

## You are not alone ...

Hi there, my name is Matt. I'm a therapist and Tutor at The Centre for Addiction Treatment Studies.



I know what it's like to have an adult in your life that misuses substances. Whether that's drugs or alcohol - or both.

It could be your mum, dad, aunt, uncle, older brother or sister.....anyone.

What I'm going to be doing is 3 blogs on this subject that I'm hoping will help you in some way. You can also listen to this message in the video on this section.

It can be really tough, knowing someone who mis-uses drugs or alcohol. They might be difficult to talk to; they might act in worrying or frightening ways; they might be really changeable, you never know quite what they are going to do next. They may be able to talk, but not able to hear what you need them to hear or what you want them to hear.....and that is difficult and that is tough.

You can worry that if you say anything to them about their substance misuse it might make things worse. You might think they may start drinking more or taking more drugs. They might get angry at you; they might shout, scream or give you a mouthful of abuse. So you say nothing, things get ignored and things just get worse.

There could be stuff happening in your home that is not healthy and not ok. But you say nothing, because you are frightened, you are worried and you are scared.

When someone is using drugs or alcohol they can be changeable, sometimes they might be really up for doing things with you, at other times they might be distant and not interested and actually quite hurtful.

For some of you, your mum or dad might be mis-using drugs or alcohol, so you could be acting in the role of a parent, looking after your mum or dad, looking after younger brothers and sisters.

You might be really struggling at school and not able to concentrate because of what is going on at home. You might be being bullied at school because you haven't got decent clothes because the reality is the money in your family is being spent on drugs and alcohol.

It might feel that you are the only person going through this, but you are not. There are young people going through what you are going through right across the country, the numbers are huge. Some will go to private schools, some will go to state schools, some are in families with lots of money and others are in families with not much money at all. It is happening everywhere, in villages, towns and cities. You are all going through a very similar experience. There will be young people in your school who are going through what you are going through. It is just so difficult to talk about it, so you kind of go through it alone. And, that can be rough.

What I really want to say again, as I think it is so important - you are not alone. There are people and organisations who understand what you are going through, they are there to help and support you. You might feel like you are alone, but you are not.

Now on the mention of feelings that is going to be the subject of my next blog.

Hopefully you will join me, take care, see you soon, bye.

Matt 😊