

# PARENTING?

## STAY SAFE FROM ALCOHOL AND DRUGS



### Start where you are

Parenting is the start of a long journey... and it is hard work! Anything you do to take care of yourself and stay healthy, that is a way you are also caring for your child.

1

Remember, you are not alone. Take one day at a time. It is never too late to get started on your recovery.

2

Make your recovery a priority.

3

Self-care is child care.

### Ask for help

Feeling overwhelmed is normal. Build a support team around you, other adults who you trust and can support you, your child, and your recovery. Your support team may include:

- ♥ **Friends**
- ♥ **Family**
- ♥ **Your health care provider**
- ♥ **A home visitor**

*A nurse or social worker can meet you in your home or virtually to help you take care of yourself and your child through the first few years of their life. This is a free and voluntary program.*

*Learn more by visiting*

*<https://dethrives.com/home-visiting/help-at-home>*

- ♥ **Early intervention services**

*A free program that supports your child's development either with in-home services or childcare centers services. Learn more by visiting <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dph/chca/dpheardlychildpublic/>*

- ♥ **A peer support specialist**

*Learn more by visiting <https://www.helpisherede.com/>*



**HELP**  
*is here.*  
PREVENT • TREAT • RECOVER



# Staying S.A.F.E.<sup>1</sup>

Parenting is a hard job, one that requires careful attention, especially if you are trying to keep an infant or young children safe. Keeping a child safe means paying attention to the environments that they live, play and sleep in. Drug or alcohol use may make it harder for a parent to attend to their child. If you feel you cannot keep your child safe, ask for help from another trusted adult.

**S**

**Safe sleep:** Under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, a parent may not be able to make the safest choices. For example, a parent may fall asleep and sleep heavier than usual, and if they are cosleeping with infants and young children, this can put the child at risk for suffocation. Put your baby to bed in a smoke free environment. Learn more by visiting <https://dethrives.com/safe-sleep/overview>



**Safe sleep means:** put your child on their back to sleep, on a firm surface, away from any soft bedding or toys. Share a room, but not a bed.



Breastfeeding reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), which often happens when babies sleep.

**A**

**Attention:** Never leave your child unattended, especially on a changing table, floor or in the car.

**F**

**Feeding:** For the first 6 months of life, breastmilk and/or formula is all your child needs.

**E**

**Environment:** A consistent schedule and calm environment help children feel safe and secure.

1. *The First Year: The Journey Project.* <https://journeyrecoveryproject.com/the-first-year/>.



## Prescriptions

Young children are naturally curious and can get into any drugs or prescribed medicines that are not safely stored. They may unintentionally swallow or eat something that is not meant for them. Always keep prescriptions and any drugs or medicines out of the reach of children, in a keyed locked medicine cabinet is best. Dispose of old prescriptions medicines safely. For more information on safe drug storage and disposal, go to [helpisherede.com](https://helpisherede.com).



## Tobacco

Smoking and vaping by parents and caregivers who are around infants and young children can affect the children's health. Of the 7,000 chemicals in tobacco smoke at least 250 are known to be harmful and 69 cause cancer<sup>1</sup>.

Exposure to secondhand and thirdhand smoke puts young children at risk for learning problems, ear infections, asthma, or more serious breathing problems when they get a cold or virus<sup>2</sup>.

There is NO safe amount of secondhand smoke (breathing smoke in the air from someone smoking nearby, especially in an enclosed place like the home or car) and thirdhand smoke (a baby inhales the toxins from the clothing, hair, and skin of someone who smokes.)

1. [www.cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov)

2. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/secondhand-smoke/health.html>



## Vaping

E-cigarettes and vaping are not safe for youth, young adults, pregnant women or adults who do not currently use tobacco products<sup>3</sup>.

They are marketed to be “less harmful”, but in reality, they are “not harmless.” Recent research performed by John Hopkins University found there were nearly 2,000 chemicals in many popular vaping products.

Just like secondhand smoke, if you breathe in secondhand vapor/aerosol you're exposed to nicotine, and all the other harmful chemicals. Please keep vaping liquids (i.e., E-liquids/E-Juice) away from children and pets because it is highly poisonous when swallowed or absorbed through the skin.

3. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/about.html>



## There are many ways to parent<sup>3</sup>

You are good enough to be a parent. You do not need to have a different past. There is nothing you need to make up for.

Be here now, as you can, with your child. Provide safety, love, structure and boundaries. Your child needs you, showing up day after day, for them.

3. *Women with Older Children: The Journey Project.*  
<https://journeyrecoveryproject.com/women-with-older-children/>.

## Resources

### for mental health and addiction

Mental illness and addiction can affect anyone. No one has to struggle alone. Choose the best way to get the care you need, right here in Delaware. All of the below services are free through [helpisherede.com](https://helpisherede.com), and any referrals are available to you, whether you have insurance or not.



### Facts about Fentanyl

Fentanyl is a synthetic drug making its way into all kinds of other drugs. Fentanyl is showing up in cocaine, heroin, marijuana, PCP, and other street drugs — causing overdoses and deaths. If you use drugs, you may be at risk for taking fentanyl without even knowing it. Learn more by visiting <https://www.helpisherede.com/Prevention/Facts-About-Fentanyl>



### Safe Drug Storage & Disposal

Keep prescription drugs locked up to prevent them from falling into the hands of others. Dispose of unwanted and unused prescriptions in one of Delaware's prescription drug drop boxes. Find a drop box location by visiting [https://ddph-materials.s3.amazonaws.com/HelpsHere/Harm\\_Reduction\\_RX\\_Factsheet.pdf](https://ddph-materials.s3.amazonaws.com/HelpsHere/Harm_Reduction_RX_Factsheet.pdf)



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