



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.

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.

Co-dependency

Addiction can create co-dependency. Family members, friends and partners can cover up for the individual, as well as provide money, which enables their behaviour. Make it clear that you are not willing to be a part of their actions.

Protect your finances

Keep a separate account that only you can access and take care of your own finances.

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.

Abusive or violent behaviour

If abuse or violence is a feature in your relationship, seek support.

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 them that you are there to support them when they are.

Improve chances of recovery

Research suggests that where families are receiving support, their loved ones are more likely to engage in treatment and achieve a successful outcome. We can support you even if your loved one is not yet ready.

Join a support group

SIAS runs support groups for family members. You could also try:

Families Anonymous

www.familiesanonymous.org.uk

FamAnon

www.famanon.org.uk

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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