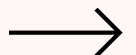


How to
support a loved
one who uses
drugs during the
holidays
(and any day of the year)

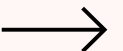
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Avoid contingencies.

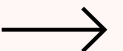
Inviting someone to dinner as long as they follow your rules is not much of an invitation.



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Respect Boundaries.

No is a complete sentence. If someone does not want to attend a family event or is not interested in talking about their substance use challenges, do not push the individual as you are likely to further isolate them.

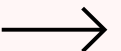


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Avoid language that implies the person should feel guilty or ashamed.

Use person first language (like person who uses drugs instead of addict) and avoid language that can be stigmatizing. Words like addict, junkie, crazy, clean or dirty are cruel and offensive.

Instead try someone who uses substances, someone struggling with their mental health, or someone that is currently using substances.



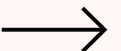
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Act as a buffer for family and friends that may not understand.

Some people just don't get it-and they may never understand what it means to struggle with substance use. This may lead to arguments and conflict between the individual that uses drugs and other family members, or among family members about this individual.

This creates a hostile environment for the family member that uses substances and makes a challenging situation worse.

If your family dynamics allow, try to change the topic or ask one of the involved people to take a walk with you.

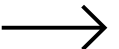


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Carry Naloxone.

While naloxone is only effective in addressing opiate overdoses, using more than one drug at a time is increasingly common and you may not know what an individual has ingested.

Administering naloxone to someone that has not used opiates will not cause them harm.





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