**Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs** (Scottish Families) is a national charity to support anyone who is impacted by or concerned about someone else’s substance use. You don’t have to be related to the person you are concerned about we are here to support, friends, neighbours, work colleagues. Family is more than blood relations.

**What do we offer family members?**

We offer support via our **confidential Helpline** which is free from mobiles and landlines and is open daily. We provide listening and emotional support to all our callers and can point them in the direction of the most appropriate support for their family’s circumstances near to where they stay. This support ranges from family support services, treatment providers, recovery groups, community groups, kinship care and carers support and bereavement support. Feedback from our Helpline is very positive and taking time out to speak with our Helpline advisors can make a difference.

Don’t just take our word for it “*Never have I spoken to a service before where they actually listen to me, not constantly asking about my sister. I know I contacted you for help for my sister but nobody has ever asked me how I am. To be honest it made me cry when you asked but happy tears as I truly felt that you care about me as a person, as a sister that is struggling to save my sister for that I am truly grateful. I look forward to contacting the services you suggested and believe this will be a new beginning.*”

We regularly speak to family members who say they put all their energy in to keeping their loved one safe that they don’t take time for themselves. It is very important to look after yourself and this is why accessing family support services are so valuable in accessing a wider support network and learning new coping responses to manage the wellbeing of your family. Meeting other people in the same situation as you can be rewarding for all involved.

There is a network of **family support groups** across Scotland. These groups are often led by family members and some by external facilitators. They are not all the same and it is important to try all the available support groups to find the best fit for you.

Hear from a family member who has attended a family support group “*I never thought anybody could help me as my son was not interested in stopping using drugs. Since coming to the group I have made new friends and feel as if I have my life back. I have learned how to talk to my son and this has helped him move into treatment. A year on and life is looking up. I can’t that the group enough for supporting me and letting me know I am not in this alone*”.

If there are no groups near where you live or you don’t want to go to the local group or have difficulty getting there we have a **Telehealth** service that you can access.

What is Telehealth? It really means that you are getting weekly support sessions from Scottish Families family support practitioners but rather than meet then in person you talk to them either on the phone, via face to face chat similar to Skype or via webchat. This allows you time to talk through your week and learn new coping responses. The service is free and sessions will be arranged at a time that is convenient for you. Our practitioners use an intervention called CRAFT (Community Reinforcement And Family Training) which can help you to:

 Communicate positively with your loved one

 Reduce your feelings of stress

 Improve your feelings of self-worth

 Encourage your loved one to enter treatment

From a family member who has received Telehealth support “*Having someone that I could talk to, and who also knew what to say and to keep things positive and real, even if the reality is harsh was the best bit of my experience with Telehealth. You understand the difficulties faced by family and are genuine and clear in all that you say. So, finally, thank you for providing this great service. For me it gave me confidence that i have done the best thing for me. The CRAFT approach is well structured and the 'pic n mix' style makes it very flexible*”.

There has been a significant increase in the last few years of drug related deaths and in order to support families through these difficult times we have a dedicated **Bereavement Support Service**. This is for anybody who has lost a loved one where drugs were implicated in their death. Drugs do not need to be the cause of their death however if they have been a drug user and have died then we can offer this support. Scottish Families will pay for counselling for any family member over the age of 16. This counselling is delivered by a fully qualified counsellor in your local area. You can access this support at any time since the death of your loved one.

One of our counsellors highlighted “*To lose a loved one in any circumstances can be absolutely devastating.   However, to lose a loved one in circumstances which involve drugs or alcohol can be especially difficult as there are often additional challenges to face.  The stigma, prejudice and misunderstanding that regularly surround addiction can make the task of grieving so much more difficult.    Being able to access help and support is so important and will, without doubt be a lifeline for many people*”. This free service is life changing for family members “*I had tried for so long to come to terms with the loss of my husband.  He was clean and sober and doing really well.  It was such a shock to the whole family when he was found dead and my world fell apart.  I was apprehensive of getting counselling as I didn’t like to talk about it but I knew something had to change.  From the first call to Scottish Families everything seemed so easy and within a week I had my first counselling appointment booked.  Since then I’ve never looked back.  It’s been 13 months since I had my counselling and my life is back on track*”.

If you feel that you would like to talk about your situation please get in touch and we can discuss your support options.

**Helpline advisors are available Mon-Fri 0900-2300, Sat/Sun 1700-2300.**

**Leave a message on the answer machine if no reply and you will receive a callback.**

**Free phone Helpline from Landlines & Mobiles – 08080 101011**

**Email –** **helpline@sfad.org.uk**

**Webchat available online –** [**www.sfad.org.uk**](http://www.sfad.org.uk)

**What do we offer organisations, services and recovery communities?**

We can offer workforce development training bespoke to what you are looking to cover. Scott Clements manages our training requests and he can be contacted via training@sfad.org.uk.

Our online service directory is our hub of information our helpline advisors use to signpost family members towards local services. This service directory gives each organisation, service or recovery community a mini web page and you can control what information you would like to be included. Check it out here - <http://www.sfad.org.uk/get-help-now/local-services-directory>

Please contact our Development Officer Suzie Gallagher via Suzanne@sfad.org.uk and keep her updated with what your service offers and she will make sure you are updated to the directory. It’s a great way for smaller community groups to have an online presence.

**Whats coming next?**

We are developing a new website and will soon have an online community that you can take part in. There will be family member blogs (contact Suzie if you would like to write one), chat rooms and message boards where you can access support from other family members. Keep an eye on [www.sfad.org.uk](http://www.sfad.org.uk) for our new look!