

Recommendations for supporting adolescents when a parent is engaged in treatment for OUD

KEY PLAYER	RECOMMENDATION
Adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice compassion with yourself and your parent – The Seven Cs • Identify ways to set healthy boundaries with your parent through support groups like Alateen and Narateen • Understand more about addiction and substance use: Just Five, Tips for Teens, and It Feels So Bad • Explore information about how opioids and other substances affect the brain: National Institute on Drug Abuse – Mind Matters • Role play and practice how to avoid or leave a context where you may be peer pressured to use substances • Seek Naloxone training. NARCAN is available at the pharmacy counter in all 50 states • Find support for loss and bereavement in instances where you may not be able to have a relationship with your parent
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regain adolescent’s trust – reduce/eliminate own substance use • Build healthy communication patterns – provide emotional support, effective problem-solving, maintain parent-child boundaries, and monitor adolescent’s behavior while honoring the adolescent’s increasing autonomy • Facilitate open conversations about substance use – highlight risks, share reflections on substance use, and communicate strategies that have helped to avoid substances • Engage in active, shared activities like going to the movies, getting outside, or playing games • Seek out peer support specialists and other providers
Treatment Providers & Other Mental Health Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend to parents’ needs both for substance treatment and support for parenting an adolescent • Involve the family in treatment and facilitate opportunities to repair the parent-child relationship • Collaborate with adolescents’ schools to provide additional support when parents are engaged in treatment – create an environment in which the adolescent can share openly without worry about child welfare involvement or stigmatization from peers
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate primary prevention programs for OUD and SUD in curriculum • Identify and serve students whose parents are engaged in treatment using a screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) model • Create a strong sense of community within the school to provide an additional resource for students to turn to when parents are engaged in treatment
 Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding for primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention programs in schools and communities • Generate and disseminate harm reduction information for adolescents and families • Implement medication take-back programs to remove opioids and other unneeded prescription medications from homes

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Supporting parents in recovery from opioid use disorder: Lessons learned from developmental science on parenting and adolescence. Working paper.