There are lots of people and places that can help you:
Childline - 0800 1111
Lifeline - 0808 808 8000
Your school counsellor or pastoral care teacher will also be able to help.
For local services contact your local Drugs and Alcohol Coordination Team or visit www.drugsandalcohol.info
Northern Team - 028 2531 1111
Southern Team - 028 3741 4557
Western Team 028 8225 3950
Eastern Team - 028 9027 9398
If you want to read more about addiction, how it affects families and what helps, the booklet Taking the Lid Off, A Resource for Adults and Young People can be downloaded from www.edact.org in the local resource section.

HELP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
DRINKING, DRUG USE OR ADDICTION.

If your family member decides to go into treatment, it’s a good sign that they are taking the steps to becoming drug or alcohol free.

It is important to be prepared for an emergency in case you ever find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

1. Make sure you know how to call an ambulance, the doctor or the fire brigade. Other people in your house should know how to do this too.
2. Make sure you know your address and postcode. This is important if you ever have to ring the emergency services.
3. Keep a little bit of money aside in case you have to make an urgent phone call. If you have a mobile phone, make sure you always have it charged.
4. Make a list of people you can call. Maybe a grandparent, aunt, uncle, neighbour or older brother or sister. Try to memorise their phone numbers so that you can contact them in an emergency.
5. If you want to talk to your parent about the drugs or alcohol, make sure you pick a safe time, when they are not drunk or high.
6. If you need to study or just a quiet space, ask a friend or relative if you can spend time in their house.

What would you do if...?
You find your family member unconscious and you’re not sure what they have taken?
Ring 999 immediately and ask for an ambulance. They will tell you what to do until the ambulance arrives. If there are any pills or alcohol nearby, show them to the ambulance crew.

We hope you never find yourself in an emergency situation, but it is always useful to have a plan just in case.

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation or treatment is not something to be scared of. It helps people deal with their addiction.

Treatment may involve seeing a professional or being involved with a self help group like Alcoholics Anonymous. Sometimes it means they have to go away for a little while in order to get the help they need. Usually a person is in treatment they may take medication to reduce their cravings and talk to people that are trained to help with problems.

If your family member begins to use drugs or alcohol again, there is an opportunity for them to learn from their mistakes.

All you can do is support them in their efforts. You might have been used to looking after them and it may be hard to let go of that role and let them look after themselves.

Sometimes treatment does not work the first, second or even third time. It can be very disheartening if your family member begins to use again. However, this is an opportunity for them to learn from their mistakes.
Addiction is when someone continues doing something, like drinking or taking drugs, despite the harm it does to them and the hurt it is causing their family. Their mood or body becomes dependent on the drug or alcohol and stopping is very difficult.

No onereally knows why a person develops an addiction but there are some reasons why they keep doing it:

- Feel happy and relaxed
- Forget about their problems
- Feel painless memories
- Feel more confident
- Feel annoyed at yourself or helpless because you can’t change things.

BUT! If a person continues to use drugs or alcohol, it is very damaging to their body and brain. This damage can make stopping very difficult.

There is nothing you can do to stop your parent or family member from drinking or taking drugs. You can empty alcohol bottles and flush drugs down the toilet but they will just go out and buy more.

If your mum or dad doesn’t stop it does not mean that they don’t love you and care about you. It means they have a serious problem and may need to get help.

WHAT IS ADDICTION?

Living with someone’s addiction is hard. You may:

- Bottle up what you are feeling.
- Feel panicky, confused and mixed up.
- Feel angry with the person and the way they behave, especially when they let you down and break promises.
- Struggle at school and feel overwhelmed.
- Feel annoyed at yourself or helpless because you can’t change things.

How do people cope? You may find that you:

There is no rule book for living with someone’s addiction, but people often follow these unhelpful rules:

- Don’t talk.
- Don’t feel.
- Don’t trust.
- Pretend that everything is ok - there is no problem.

How do people cope? You may find that you:

You often hear this advice to people under stress: look after yourself. There are some telephone numbers and websites on the back page that may be useful to you.

- If you are told to keep secrets about something you think is wrong, tell a responsible adult.
- If you are told to keep secrets about something you think is wrong, tell a responsible adult.
- How fun! Remember you are young. Get involved with activities outside your home like youth club or sports. Do things that other young people do.
- Choose a time to talk to your family member when they are not drinking or using drugs. Explain how their addiction is affecting you.

Addiction. You didn’t cause it, you can’t cure it, but you can take care of yourself!

Looking after yourself

You often hear this advice to people under stress: look after yourself. There are things you can do to improve your sense of wellbeing. Eat well, exercise, do enjoyable things. Most of all value and look after yourself.