



# Sedona Police Department

## Drug abuse

### Signs of drug or alcohol abuse

- Increased interest in alcohol or other drugs: Talking about them, talking about buying them, or increased interest in them.
- Owning drug paraphernalia such as pipes, hypodermic needles, or rolling papers.
- Having large amounts of cash or always being low on cash.
- Drastic increase or decrease in weight.
- Slurred or incoherent speech, or talking about "off the wall" topics.
- Withdrawal from others, frequent lying, depression, or paranoia.
- Dropping out of school activities.

If your friend acts this way, it is not a guarantee that he or she has an alcohol or other drug problem. But it's better to say something and be wrong than to say nothing and find out later that you were correct.

### How to talk to a friend who's in trouble

- Consult with a counselor. Call a local hotline or drug abuse counseling site.
- Plan ahead what you want to say and how you want to say it.
- Pick a quiet and private time to talk.
- Don't try to talk about the problem when your friend is high or drunk.
- Use a calm voice and don't get into an argument.
- Let your friend know you care.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help. Offer to go along with them to a counseling site.
- Don't expect your friend to like what you're saying. But stick with it and revisit the topic gently. The more people who express concern, the better the chances of your friend getting help.
- Remember that you cannot force a friend to get help. Only they can decide to get help.

### Take control of your life

Look and ask for help. Talk about the situation with someone who knows about drug abuse and helping abusers. Skip parties and people who abuse alcohol or other drugs; hang out with friends who don't need alcohol or other drugs to have fun. Get involved with drug-free activities.



#### Drug abuse includes using prescription drugs for nonmedical reasons

Most abused prescription drugs fall under four categories:

- Painkillers
- Tranquilizers
- Stimulants
- Sedatives

Many people mistakenly think that those who use drugs lack moral principles or willpower and that they could stop their drug use simply by choosing to. In reality, drug addiction is a complex disease, and quitting usually takes more than good intentions or a strong will.

## Help others

- Remind friends that buying or possessing illegal drugs (even for someone else) is against the law. Penalties for drug-related offenses are harsh and can include loss of benefits like student loans.
- Remind friends that using intravenous drugs seriously endangers their health from blood-borne diseases.
- Organize drug-free activities like dances, movies, community service projects, walk-a-thons or marathons to raise money for charities that support sobriety, recovery and health.
- Tell a police officer, teacher, or your parents about drug dealers in your school or community, and about people who are abusing drugs.

