

The Family Workbook



**Helping families to talk about
drug and alcohol problems**

Welcome to this special book.

You may feel you are the only one with a problem but many young people have problems – you are not alone. People are here to help.



This booklet is to help you and your parents to talk about what's happening in your life. It will also help you and your parent to make some plans so that your life can be better. Some mums, dads and carers have an adult problem with alcohol or drugs which can make things difficult at home and cause you to have problems and worries. If this is happening it can affect different areas of your life like home, money, friends and school. These problems can be very hard to talk about.

Your parent really loves you and wants to make your life better. That's why they have chosen to ask you to work through this booklet with them. They want you to be honest and not scared that you may hurt their feelings. They know that their adult problem can hurt them, you and others.

How to use this book



You can work through this booklet with your parent in any way you wish but you will probably find that you do a bit at a time. It's probably quite good to do a bit and then have a break, just make sure you have enough time and don't have to rush all the conversations!

My Family

Draw or write the names of the people in your family. If you have photos you could stick those here.

A Happy Memory

Draw or write about a time with your parent when you felt happy.

Talk about why this was a happy time.

Happy and Sad Times

All families have happy and sad times. All people do things we like and don't like.



What does your parent do that you like and don't like?

I like it when my parent...

I don't like it when my parent...

Talk to your parent about the things you do that they like and the things you do that they don't like. No one is perfect but your carer wants to do better.

What is an adult problem?

A drug is something that you put into your body to make yourself feel better, but not all drugs are good for you. Nicotine is a drug in cigarettes which is not good for you but people still choose to smoke. Alcohol is a drug in drinks like beer, cider and wine and if you drink too much, it isn't good for you. There are lots of other drugs and many of them can change the way you act – you can become angry, sleepy, do silly things, or just act strange. When people take the drug they can find it hard to look after themselves and their families. They can act as if they just don't care, but they do.

Why don't they stop taking the drug?

Your parent has got into a bad habit and it is very hard to stop. But it is possible, it just takes some time.



Talk to your parent about what happens when they have taken their drug.

Are any of these how you feel?

I feel sad

I feel angry

I feel lonely

I can't do my homework

I feel like it's my fault

I can't enjoy myself

I worry in case they hurt themselves

I don't feel safe

I feel scared

They won't remember what they did or said

Anything else?



**Remember it's OK to love your parent
but hate the problem**

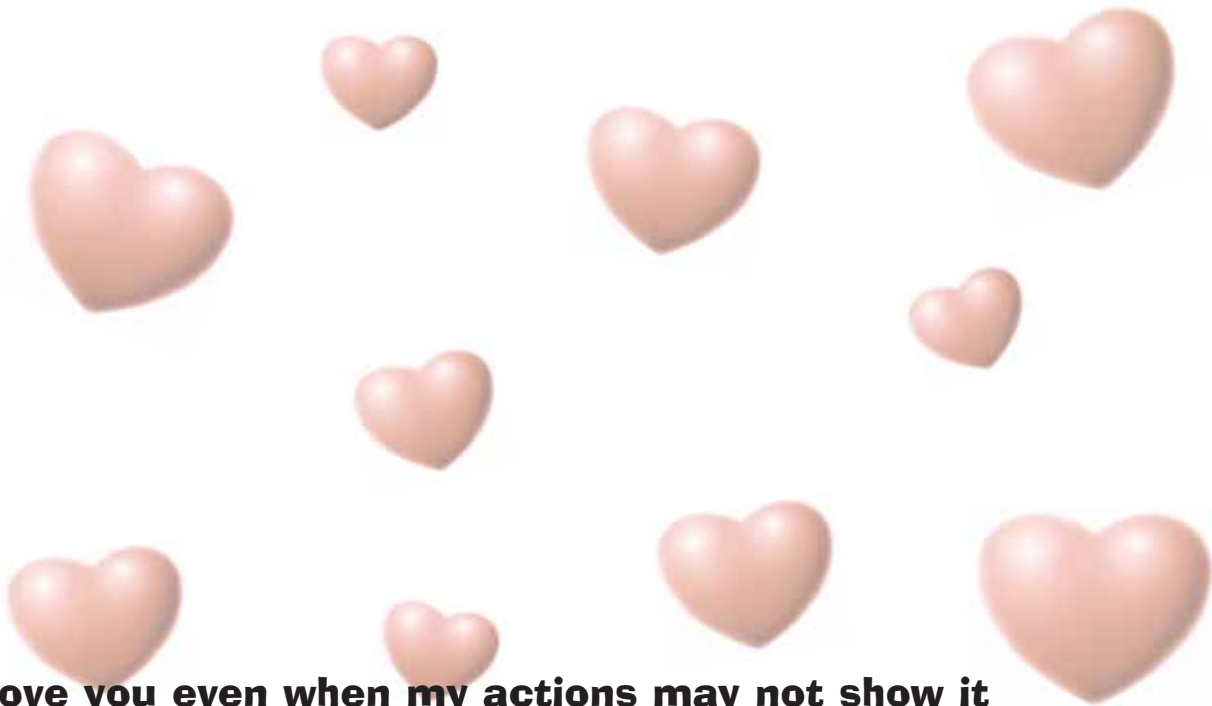
I'm loved

Just because your parent has a problem doesn't mean they aren't good people or that they don't love you. This next activity is for your adult!



Write or draw the different reasons why you love your child. Write your child's name in the sentence below.

I love in many ways



I love you even when my actions may not show it

Who is responsible for your parent's problem?



Lots of children think their parent's problem is their fault...



BUT children can't cause or stop their parents having a drink or drug problem. It's not your fault. Your parent has to sort out their own problem.

Planning to keep safe

It's important that you and your parent make some plans to help keep you safe – all families need to make these plans. Being safe means not being in danger and being cared for:

- Knowing what to do if you feel worried
- Having enough food
- Having someone to talk to that you trust
- Being warm enough
- Knowing who to talk to if you need help

If your parent's problem means that they are unable to look after you for a time, you can make some plans with them so you can safely look after yourself, and know who to ask for extra help



I feel worried

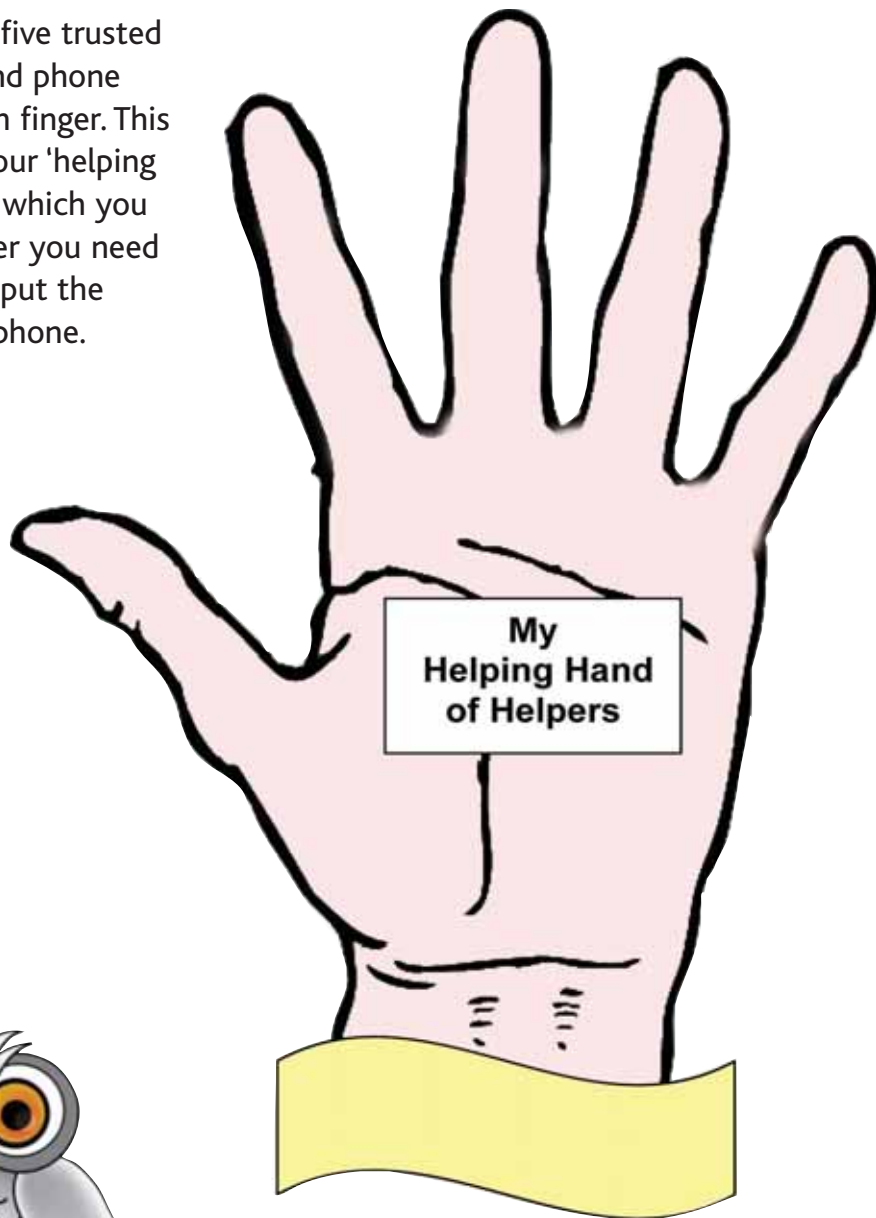
Remember there is nothing so awful that you can't speak to someone about it – a problem shared is a problem halved....

Sometimes children feel they should keep family stuff private but your parent wants you to feel supported. Think who you can talk to.

You don't have to cope on your own. Talk to your parent about the adults you can trust and can talk to – neighbour, grandparent, teacher, who else?



Now write your five trusted adults' names and phone numbers on each finger. This will now form your 'helping hand of helpers' which you can use whenever you need help. If possible, put the numbers into a phone.



**Up your sleeve you could put
Child Line 0800 1111**

What do I do in an emergency?

All children need to know what to do in an emergency. A good thing to do is to programme the emergency number 999 into the phone. The number should be marked **'EMERGENCY'**. If you can't programme it into the phone put a sign next to the phone which says **'EMERGENCY 999'** and write your address – as it's easy to forget if you are feeling worried. Make sure you know how to use the phone whether it's a landline or your parent's mobile – and where it is usually kept.

Practise what you would say in an emergency...

'My mum/dad has collapsed and s/he uses drugs... my address is...'



If you are worried about your parent don't waste time deciding whether to call an ambulance or not, as you won't get into trouble with the ambulance officers.

If you are older, you could also find out what the recovery position is.



I'm hungry

Talk to your parent about the types of food you could get ready yourself. What do you like?

Look at the list and see which foods your parent could buy in for these times.

Tick the ones you like:

Dried fruit

Bread sticks

Rice cakes

Nuts and raisins

Bread

Marmite

Peanut butter

Oatcakes

Fresh fruit

Cheese

Seeds

Baked beans

What other healthy foods could your parent get?

Write them here:



The foods you can get for yourself will depend on your age – if you are older you may be able to heat food in the microwave or use a toaster.

CERTIFICATE

Well done for completing this book.

Make sure you keep it in a safe place and don't forget to keep updating your helping hand of helpers.

Good Job!!

Notes

What can you do together to celebrate completing this book?

PLAY A GAME

**WATCH A
FILM
TOGETHER**

HAVE A SWEET



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

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