



Supporting recovery  
Reducing harm  
Rebuilding lives

## Family and friends:

self help

guidance

**If you are living with a family member, or have a close friend, whose addiction is affecting your life, here are a few things to bear in mind.**

### **Gain information**

SIAS can help you gain information about substance misuse or gambling and understand addictive behaviour.

### **Seek help**

Don't be afraid to seek help and support for yourself. Families need to recover too. Living with a substance user or gambler is an unstable and unpredictable environment. You may be finding it difficult to cope and as such may fall into coping strategies that are not particularly helpful to you or your situation. SIAS can help you identify these behaviours and teach you new ways to cope with difficult situations.

### **Abusive or violent behaviour**

If abuse or violence is a feature in your relationship, seek support to help protect yourself and the rest of your family.

### **Do not blame yourself**

Many families blame themselves for their loved one's addiction. However, there are many factors which contribute to substance misuse or gambling. We can help.

### **Improve quality of life**

Research suggests that where families are supported, loved ones are more likely to engage in treatment, complete treatment successfully and maintain their new lifestyle. If the person you care about is not ready for treatment, we can still support you and other family members.

### **Join a support group**

You are not alone; there are many people like you. By joining a support group, you will increase the support network of people who can help you to cope. SIAS runs regular support groups – get in touch for details.

### **Protect your finances**

Money you give your loved one could be spent on financing their habit. Keep a separate account that only you can access and take care of your own finances. Addiction can create co-dependency. Family members, friends and partners can cover up for the individual, enabling their behaviour. Make it clear that you are not willing to be a part of their actions.

### **Set clear boundaries**

Setting boundaries may be difficult and distressing, but you do not have to live with unacceptable behaviour. Setting boundaries can benefit you *and* your loved one.

### **Take care of yourself**

Living with someone with an addiction can be emotionally draining. Take some time away to enable you to focus on the positive things in your life.

### **Offer support**

Even if your loved one is not ready to change, you can tell that you are there to support them when they are ready.

**If you are in need of support or guidance for yourself or another, please call us on:**

**0121 301 4141**

SIAS is a partnership between Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, Welcome, Aquarius, Changes UK and Urban Heard and is commissioned by Solihull Council.

We work closely together to offer easy access to appropriate support and treatment for individuals whose drug or alcohol use, or gambling has become problematic. We also offer support to their families and friends.

**Find out more**

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