



## 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 children and let them know that no matter what the problem is you will listen without judgement and help them to work out 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.

- 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 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 willing to listen will keep the lines of communication open 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, ask them why.
- 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.



### Where else can you go for advice?

**SDERA** [sdera.wa.edu.au](http://sdera.wa.edu.au)

**Drug Aware** [drugaware.com.au](http://drugaware.com.au)

**National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre** [ncpic.org.au](http://ncpic.org.au)

**Australian Drug Foundation** [www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au)

**Alcohol and Drug Support Line** is a free 24-hour, state-wide, confidential telephone service where you can talk to a professionally trained counsellor about your own or another's alcohol or drug use.

**Phone:** (08) 9442 5000

**Country callers:** 1800 198 024

**E-mail:** [alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au](mailto:alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au)

**Parent and Family Drug Support Line** is a free alcohol and other drug information and support line 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.

**Phone:** (08) 9442 5050

**Country callers:** 1800 653 203

**Email:** [alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au](mailto:alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au)

**Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service**

provides a range of culturally secure services, including treatment, education programs and yarning.

**Phone:** (08) 9221 1411

**Reachout** is about helping young people to help themselves

[www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au)

**Beyondblue** is a national depression initiative for young people

[www.ybblue.com.au/](http://www.ybblue.com.au/)

**Kids Helpline** is a 24 hour help line that can be called on 1800 55 1800

[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

**Headspace and Yarn Space**

[www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

