

Getting Help for the Rest of the Family

Drug addiction affects more people than just the addict. Even if your non–drug–using children seem okay, chances are they're harboring some resentment towards their sibling and you for his destructive behavior or all the attention he's receiving, or may live in fear of the drug user's unknown future. These negative feelings are detrimental to both the user and the other family members. By getting help to make sure that your other children are emotionally stable and fully comprehend their brother or sister's situation, you're aiding in everyone's recovery and healing process. It also helps the non–using sibling to have his feelings of resentment and anger validated. They have a right to be angry, frustrated and hurt about the situation.

- School counselor
- Caring Adults (teachers, coaches, friends' parents, aunts, uncles)
- Support Groups (Al–Anon or Ala–Teen)

I'm too embarrassed to tell others about my child's drug use because of the stigma

It is unfortunate and understandable that you may feel a little embarrassed by telling others of your child's drug use, but the reality is that you must put your child's health first.

Substance use and abuse does not have the same negative stigma it once did. If you treat your child's drug or alcohol problem like a health issue and not a behavioral one, most others will follow suit. There will always be people who believe drug users are "bad people," but it's not up to you to worry about their views. It is up to you to keep your child healthy and out of harm's way.

Remember: As a parent, you are your child's biggest advocate! If you are too embarrassed to talk about his drug problem and get him help, no one else is going to do it. You are the person who can make a world of difference in this situation.