

Module 1

Make sure you're safe

Several of the people at Sibling Support have been threatened by their brother or sister, or felt like they were walking on eggshells around their sibling. They felt it was really important to mention this, even though it's not really a strategy.

Guidelines for dealing with a brother or sister with a drug or alcohol addiction

- Be as consistent and predictable as you can
- Set clear limits, rules and expectations
- Keep a loving distance
- Attribute the symptoms to the addiction
- Don't take the behaviour of your brother or sister personally
- Don't let the person's addiction create chaos in your life
- Be active; engage in activities without your brother or sister
- Continue to educate yourself and talk to supportive people

Make sure you're not taking on your brother or sister's problems

Several of the people at Sibling Support felt like they needed to help their brother or sister. In their experience, it's pretty difficult to help your brother and sister, and can just lead to a lot of worry and anxiety.

Remember it is most often parents who are in the best position to help alcohol or drug users, but even they only have limited ability to help the situations.

Many users don't want help, and will get through on their own

Check out the Fact Sheets 'are you in the right place to help your brother or sister' and 'do you have trouble saying no' for more details.

What to do if you're threatened by your brother or sister

If your brother or sister is threatening you, then get out of the situation as safely and as quickly as you can

You could also call 000 or chat to the police

It's easy to think that your brother or sister won't hurt you because you've known them for so long. But you never know how they could behave, particularly when drugs like methamphetamine (ice), are involved. It's also important that you talk the situation over with someone who is not closely involved. This could be a psychologist, teacher, or someone on the sibling support chat room.