



Family Drug Support

“Supporting families since 1997”

Media Alert

Friday 19 February 2021

Families impacted by drug use gather in Parliament House for major event

Families impacted by drug use – along with alcohol and other drug (AOD) experts and Federal politicians – will mark International Family Drug Support Day by gathering in Parliament House’s Dame Enid Lyons Alcove on Wednesday, 24 February to raise awareness about how families can be better supported when a family member experiences problems with alcohol or other drugs.

Family Drug Support CEO, Tony Trimingham, said families were often distraught when a family member experienced substance use issues, and that many suffered unnecessary and cruel stigma and discrimination as a result.

“Problems connected with alcohol and drug use can affect any family, anywhere in Australia, regardless of background or economic status. Often, our community’s response is to judge these families as failures. The shame and stigma experienced by families when a family member has a drug problem is very real and there is evidence that supporting the family can lead to positive outcomes for the family, the person experiencing drug use problems and the general community.

In our experience of over 23 years of working with families, we have found that families staying connected with their family members is far more effective than practicing tough love and abandoning the family member. Which is why our focus this year is “Family Connection is More Effective than Tough Love”

“This International Family Drug Support Day event in Parliament House is all about reaching Federal MPs and Senators – from all parties, and from every state and territory – and asking them to work with us on better helping families in this situation. As it stands, our organisation receives more than 25,000 phone calls a year from families who are desperate for help, and that’s just a fraction of the need that’s out there. We encourage our MPs – from all parties – to work together to provide more support for substance users and their families, so they can get help when and where they need it,”

“As well as focussing on the importance of support for families we also need to change our attitude to how we deal with drugs and implement effective and innovative policies such as pill testing, heroin prescription and decriminalisation. These have been successfully applied already in countries across Europe and other countries.” said Mr Trimingham.

What: International Family Drug Support Day 2021 event
When: 11am-11:45am, Wednesday 24 February
Where: Dame Enid Lyons Alcove, Australian Parliament House, Canberra
Who: Jen & Marion – representing affected families
Tony Trimingham, CEO, Family Drug Support
The Hon Tanya Plibersek, Shadow Minister for Education (speaking at 11:40am)
Dr Mehreen Faruqi, Senator for NSW (speaking at 11.35am)
Jennifer Duncan, CEO, Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council

Jen, Marion and Tony will be available for media comment at the conclusion of the event at 11:45am

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