

What if I've tried every option?

OTHER TITLES

Create It

Teaching your children to talk about their feelings

How can I help my young child learn to get along with others?

If you're a parent, you're a role model: How to teach your children by example

Nurture It

How can I teach my young child to deal with peer pressure?

Teaching your children the truth about drugs and gambling

How can I help my young child to be more confident?

How to listen actively to your children

Choose It

How can I help my child if my partner is addicted?

Helping your teen work through anger

The truth about popular drugs

How do I know if my teen is using drugs?

How do I talk to my teenager about drugs?

Raves and club drugs: How do I protect my kids?

Get it Back

Helping teens evaluate their drug use

How bad is my teen's drinking or drug use?

Does your teen's drug use leave you feeling like you're losing your sanity?

How to get through to your teen

Intervening when your teen is using drugs

Getting help for your son or daughter who is drinking, using other drugs or gambling

Supporting your son or daughter in recovery

What if I've tried every option?

YOUR CHILD IS STRUGGLING with an alcohol or drug addiction. You've tried everything you can think of to help your child: talking with people in your community, seeking help from the school counsellor, and exploring virtually every treatment option that may be available for your child. However, your child refuses to participate. You feel frustrated, overwhelmed and powerless. You wonder what options you have. What do you do? Where can you turn? You have already considered so many alternatives and you wonder how you might consider one more. Information often aids decision-making, and AADAC would like to tell you about the options offered by AADAC and other organizations.

You already know how important it is to carefully consider the alternatives. You've tried many times to determine what's best for your child and your family. Another option available to your child and family July 1, 2006 is AADAC's program in support of the Protection of Children Abusing Drugs (PChAD) Act, called the PChAD program.

What is PChAD?

The Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act (PChAD) is an Alberta law to help children under 18 years of age whose use of alcohol or other drugs may severely endanger themselves or others. More specifically, it is meant to help a child whose drug abuse may cause significant psychological or social harm to the child, or physical harm to the child or to others. The PChAD Act allows you, as a parent or legal guardian, to ask the court for an apprehension and confinement order. When supported, this order will result in your child being taken to a protective safe house for up to five days to be admitted into AADAC's PChAD program, even if he or she does not want to go.

This confinement period will provide your child with a secure, structured and protective setting in which to begin detoxification (that is, safe withdrawal

from alcohol or other drugs), while offering you an opportunity to get involved and help in the process. The time spent in the protective safe house also allows addiction counsellors to work with you and your child to assess your child's needs and to work with your family. Ultimately, the goal is that, together, you will develop a plan that outlines steps that you and your child can take to begin your child's recovery from drug abuse.

How do I know if PChAD is the right program for my child?

AADAC offers a number of voluntary programs to assist children and their families with issues related to alcohol and other drugs. These programs vary in intensity, and were created to help with problems of varying severity. The PChAD Act defines a specific program to help children who may be in danger of harming themselves or others.

If you aren't sure if PChAD is the answer, call your local AADAC office or the AADAC Help Line at 1-866-332-2322. An AADAC counsellor will explain the options available and provide the information you need to make the best decision for you and your child.

How do I get my child into the PChAD program?

Only parents/guardians can initiate access to the PChAD program. You must file an application with the Provincial Court of Alberta, Family and Youth Court. To learn how, call the Provincial Court of Alberta located in your area or contact a lawyer experienced in family law. If you decide to make the application on your own, court clerks will be available to help with the application. Please refer to the *Guide for Applicants Seeking Orders Under the Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act*, available at the court house, for important information about the application process.

Your child is not required to be present when you make the application to the court.

You must notify AADAC and other legal guardians of the application to the court as explained in the *Guide for Applicants Seeking Orders Under the Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act*.

If the court supports the application, your child will be admitted to the PChAD program. If the court rejects the application, your child cannot be placed in the program. If the application is supported by the court, you must call AADAC at the number indicated in the *Guide for Applicants Seeking Orders Under the Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act* so that AADAC can inform you of the location of the protective safe house where you will take your child.

You may request assistance with transportation of your child to a protective safe house at the time of application. One example of when you may request this option is when your child's whereabouts are not known. Police apprehension and transportation requests must be made at the time of the initial PChAD application to the court. Once your application is supported, the court order will allow police to search for your child and enter a building if they believe your child is there. If the police transport your child, it is their responsibility to contact AADAC to learn the location of the protective safe house where your child should be taken.

What is a protective safe house?

A protective safe house is a residential facility that is safe and secure, offering round-the-clock supervision in a drug-free environment, which supports the child's detoxification and assessment under the PChAD program. Protective safe house providers are agencies that specialize in such services for children and meet the standards set by Alberta Children's Services.

Where are the protective safe houses located?

There are five protective safe houses in Alberta. There are three to six clients at each facility at a time. While AADAC will make every attempt to place your child in the protective safe house closest to your home, placement location will depend upon bed availability.

What will happen to my child once they arrive at the protective safe house?

Under the PChAD legislation, your child can be confined to a protective safe house for a maximum of five days. During this time, your child will be helped through detoxification in a safe, supportive and secure environment. For some children, detoxification will involve an acute physical withdrawal process from the effects of substance abuse. At the same time, AADAC would like to help you and your family identify ways to work together to manage the many aspects of this complex problem. Whether you are in the same location as the child or in another community, AADAC would like to help.

AADAC's addiction counsellors and staff working at the PChAD protective safe house will help you and your child to talk about their dependence and to explore ways that you can work together to manage it. They will also be monitoring the detoxification process to ensure that your child is safe.

Over the course of the confinement period, AADAC addiction counsellors will assess your child to learn more about their use of alcohol or other drugs. This includes a review of substance abuse history and the impact of use on the child's major life areas, such as school, family, friends and health. The information gathered will then be used to make treatment recommendations for your child once the child is discharged from the protective safe house.

Your child can request a review of the court order under the PChAD Act.

Under the PChAD Act, your child has a right to request a review of the order issued by the court. When your child first arrives at the protective safe house, your child will be informed that they may decide at that time, or at any time during the confinement period, to request a review of the court order. The Request for Review form will be provided at the safe house. Your child will also be informed that if the child files a request for review, the court is required

to hear it within one day. Staff at the safe house will also give your child the following information:

- why the child has been confined
- how long the confinement will last
- how to contact Legal Aid or a lawyer

What is my role in the process?

The support of people closest to a child, such as parents, is critical to the success of the child's recovery. Young people look to primary relationships as a foundation on which to build a new, "non-using" life. AADAC encourages you to participate in your child's detoxification and assessment while the child resides in a protective safe house. It's important to remember that addiction affects the whole family and all family members have a very important role to play in a child's progress.

The level of participation can vary and will depend upon the needs of your family. Under the PChAD Act, AADAC can request that you meet with the AADAC counsellor. You may be required to provide AADAC with access to your child's medical records.

AADAC offers services ranging from general information sessions to family counselling. Whichever route you choose, you'll find that getting involved with your child's treatment at an early stage will help lay the groundwork for a more co-operative and constructive recovery process.

It's also very important that parents seek information and help for themselves in learning about their child's situation. Parents also need support and information. They may not understand the damaging social and emotional effects of a drug and may need to be with other parents and those who have gone through the experience. As with all AADAC programs, the PChAD program will incorporate AADAC's approach to engage children and their families with respect, and provide an appropriate level of staff support, access to family counselling, psychological services and medical services, as needed.

Once the detoxification and assessment period is completed, you are responsible for transporting your child home or to one of the voluntary treatment centres, depending on the treatment plan you and your child have chosen.

What can be achieved in five days or less?

The confinement period of up to five days is intended to begin your child's detoxification process, assess their needs and provide them with an opportunity to take an active role towards further treatment. It is not intended to offer a complete and full treatment and recovery process. Giving your child information about substance abuse and how it affects their life can get them to start thinking about the negative effects of addiction. This contemplation can motivate your child to change their behaviour. This is the first step on the journey to recovery.

While a confinement period of up to five days is simply the beginning of a full treatment and recovery process, it is intended to begin your child's detoxification process, assess their needs and give your child an opportunity to take an active role in further treatment. For instance, if the child decides to continue with the voluntary treatment plan, AADAC will transfer them to other programs where the detoxification and assessment can continue on a voluntary basis with little or no interruption in services.

What happens after the confinement period ends?

AADAC and protective safe house providers will make every effort over the confinement period to engage your child and your family in the treatment process. This consultative process will take place even if your child's protective safe house is not in the community in which you and your family live.

As you and your child move on to voluntary treatment, AADAC offers several services to aid in the continuation of your child's treatment and recovery process: for example, voluntary residential program, intensive day program, outpatient counselling, and peer mentoring opportunities. Family counselling is included in many of these programs. Your AADAC counsellor will guide you through the various options.

Family life has a strong influence on a child's well-being. Having at least one caring and supportive adult in their lives can help children rise above difficult circumstances. Parents are incredibly important to a child's recovery process and your participation will make a difference to your child's success.

For more information

AADAC staff understand that everyone's needs are different. Whether you want to prevent your child from using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, or you want to help your child deal with a drug problem, we can help. From information and prevention programs to group and family counselling, outpatient and residential treatment, and even a wilderness program, AADAC and its Funded Services offer a full range of services to help your child and your family.

For more information, contact your local AADAC office, call our 24-hour Help Line at **1-866-33AADAC** or visit our website at **aadac.com**. We are available to give you information and support.



For more information, contact your local AADAC office, call 1-866-33AADAC or visit our website at aadac.com