WELCOMING HOME AN ADULT CHILD WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

DURING COVID-19

Many families have welcomed adult children home during the COVID-19 outbreak. No matter the reason for the return, there will be challenges. If the child has a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) including Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), this may be more difficult for everyone.

Promote Healthy Discussions

Neutral ground - Find a time that works for everyone. Start the conversation on neutral ground such as the living room or kitchen rather than a bedroom or office.

Fears and frustrations - Acknowledge frustrations they are experiencing - their routines have been disrupted. Remind them this is for the greater good, and all people are making sacrifices. Empathy should be shown regarding the feelings of fear and disappointment.

Establish expectations – Provide clear and fair guidelines while your child is living at home. Discuss how both sides can contribute to this living arrangement. Have a dialogue regarding expectations and reasons you feel they are important to everyone's well-being. Encourage questions.

Love and support - Communicate your love and support for each other, discuss the benefits of having extra time together – all have a safe place to stay during these challenging times. Your child can receive support while staying with you.

Remain calm - By being patient and calm, your child will be better able to cope with their anxiety and stress and feel more comfortable coming to you for support or help.

Social distancing - These rules must be followed if going to into public spaces, not only for your child's safety, but for those in your family and the community. If your child is not following the social distancing guidance outside of the home, consider implementing quarantine measures (like designating a room and bathroom only for your child) in the home to prevent the spread of illness.

If you choose to invite your adult child back into your home, remember they are an adult and have been on their own. Even though you may not agree with all their choices, promote mutual and respectful conversations when addressing topics surrounding SUD.

How You Can Help

If your child was drinking (legally or illegally) or using other substances when they were living away from home, you can establish boundaries around their use in your home. This may be a good time to help reestablish healthier habits.

If your child takes prescribed medications for a mental health issue, such as depression or ADHD, encourage them to consult with their prescriber to ensure there is no disruption in treatment. You may also offer to help them manage their medication if they are offered a longer-term supply.

As many in-person support groups have been moved to virtual or online sessions – encourage your child to find out how to stay involved in their support programs and networks.

If your child has struggled with opioids (such as Oxycontin, Vicodin or heroin) have naloxone (Narcan is a common brand) at home and know how to use it. Contact your pharmacy or community recovery center for education about these medications, their administration, and recovery resources.

If your child uses substances, particularly alcohol or benzodiazepines (such as Xanax, Ativan, Valium, Klonopin) be aware of the risks of withdrawal. There is an increased risk of overdose if an opioid is used with these substances. Supervised medical care may be necessary to avoid seizures and life-threatening complications of withdrawal. Getting help fast is critical.

MI RESILIENCE

For more supportive resources:

Michigan.gov/StayWell

Supporting Individuals with SUD During COVID-19

Learn about harm reduction, stress management and ways to reduce risks associated with drug use, addiction, overdose, relapse, and withdrawal. Information for building resilience, mindfulness techniques and many other resources to support people with SUD/OUD.
michigan.gov/documents/coronavirus/Resources_for_SUD_OUD_5-6-20_689694_7.pdf

Resources

University of Michigan - Addiction and Recovery Resources

Resources for coping with substance use, online recovery, virtual meetings, education materials, and support applications.
medicine.umich.edu/dept/psychiatry/programs/addictioncenter/coronavirus-covid-19-addictionrecovery-resources

United to Face Addiction

ufamichigan.org

Families Against Narcotics

familiesagainstnarcotics.org

Immediate Crisis Help

- National Disaster Distress Helpline 24/7
  1-800-985-5990
- Michigan Crisis Text Line 24/7
  Text Restore to 741741
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24/7
  1-800-273-8255
  or Text TALK to 741741
- Michigan PEER Warmline (for people living with serious mental illness)
  1-888-733-7753 daily, 10 a.m. - 2 a.m.