

RESPONDING TO THE DRUG ADDICTION EPIDEMIC

You are not alone. There is hope. Addiction is a chronic brain disorder from which people can and do recover. We must be ready to accompany all those in need. Our overriding message should be one of compassion, a readiness to assist, a commitment to strengthening the bonds of family life and community support, and a promise of new hope and a future worthy of human dignity. Our church can assure those affected by the drug crisis that they need not ever feel alone.

How do I keep my family safe?

- Start talking. Keep family members informed. Find resources at Start Talking! Ohio, www.starttalking.ohio.gov.
- Engage in family life affirming activities.
- Talk to your doctor about safe pain management.
- Lock up medications at home.
- Properly dispose of unused prescription drugs, www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/Pubs/DrugDisposalResources.aspx.

What are the signs and symptoms?

- Constricted or enlarged pupils
- Drowsiness/excessive sleeping or overly alert/not sleeping
- Needle marks on arms or legs (possible infections)
- Change in moods (anxious, irritable)
- Isolation from family, friends and church
- Deceitful or secretive behavior
- Black smudges on light switches and vents
- Weight loss

Do I suspect drug abuse? Step-by-Step Guides

- Visit www.takechargeohio.org/Get-Help/Help-Someone
- Call 1-877-275-6364 for information and referral.
- Contact your local ADAMH Board for resources in your area.

In a crisis?

- Call 911. When you arrive at the hospital, you can ask for a social worker and assistance seeking addiction treatment.
- Text 4HOPE to 741741, a free, confidential, crisis text line.

How do I identify treatment options?

- Visit www.takechargeohio.org/Get-Help/Help-Someone
- Contact your local ADAMH Board for resources in your area.

Questions you can ask when looking for a treatment program.

- Does the program specialize in your specific drug(s) addiction?
- What kind of treatment is offered?
- What types of insurance are accepted?
- Is the treatment program either licensed by the state of Ohio, or certified by an accrediting body?
- How soon can treatment begin?

I'm in rehab. What's next?

The Body of Christ needs everyone. We need you to be whole and healthy. Long term recovery is a journey. It may take place in a treatment center and a recovery house. Relapse is possible, but it doesn't mean treatment has failed. Try again and remain hopeful.

How do I support recovery?

Take good care of yourself first. Accompany with compassion. As believers we are called to accompany individuals and family members on the journey to wholeness. Encourage ongoing participation in recovery programs. Attend or transport to counseling appointments or recovery meetings. Communicate and look for signs of relapse. Keep them in prayer.

What gifts and talents do I have to support the parish in addressing this issue?

Everyone is called to help within his or her role and comfort level. Stay in your lane. Are you a counselor? Can you offer a support group for families? Are you an educator who can spread the appropriate message to parish groups? Can you help with material needs? Are you a first responder? Contact the parish office to offer your assistance.



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For online resources, please visit www.columbuscatholic.org/drug-awareness