



PROGRAM FACILITATOR *Manual*

Version 1.2 | May 2025



OVERVIEW

Breakthrough Our Way Program (and Breakthrough Yumi Way Program) has been adapted from the mainstream Breakthrough for Families, an initiative of the Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to tackle alcohol and other drug use in Queensland. Breakthrough Our Way Program has been contextualised particularly for Aboriginal families and community, and the Breakthrough Yumi Way Program has been contextualised particularly for Torres Strait Islander families and communities. This package was updated in May 2025.

This program offers a suite of educational and practical resources developed with community for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and significant others whose lives are affected by someone's drug and/or alcohol use. Families and community members can attend information sessions and access ongoing support.

The Breakthrough Our Way Program has four sessions. The first session focuses on understanding alcohol and other drugs and its effects on a person's mood, thinking and behaviour. The next session focuses on making change through the Stages of Change. This includes asking the person impacted by drug use what sort of help and support they need, taking into consideration their strategies to make change and finding ways to reduce harm if they continue to use. Following sessions focus on managing emotional and mental health and providing support. As a health professional, it is important to keep yourself informed about different support services and options available in your community for your client such as counselling, detoxification/withdrawal services, rehabilitation services and peer/community support groups.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), the peak body representing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) in Queensland, acknowledge the Traditional and Cultural Custodians of the lands, waters and seas across Queensland, pay our respects to Elders past and present, and recognise the role of current and emerging leaders in shaping a better health system. We recognise both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland and support the cultural knowledge determination and commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in caring for the health and wellbeing of our peoples for millennia.

QAIHC also acknowledges the work of Apunipima Cape York Health Council in developing and delivering this Breakthrough Our Way Program package. The review and development of this package has been funded by Queensland Health and Western Queensland Primary Health Network (WQPHN).

CONTENTS

About QAIHC	5	Session 2: Managing Emotional and Mental Health	16
About this Program Manual	5	When drugs and alcohol affect our family	16
Program Resources	5	Ask yourself, why?	17
Introduction	6	There are many reasons why people use drugs	17
Objectives	6	Whatever the drug	18
Getting to know each other	6	Remember, the way we see things can be different	18
Facilitator Introduction	6	Drug use and mental health	19
Participants Introduction	6	Psychosis	19
Safety and confidentiality	6	Managing aggressive or agitated behaviour	20
Breakthrough Our Way Overview	7	How to respond	20
Acknowledgement of Country	8	Ways you can help your family member stay safe and healthy	21
House keeping	8	Boundaries	21
Service introductions for BOW	9	Responding to critical incidents	22
Bridges Health & Community Care	9	In summary	22
Drug ARM	9	Session 3: Making Change	23
Lives Lived Well	9	Stages of change	23
Apunipima	9	Not worried	24
Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC)	9	Thinking	24
Session overview	10	Getting ready	25
Things to remember	10	Trying	25
Strong and healthy families	11	Sticking to it	26
Session 1: Understanding Alcohol and Other Drugs	12	Lapse or relapse	26
It can be a tough road when a family member is using drugs and alcohol	12	Remember, change is not always straight forward	27
Types of drugs and their effects	13	Session 4: Support	28
What do you call drugs and alcohol?	13	The good news — there is hope	28
Looking at Meth/Ice a little closer	14	Treatment and support	29
Effects of ice use	15	Treatment journey	29
Cycle of ice use	15	Looking after yourself	30
		Reconnecting	30
		Supporting our young people	32
		Need to talk to someone?	33
		Where to go for more help	33
		Closing	34



ABOUT QAIHC

Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) is the peak body in Queensland that represents, advocates for, and supports the state's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Services Organisations (ACCHOs) sector in their delivery of culturally appropriate primary health care to their respective communities. QAIHC has ACCHO representatives who are members on the Board of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

ABOUT THIS PROGRAM MANUAL

Breakthrough Our Way Program Facilitator Manual has been developed for health professionals working with families and significant others whose lives are affected by someone's drug and/or alcohol use. Health professionals can use this manual to deliver the Breakthrough Our Way program and provide ongoing support and resources to families.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

As a health professional delivering the Breakthrough Our Way program, these are some resources that you would need and some things to keep in mind:

- Admin
 - Registration form
 - Photo consent form
 - Evaluation form
- Practical equipment
 - Breakthrough Our Way flipbook
 - Breakthrough Our Way notebooks and pens
- Technical equipment
 - Program resources — Powerpoint/USB/laptop
- Additional Items
 - Other Breakthrough Our Way resources
- Things to keep in mind
 - Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners before the session: Please enquire if there is a Traditional Owner or Elder in the community who would be prepared to do a welcome/ acknowledgement or ask an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander participant in the group if they would like to do so (try not to put people on the spot). A gift of appreciation to this person will be appreciated.
 - Make notes of housekeeping information — use of phones, toilets, smoke break, in case of fire and session breaks.



INTRODUCTION

Objectives

- To introduce the Breakthrough Our Way program, its purpose and service providers that deliver Breakthrough Our Way throughout Queensland.
- To understand the program aims and how to deliver.

Getting to know each other

Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners of Country on which this program is being facilitated.

Facilitator Introduction

- Introduce yourself
- Share with the group where you are from and who your mob is
- Share with the group two things you enjoy (or other questions as an ice breaker)

Participants Introduction

- Ask participants to introduce themselves and share where they are from and who their mob is
- Ask to share with the group two things they enjoy (or other questions as an ice breaker)

Safety and confidentiality

There is a chance that participants might share personal information about themselves or their loved ones. Ensure participants are respectful of each other and are not to share these stories outside of the group. It is important for participants to feel safe and talk about things if they want to.



BREAKTHROUGH OUR WAY OVERVIEW

Breakthrough for Families is an initiative of the Queensland Government Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to tackle alcohol and other drug use in Queensland.

Breakthrough Our Way has been adapted from the mainstream Breakthrough for Families and contextualised particularly for Indigenous people. It offers a suite of practical, easy to use resources developed with Community for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and significant others whose lives are affected by someone's alcohol and/or drug reliance.

The interactive sessions explore how the Breakthrough Our Way resources can support you in everyday work with families and the community.

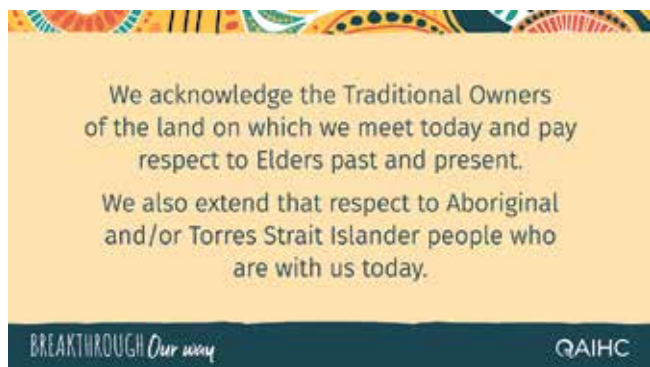
Breakthrough Our Way is a free program that helps people affected by another person's alcohol and/or drug use. Alcohol or drugs issues can have a big impact on families and people's lives.

Families and community members can attend information sessions while families can also access ongoing support.

Breakthrough Our Way sessions consist of 4 units. The units will discuss:

- Understanding Drugs and Alcohol
 - Effects of Drugs and alcohol
- Managing Emotions and Mental Health
 - Using your strength to stay strong and safe
 - Healthy Minds
 - Learning how to help family stay safe and healthy
 - Boundaries
- Making Change
 - Stages of Change
- Support
 - Where to get support
 - Looking after yourself

“Disconnection is the disease, reconnection is the cure.” Aunty Lorraine Peters, Marumali Healing Program.



Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners is important to recognise before the program commencement.

Please enquire before commencing the session if there is a Traditional Owner or Elder in the community who would be prepared to do a welcome/ acknowledgement, or ask an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander participant in the group if they would do this before the commencement of the session (try not to put people on the spot).

Showing appreciation to the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person making the acknowledgement will be appreciated.



House keeping

Just a few reminders and information.

Phones: Please make sure they are off or on silent.

Toilets: You will find these...

Fire: If there is a fire our closest exit is...

Smoking: For the smokers in the room, the smoking area is...

Breaks: We will have a break midway through the session.

Service introductions for BOW

Bridges Health & Community Care

Bridges Health & Community Care is a leading provider of community-based mental health and drug and alcohol services.

Bridges offer a range of interventions from psychological services; care coordination for people with serious mental illness and complex needs; through to counselling for youth, adults, families and carers. They offer training and mental health promotion services to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness, drugs and alcohol and reduce stigma and discrimination.

Bridges are delivering Breakthrough Our Way throughout the Wide Bay-Burnett Region. Bridges also offer a range of services as you can see online at: <https://www.bridgeshcc.org.au/>.

This organisation is delivering the Breakthrough Our Way Program.

Drug ARM

Drug ARM is a not-for-profit organisation committed to reducing the harms of alcohol and other drug use. Drug ARM has specialised care through a range of programs and services that include education, outreach, prevention and treatment.

Drug ARM are delivering Breakthrough Our Way in Mackay, the Darling Downs, West Moreton and the South West areas. Drug ARM also offer a range of services tailored to meet the needs of each client.

This organisation is delivering the mainstream Breakthrough for Families.

Lives Lived Well

Lives Lived Well is a not-for-profit organisation working to help people impacted by drugs or alcohol as well as mental health concerns. They work with people to help get their lives back on track by delivering a wide range of programs and services across Queensland and New South Wales.

Lives Lived Well are delivering Breakthrough For Families in the following regions:

- Townsville
- Cairns
- Sunshine Coast
- Brisbane

Apunipima

Apunipima Cape York Health Council is a membership-based Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation delivering high quality, culturally appropriate and comprehensive primary health care.

Apunipima Cape York Health Council service the Cape York region and have a range of services, Breakthrough Our Way is just one of the many they offer.

Apunipima Cape York Health Council are a QAIHC member site and are delivering services in 11 Cape York Communities.

Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC)

QAIHC delivers training to various sites throughout Queensland to build workforce capacity to deliver Breakthrough Our Way to Community and create linkages with stakeholders to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status state-wide.



Session overview

AIM: to give an overview of the session and time frame.

- **Understanding alcohol and other drugs** such as their effects and looking in particular at crystal methamphetamine (ice).
- Learning how to **manage emotions**, why people use alcohol and other drugs, boundaries for looking after yourself, learning about **mental health conditions** and how to keep safe.
- **Making change:** viewing the stages of change and;
- **Support:** viewing supporting systems and how to heal using the Breakthrough Our Way healing journey.



Things to remember

AIM: To acknowledge the strength within families; we all want the same thing for our families – to be safe, strong and healthy.

- **Confidentiality:** It is important our participants feel safe and talk about things if they want to. What is said in the room stays in the room, unless we have worries about a participant harming themselves or someone else. Then we need to make sure they get the help they need and ensure others are safe.
- **Sharing Stories:** There is a chance that people will share personal information about themselves or their loved ones. *Please try not to have them identify a family member or other people (this may be difficult to do).* Ensure we are respectful of each other and don't share the stories outside of this session.
- **Strong Feelings:** This is a tough yarn and can bring up pretty strong feelings. Remind participants of the importance of maintaining respect.



Strong and healthy families

AIM: To acknowledge the strength within families, that we are all here wanting the same thing – for our family to be safe, strong and healthy.

Content Discussion Points

Have a group discussion:

“Let’s look at ways you can stay **strong** and **healthy**”

Ask your participants:

- “What are you doing to keep your families healthy and strong?”

Strong families support each other emotionally, spiritually and physically. Staying connected to culture, land and community strengthens relationships. Looking after ourselves helps us support our loved ones better.

- “What can a family look like when it’s not strong and healthy?”

Disrespectful, conflict, lack of communication, feeling isolated or unsupported. Constant stress or worry about a loved ones substance use.

- “What can a family look like when it’s strong and healthy?”

Working together to solve problems. Supporting each other without judgement. Connecting through culture, traditional activities and community events.



SESSION 1: UNDERSTANDING ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

AIM: To deliver a basic understanding of alcohol and other drugs. There are four (4) main slides that will help you to have a discussion about the names of drugs and alcohol, their effects, and a brief understanding of the methamphetamines.

OVERVIEW:

- **It can be a tough road when a family member is using drugs and/or alcohol.**
Exploring the way people behave, feel and think when someone is dependent on alcohol and/or drugs.
- **What do you call drugs and alcohol?**
Giving workers an opportunity to have an interactive discussion about the names, codes and language of alcohol and drugs within the community.
- **Types of drugs and their effects.**
Understanding the effects of particular types of drugs and alcohol.
- **Looking at Meth/Ice a little closer.**
Basic information on methamphetamine in particular crystal methamphetamine/ice.



It can be a tough road when a family member is using drugs and alcohol

AIM: To get participants to understand that every family and each individual's response to a loved one using alcohol and other drugs can be very different.

Content Discussion Points

It can be a tough road when a family member is using drugs and alcohol. It's important that health professionals and family members are aware of the way they talk to, and about the individual using substances.

People and families with substance use issues often have experiences that make them feel bad. Without thinking, language can be used that makes things worse, and sometimes words and actions are stigmatising and discriminatory (for example, words like junkie, drug user, addict, misuse and clean/dirty).

Have a group discussion:

"Let's look at how it can affect a person's **behaviour, thoughts and feelings.**"

Ask your participants:

- "What types of behaviours could families be seeing when their loved one is using alcohol and other drugs?"
- "What types of thoughts could families have when a loved one is using alcohol and other drugs?"
- "What types of feelings are experienced by families when loved ones are using alcohol and other drugs?"



Types of drugs and their effects

AIM: To provide an understanding of the different types of effects that drugs and alcohol can have on a person.

Drugs (including alcohol) are substances when taken or administered into the body has a physiological effect. Different drugs have different effects on people. Drugs may be illegal (e.g., cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine and heroin) or legal (e.g., alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and prescribed or over-the-counter medications).

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “Looking at the different drugs and alcohol on the next slide. What category would you put them in?”
 - Depressants
 - Stimulants, and
 - Hallucinogens.



What do you call drugs and alcohol?

AIM: To identify the different terminology used in different communities and regions for drugs and alcohol.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “What are some common names for drugs and alcohol that you have heard?”



Looking at Meth/Ice a little closer

AIM: To raise knowledge and awareness of ice/crystal meth and to provide a visual of what methamphetamine looks like, methods of use and common names used throughout Queensland.

Here is a visual on what the different forms of Methamphetamine look like.

You can see the lower strength is in powder form and has a similar strength to beer.

Middle strength is base and like wine.

Finally, the higher strength is like spirits and is also known as meth, glass and ice.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “Did you know what ICE or crystal meth looked like before today?”
- “What method of consumption is used?”
- “What are some of the street names they go by?”

SPEED	BASE	CRYSTAL METH / ICE
		
Also known as: Powder meth, Goey, Whiz Appearance: White or off-white powder Method used: Snorting, swallowing, injecting Strength: Lower strength—Speed is like light beer	Also known as: Pure, Point, Wax, Meth Appearance: Dampish, waxy. Colour varies from white to brown Method used: Swallowing, injecting Strength: Mid strength—Base Meth is like wine	Also known as: Meth, Shabu, Tina, Glass Appearance: Translucent crystals, sometimes shards Method used: Smoking, injecting, swallowing Strength: Higher strength—Crystal Meth (Ice) is like spirits

Reference: Lee, N (2015). Forcing ice users into rehab won't solve the problem—here's what we need instead. The Conversation.



Effects of ice use

AIM: To explain the short and long term effects of using ice (meth).

Methamphetamine is a stimulant drug with one of the immediate desired effects being an intense feeling of euphoria, which can last for many hours. People who use it look for the quick 'high' and immediate effects which include intense pleasure and clarity.

Some immediate effects of ice use include feelings of alertness, awakesness, motivation and self-confidence. These feelings of pleasure and euphoria lead to continued use which can have negative effects and lead to addiction.

Content Discussion Points

- Discuss the short-term effects (green list) versus the long-term effects (red list) of ice use



Cycle of ice use

AIM: To explain the phases in the cycle of ice use: the rush, high and comedown or crash.

The 'Comedown' phase

The initial effects of ice often last between four to 24 hours depending on how much ice is consumed and how it is taken. It can take one to three days to entirely leave the body. A 'comedown' phase or 'crash' is often experienced by people who use ice, as the drug starts to wear off.

These feelings can last a few days with symptoms including:

- not being able to sleep and feeling exhausted,
- decreased appetite,
- headaches, dizziness and blurred vision,
- irritability and feeling down,
- paranoia, hallucinations and confusion.

Dependence and withdrawal

It is easy to become dependent on or addicted to ice if it's used regularly or often. People using ice feel they need it to go about their normal activities like working, studying and socialising, or just to get through the day. Withdrawal refers to the unpleasant symptoms experienced by people with a dependence on ice. These symptoms can last for several days to months, depending on the severity of use.



SESSION 2: MANAGING EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

People tend to do drugs for all sorts of reasons. For some it is ways of managing emotional and mental health and this can affect loved ones, family members and community.

The following slides will look at why people use drugs, mental health impacts, managing aggressive and agitated behaviours, boundaries and safety.

AIM:

- To understand why people use substances and the effect of substance use on family and community.
- To understand the coexistence of mental health challenges with drug use and the basics of psychosis.
- To understand the effects of ice on emotional and mental health and how to respond to challenging behaviours.
- To assist families with strategies and safety plans to support the person affected by alcohol or drugs.



When drugs and alcohol affect our family

AIM: To have participants thinking about reliance on drug and/or alcohol and how it affects relationships with their family and community.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- "Have you experienced or witnessed someone who is relying on drugs?"
- "What were the signs?"
- "How has it affected the person's family and community?"



Ask yourself, why?

AIM: To create a shift in participants' thinking, to help them understand there are many reasons people might be using drugs/alcohol.

Content Discussion Points

Provide an opportunity for the participants to share their thoughts about why our mob use alcohol and other drugs.

Ask your participants:

- "Have you ever wondered why our mob use drugs and alcohol?"



There are many reasons why people use drugs

AIM: To provide participants with some reasons why their loved one might be using drugs and/or alcohol and that there could also be a combination of reasons for using.

Content Discussion Points

People use drugs for a variety of reasons. Some of these include:

- as medication,
- to have fun, celebrate, relax and/or experience a 'high',
- to fit in with friends, gain confidence and socialise,
- out of curiosity,
- to relieve boredom and stress, and
- as self-medication to forget and cope with problems.

Ask your participants:

- "Can you think of any other reason why someone may be using drugs and alcohol?"



Whatever the drug

AIM: To conclude and summarise 'Why people use drugs and alcohol.'



Remember, the way we see things can be different

AIM: To remind participants of the different perspectives we may have.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “Can you think of other things we may see differently to our loved one?”



Drug use and Mental health

AIM: Participants to gain an understanding of the coexistence of mental health challenges and drug use.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “What is mental health?”
Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act, influencing our ability to manage stress, build relationships and make decisions.
- “What is good mental health?”
Good mental health is more than just the absence of mental health problems. It is a state of wellbeing where individuals can cope effectively with daily stresses. Utilise their abilities and talents. Work productively. Socialise.
- “What is poor mental health?”
Poor mental health is when our thoughts are not as healthy and we aren’t feeling good feelings inside.



Psychosis

AIM: Participants to gain a basic understanding of Psychosis.

Use of certain substances can induce psychotic episodes during intoxication, withdrawal or due to prolonged use (substance-induced psychosis).

Treatment may include detoxification, antipsychotic medications, counselling and support groups for both their substance use and mental health.

Many people stop experiencing psychotic symptoms once the drugs wears off. However, for others, the symptoms may last for days, weeks or longer. It’s important to talk to a health professional you trust if this is happening or has happened.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “What is psychosis?”
- “What can it look like?”
- “Ask participants if they have experienced anyone with psychosis?”

Explain they are all mental health conditions.

Ask how they cope with someone with mental ill-health.

Remind participants you are not an expert but you are willing to help and find out how you can help and assist if they need any information.



Managing aggressive or agitated behaviour

AIM: To provide ideas to participants on ways to identify the signs someone is becoming agitated/aggressive.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “Have you experienced other signs of aggressive or agitated behaviour?”
- “How have you managed aggressive or agitated behaviour?”



How to respond (over 2 pages/slides)

AIM: To provide advice on how to respond when confronted with aggressive and agitated behaviour.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “What are some things that you have done to respond to agitated behaviours?”
- “Is there anything we missed you would like to share?”



Ways you can help your family member stay safe and healthy

AIM: What families can do. To understand and recognise ways of keeping our families safe when using or before using drugs and alcohol.

It's important to help participants to understand the impact of tone and body language. A simple example of this may be greeting someone with a friendly tone and happy face, opposed to greeting someone with arms folded, frowning and an angry tone.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- **Yarning right way/good ways:** have participants look at the segment and have them identify ways of good yarning: listening, showing respect, body language and tone of voice.
- **Food and water:** ask why is this important when keeping our mob safe when either under the influence of alcohol and drugs or before drug use.
- **Sleep:** why is it important.
- **Set a good example:** encouraging family members to be a role model and leader.
- **Safe place:** why is this important?



Boundaries

AIM: To have participants understand the importance of having boundaries/expectations when it comes to safety.

Content Discussion Points

Draw two (2) columns and title them as shown below:

- Flexible boundaries (first column)
- Inflexible boundaries (second column)

Ask your participants to suggest and discuss both types of boundaries.

- **Flexible boundaries** are kind of negotiable.
 - Have participants suggest some flexible boundaries and write them in the first column
 - Do they have any in place? Are they working?

Then go to the next column.

- **Inflexible boundaries** or **solid boundaries** are not negotiable.
 - Have participants suggest some solid boundaries.

Have participants review their suggestions and ask if they learnt anything new from each other about this session.



Responding to critical incidents

AIM: To give advice on how to respond to critical incidents safely.

When responding to someone becoming aggressive or agitated, make sure you:

- To keep a safe distance.
- Avoid arguments.
- Avoid stirring or teasing.
- Avoid physical contact.
- Minimise direct eye contact.
- Avoid quick movements or moving suddenly towards the person.
- Try not to take their behaviour personally.

You can respond by:

- Listening to the person.
- Speak in a low, controlled voice.
- Being reassuring and supportive (now isn't the time to disagree or argue).
- Explain to the person what is happening, what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Get help as soon as you can. Make sure you look after other people around you. Check in with yourself – how are you feeling and coping?

Content Discussion Point

Ask your participants:

- “How do you respond when someone is agitated or being aggressive?”

Making a safety plan will help you and your family to respond to a crisis or get to safety quicker.



In summary

In summary, with boundaries – ensure your safety and be clear on what YOU need as a family.

Learning outcomes

To build families' knowledge on critical situations like emergency medical and safety plans.

Content Discussion Points

In a group, facilitate the following discussion:

- “Do you have a safety plan?”
- “What does this look like?”

A safety plan will help you to respond to a crisis and get to safety quickly:

- *List of important phone numbers*
- *Identify a safe place where you can make a call without being overheard*
- *Identify a safe location where you and your family member can go if needed*
- *Ensure your phone is always charged and nearby*



SESSION 3: MAKING CHANGE

Throughout the Making Change program we will look at the stages of change and go through each section.

AIM:

- To understand the Stages of Change model and how family members can support the individual through each stage.
- To understand that change is not always straight forward and will differ from person to person.



Stages of change

AIM: To give families an understanding of what their family member is going through and some ideas about what THEY can do in each segment of these stages.

The Stages of Change Our Way model is widely used in Alcohol and Other Drug treatment services as a tool for guiding the way in supporting a person impacted by substance use.

The model suggests people impacted by substance use are in different stages:

- **Not worried** (pre-contemplation) — The person is not ready for change and isn't concerned about their substance use.
- **Thinking** (contemplation) — The person is starting to notice problems. The positives of their substance use still outweigh the negatives.
- **Decision Point** — The person is deciding to make change.
- **Getting Ready** (preparation) — The person has decided that they want to make change soon and have started preparing themselves. The negatives of their substance use now outweigh the positives.
- **Trying** (action) — The person has made changes and is working hard to keep on track.
- **Sticking to it** (maintenance) — The person has been able to maintain the changes for a long period of time but may still need to work to prevent lapse or relapse.
- **Lapse/Relapse** — The person may return to old ways of behaviour and thinking. This might be short-term (lapse) or long-term (relapse).

At every stage, the person and their families are **learning** about substance use and how to make good choices about healthier living.

Change is not always straight forward but as health professional and family member you can always support the individual at each stage.



Not worried

AIM: To look at ways to support a person during the 'Not Worried' stage.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- "What strategy can you put in place to:"
 - Build on their relationship?
 - Avoid arguing?
 - Learn about the drug?
 - Look at ways to keep them safe?



Thinking

AIM: To look at ways to support a person at the 'Thinking' stage. Remind participants the person is in-between staying the same or changing, how they can be supportive and accepting of their decision.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- "What conversations could you have when you identify a person is at this stage?"



Getting ready

AIM: To look at ways to support a person at the 'Getting Ready' stage.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- "What conversations could you have when you identify a person is at this stage?"
- "What can you do to support the person?"



Trying

AIM: To look at ways to support at the 'Trying' stage. The person has decided that they want to make change, one step at a time.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- "What conversations could you have when you identify a person is at this stage?"



Sticking to it

AIM: To look at ways of supporting the person sticking to their decision, make change and staying on track.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “What conversations could you have when you identify a person is at this stage?”

Identify what kind of positive changes the person has made like:

- Going on country
- Cultural practices
- Good food
- Exercise
- Hobbies
- What can you do?

Reinforce to the participants the importance of acknowledging the person's journey so far and continuing to praise and support the person through their journey.



Lapse or relapse

AIM: Understand lapse and relapse is part of their healing journey.

Change can be difficult and might include lapse or relapse and return to old behaviour. This is normal as people rarely change on their first attempt.

This provides a chance to understand triggers and learn ways to avoid future lapse and relapses.

This can happen at any time. You can help by planning for it and reminding them that lapse and relapse is a learning experience.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “How can you support a person who may be at this stage?”



Remember, change is not always straight forward

AIM: To give participants a visual understanding that change is not a straightforward process and it can take time.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “Would anyone like to share a story about putting someone on a journey to healing or change.”
- “Is it a windy road/track or up and down hill journey?”
- “What does the journey look like for them?”



SESSION 4: SUPPORT

AIM:

- To understand there is hope and how to support family members and loved ones using substances.
- To be aware of the different types of AOD treatment and support services available.
- To understand why it is important to look after yourself while supporting someone using substances.

This session will cover the following topics:

- The good news — there is hope
- Alcohol and drug treatment
- Social emotional wellbeing
- Supporting our young ones
- Looking after yourself.



The good news — there is hope

AIM: To remind participants that there IS hope. People do cut back, quit and heal. There is help available and a number of treatment options that work.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- "What support is available in the community?"
- "Do you know anyone who has engaged in treatment supports?"



Treatment and support

AIM: We will look at services that are out there you can access to help you.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “How do you get help for alcohol and other drugs treatment?”
- “Have you had any help from any AOD services?” or
- “Have you supported someone to access alcohol and drugs treatment?”
- Encourage participants to share a story.

Explain to participants:

It is important to remember that treatment and support services will only engage or admit an individual if he/she wants to get help for their drug use.

- Each person’s journey is unique and the steps towards treatment can take time.
- Not everyone needs rehab, different things work for different people.
- Which alcohol and drug treatments are available.

Content Discussion Point

Ask your participants:

- “What kind of alcohol and drug services are there in their community?
(counselling, detox and withdrawal services, rehab services and community/support groups).

It is important to remind families of the strength they already have, and where they can go for further support, for the families to turn their attention on the needs, coping skills, and resilience of the family unit can support clients to maintain the positive benefits of treatment and increase the chance of achieving successful AOD treatment outcomes.



Treatment journey

AIM: To identify where the family member can access support and help them recognise what types of support there are in their community, town or city.

It’s important that the person has support while they are waiting to get into treatment as it can be hard to stay motivated. Some services have pre-admission or pre-treatment programs to work with clients while they wait to receive treatment, however you can also provide support while they wait. Everyone’s treatment journey will look different, they just need to be ready for change.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “How do you look to support your social and emotional wellbeing?”



Looking after yourself

AIM: This image can assist in reminding us to keep connected to the things that make us whole and can also be helpful when supporting our loved one on their recovery journey, teaching and connecting them to the steps.

Content Discussion Points

In a group, facilitate a discussion about looking after yourself following the reconnect circle.

Looking after yourself:

It's very important to look after yourself and family members when someone is on methamphetamines or any other drugs or alcohol.

- Make sure all family members are safe. If someone feels scared and there are children around, you will need to talk to them about what is happening.
- Connect with people who support you like family, Elders, friends and health staff.
- Keeping doing things that you enjoy doing like seeing friends and family, recreation like fishing, camping and swimming, eat healthy and exercise.
- Maintain hope for your loved one, get support and stay positive.



Reconnecting

AIM: To explore ways we can reconnect or stay connected to the things that keep us strong.

Family Ties and Kinship

Spend time with family who love and care about you, who build you up and help you feel good about yourself, e.g.:

- Family wellbeing
- Sharing meals/food
- Preparing meals and doing activities together
- Celebrating each other
- Respecting each other
- Have fun with family
- Reminisce on treasured memories.

Community

Get involved with the local men's/women's group – find somewhere you feel a sense of 'belonging' somewhere that will help you be the person YOU want to be, e.g.:

- Get involved in community
- Help someone
- Find common ground
- Participate in community activities
- Have new conversations
- Support each other
- Hold events together (e.g. Christmas, birthdays).

Country

Getting out on country can be incredibly healing and nurturing—whether it's the beach, the bush, rainforest or your own back yard. Spending time connecting to the land on which you are living can be so very healing and 'grounding', e.g.:

- Caring for our environment
- Listening
- Respecting law/lore
- Connecting
- Being
- Being positive
- Respecting and listening to Elders
- Exploring
- Connecting to past traditional cultural ways
- Using cultural resources/tools
- Catch up with family
- Camping
- Painting
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Singing
- Dancing
- Story telling.

Spiritual Healing

Are you able to access traditional healing? Can you ask someone to help with this? If religion is important to you, make sure you are making the time to keep connected to this. Is there support for you at your local health centre? Do they offer healing opportunities? Or if you have a significant cultural site that provides you with spiritual healing visit your cultural site even if it's sitting by the fire or river.

- Keeping mind, body and own spirit healthy with positive things, without grog or drugs
- Turn negatives into positives – what can you take away from this?
- Being on Country
- Singing
- Story telling

- Feel each others emotions
- Painting
- Find common ground as human beings
- Dancing
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Connection to past traditional cultural ways
- Respecting and listening to others
- Take experiences as lessons
- Learn lessons and apply to life
- Share your growth with others.

Culture

Think of ways you can strengthen your relationship with culture – family, friends, Elders. Where and who are the cultural services here that can support you in reconnecting with culture? **We won't/might not have the answers for this for you but can absolutely support you in finding out where to go.**

- Hunting and gathering
- Kinship
- Learning about our culture
- Listening
- Dreaming
- Respecting our Elders
- Home land
- Language
- Sharing/caring
- Connecting – people, story telling, teaching, dance, lore
- Returning to our land
- Costume
- Managing/care-taking
- Sacred sites/artefacts.

Wellbeing

Reconnecting to ourselves is achieved through slowing down, listening, learning, exploring, playing, wondering, and being interested in and being inquisitive about what's going on inside. Reconnecting doesn't have to be a grand gesture,

it can be small. Here are various small steps and activities to take and try:

- Ask yourself daily, How am I doing?
- Try not to judge your emotions (and yourself for feeling them):
 - I shouldn't be sad!
 - I'm terrible for feeling jealous!
 - I'm so weak for feeling anxious.
 - I'm awful for getting angry.
- Sit in silence, without scrolling on your phone, without listening to music, without doing anything other than listening to your heart beat.
- Practice a guided meditation.
- Take a walk, with or without your headphones.
- Listen to the sounds of nature, which can help you listen to yourself.
- Create art: write short stories or books; paint something; pen a poem about yourself, about the sunset, about a difficult (or exciting) emotion; make a collage of random images that resonate with you; snap photos of your favorite objects.
- Dance: to slow music, to an upbeat tempo, in a class, by yourself, with someone.
- Ask yourself sometimes: what am I loving/liking/ enjoying right now?
- Ask yourself: what's on my mind? What's on my heart? Maybe jot it down in a journal.
- Spend time in natural surroundings: the beach, the park, a botanical garden, the forest, a lake, Country.
- Ask yourself: how can I care for myself? How can I care for myself mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually? Today? This week? This month?
- Find a piece, a chunk of beauty in something: in your own eyes, in your child's eyes, in yesterday's sky, in the errand you ran, in a book you're reading, the sport you might be playing.
- Create a small space at home that includes all your favorite things—books, essential oils, a journal, candles, family photos, calming images, your kids' artwork—and spend some time there as needed.



Supporting our young people

AIM: We are now going to look at supporting our young people in our household and acknowledge the rights of children and young people.

Content Discussion Points

Ask your participants:

- “How do we support our young people?”

Have the participants discuss the following points:

- Children have the right to feel safe and protected.
 - What does that look like for our kids? How can our children feel safe and protected?
- Children are unsafe when they are exposed to alcohol and drug use.
 - What can they be exposed to?
- How do we look out for our young people and keep them safe?
- What can we do to keep them safe?



Need to talk to someone?

AIM: Provide local service information for families.



Where to go for more help

Read through the slide

- Family Drug Support
- Life line
- Kids Help Line
- MensLine Australia
- Family Drug Support
- Life line
- Kids Help Line
- MensLine Australia



Closing

Thank you everyone for coming along and sharing your stories.

Please take a moment to fill in the feedback form and hand it to the session facilitator.

And remember, If you would like to speak with us, we will be here for a few more minutes and are happy to yarn.



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