



Helping your teenager ask for help

Many teenagers believe that they should be able to sort out their problems on their own. They are often too embarrassed to talk to someone and can also be worried about the confidentiality of information they give to a professional.

So what can you do as a parent? Firstly, keep talking to your teenager and let them know that no matter what the problem is you will listen without judgement and help them to find ways to cope or solve the problem. Now this sounds easy but teenagers, even when they know this, will probably choose to talk to their friends and not you. Don't give up – keep the conversations going.



Where else can you go for advice?

- **Parent and Family Support Line**

Phone: (08) 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers only)

This is a free alcohol and other drug information and support for parents and family members. Talk to a professionally trained counsellor about alcohol and other drugs. Talk confidentially to another parent for strategies and support.

- **School Drug Education and Road Aware**

www.sdera.wa.edu.au



- **Reachout**

www.reachout.com.au Reachout is about helping young people to help themselves

- **Beyond Blue**

www.ybblue.com.au/ Beyondblue is a national depression initiative for young people

- **Kids Helpline**

www.kidshelp.com.au Kids Helpline is a 24 hour help line that can be called on 1800 55 1800

- **Make sure you know your teenager's friends and their parents.** Not so you can delve and discover, but so they know you are approachable and if they feel that the problem needs your involvement, they can talk to you openly and honestly.
- **Listen non-judgementally.** Now is not the time to give your judgement on a situation that your teenager has decided to share with you. Try to get as much information as you can to help you both talk about the issue – but don't try too hard or you might push them away.
- **Tell them you are concerned about them.** Knowing that you care and are willingly to listen will open the lines of communication and encourage your teenager to talk to you when next they have a problem.
- **Ask if they have thought about getting help.** If your child has resisted getting help, talk to them about this.
- **Brainstorm the different people they could go to for help.** Have a list of support services available in your area in case your teenager suggests seeing a professional.
- **Check to see if your teenager is okay with you letting the school know there is a problem.** This can help to explain changes in behaviour that school staff may have noticed.
- **Offer to make an appointment for your child to talk to a professional.** Make time to go to the appointment with your teenager, but check that they want this to happen first.