

Tips on Supporting Loved Ones in Early Recovery or Still Using Substances During the Holidays

Prioritizing health and safety

CENTER CITY, MINNESOTA, UNITED STATES, December 21, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- At its sites around the United States, [the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation](#) often sees an uptick in substance use and mental health care admissions after the holidays—an often-stressful time quickly followed by the motivating promise and hope of a New Year. Annually, the clinicians at Hazelden Betty Ford observe the consequences of delaying care that is needed now.

The holiday season, while full of joy for many, can pose significant challenges for families whose loved ones are in early stages of recovery or still engaged in problematic substance use.

Increased holiday stress, coupled with the heightened availability of alcohol at gatherings, can make it difficult for some to control their use and for others to maintain their sobriety and well-being. And while supporting loved ones in recovery is crucial, it's equally important for family members to prioritize their own well-being during this time.

Families can take proactive steps to support their loved ones and themselves during this time by applying learnings from Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) is an evidence-based approach that equips those struggling with substance use and family members with the skills to learn insights to identify high risk situations, apply positive reinforcement, establish clear boundaries, and enhance communication to support their loved one's recovery journey. It's one of the key approaches informing Hazelden Betty Ford's [full continuum of family services](#),



Hazelden Betty Ford
Foundation

Reach out for answers and help. We're here for you.



By prioritizing self-care and fostering open communication, families can create a supportive environment that promotes healing, help-seeking and long-term success.

including virtual options—some involving no cost—available whether a loved one is in treatment, in recovery or still actively using substances.

“We know a lot of people feel the need for help this time of year and that there’s a strong temptation to put it off until the new year, but a lot of hurt and harm can happen in the meantime. That’s why we continue to admit patients and serve families throughout the season,” said Heather Jones, PhD, vice president of mental health, family and children’s services for Hazelden Betty Ford, the nation’s leading nonprofit system of addiction treatment, mental health care, recovery resources and related prevention and education services. “If you have been considering seeking help, have questions that have gone unanswered, or need information and guidance on your next step, the best time is now.”

Here are some ways to incorporate CRA principles during the holidays:

- **Encourage positive changes:** Celebrate and encourage positive behaviors that are in line with recovery goals rather than dwelling on negative repercussions, setbacks or past mistakes. This may include recognizing a loved one’s commitment to therapy, healthy choices, or recovery activities.
- **Establish Clear Boundaries:** Communicate clear expectations and clarify consequences for actions that disrupt family celebrations and relationships or jeopardize recovery. This could involve communicating that you will not provide alcohol or other substances: letting them know that you want to provide a space where the focus can be on enjoying time together and what they can expect to do instead. Offering a clear alternative could reduce the anxiety around not having the normal presence of alcohol.
- **Communicate Effectively:** Practice communicating what you hope to happen with active listening, and use “I” statements to convey your feelings and concerns in a supportive and non-accusatory manner. Avoid criticisms, judgement, accusations, confrontational language or ultimatums, and emphasize open communication that builds trust and understanding.
- **Encourage Healthy Choices:** During holiday gatherings, encourage loved ones to make healthy choices by offering non-alcoholic beverages and healthier snacks, and suggest alternative activities that don’t involve alcohol and other drugs. Plan events that foster healthy connection, support and recovery like family game nights, outdoor activities, or volunteering together.
- **Offer Ongoing Support:** Keep in mind that change can be difficult, communicate understanding of this by reflecting what you have heard them say about this process. Recovery is an ongoing journey, and the holidays are fleeting. These tips will help you know how to offer unwavering support, encouragement, and understanding after the holiday season ends.

Prioritizing Self-Care for Family Members

Prioritizing one’s own well-being might include engaging in activities that promote self-care, such as exercise, relaxation techniques, and spending time with supportive individuals. It could also include joining/attending a support group or seeking [professional guidance and services](#) to address concerns and challenges related to a loved one’s addiction.

The holidays can be a time of joy, connection, and support for families with loved ones in

recovery and even for those with loved ones in need of help. By applying CRA principles, prioritizing self-care, and fostering open communication, families can create a supportive environment that promotes healing, help-seeking and long-term success.

30

About the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

Harnessing science, love and the wisdom of lived experience, the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation is a force of healing and hope for families and communities affected by substance use and mental health conditions. As the nation's foremost nonprofit provider of comprehensive behavioral health care, the Foundation leads the way in helping society rise above stigma and overcome addiction. With a legacy that began in 1949 and includes the 1982 founding of the Betty Ford Center, the Foundation now has treatment centers and telehealth services nationwide as well as a network of collaborators throughout health care. Charitable support and a commitment to innovation drive ongoing advances in care, research, programs and services to impact more lives. In addition to clinical care, Hazelden Betty Ford encompasses a graduate school of addiction studies, a publishing division, a research center, thought leadership and advocacy, professional and medical education programs, school-based prevention resources and a specialized program for children—with a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in all of its endeavors. Learn more at [HazeldenBettyFord.org](https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org).

Samantha Moy-Gottfried

Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

+1 651-213-4728

[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/676688254>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.