

# SUBSTANCE ABUSE

## Know the **Signs** to **Help a Loved One**

*You can help someone who has a problem with alcohol or drugs. You just need the facts, and a lot of love.*

### **HOW CAN I HELP?**

First know how to spot the signs. Do you have a friend or family member who is causing problems at work? Messing up at home? Do they have trouble getting along with people? That tells you there may be a problem. Now here's how to tell what it is.

### **IS IT ALCOHOL?**

People who drink too much take dumb risks like drinking and driving. They may get in trouble with the law.

Drinking can turn into a disease with its own symptoms. When they start drinking, can they stop? Do they need to keep drinking more to feel good? If they have to go without, does their body start to shake?

### **IS IT PILLS?**

Someone on pills will be sleepy and slow. They will be too lazy to do the things they need to do or like to do. They may be confused, or they may lose too much weight.

### **IS IT COCAINE?**

Anger, crazy talk and sudden changes of mood are signs. The person may not be able to sleep, or they may lose a lot of weight.

### **FIRST FIND OUT WHERE TO GET HELP**

Talk to your doctor. You can also call **1-800-564-6600** for drug

treatment and recovery resources. Then talk to the person with the problem.

### **WHAT DO I SAY?**

Talk to them the next time their habit causes a problem. Wait till they are sober, and talk to them in private. Talk about problems that have happened in the past. Then tell them how to get help. Be ready to say what you will do if they don't try.

If you think your child has a problem, you can say things like:

- ▶ "I love you and I'm worried you might have a problem."
- ▶ "I know lots of kids do it, but it's bad for you. You can get in real trouble."
- ▶ "You aren't alone. We can help you through this. Here's what I will do to help."

With a child or an adult, don't just talk—listen. Make sure they know you love them.