

NATIONAL FAMILY DRUG SUPPORT DAY 2017



In the addresses at the events held at the Sydney, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia Parliament Houses, Mr Tony Trimmingham (CEO, Family Drug Support) will call for the following major requirements.

1. Policy must focus on measures that reduce drug fatalities - families want policies and programs that keep their children alive. This includes harm reduction strategies such as safe injecting facilities, pill testing and heroin prescription programs.
2. Families want informed and innovative policies and programs that reduce the likelihood of harm for their children. This means substantially increasing the proportion of Australia's \$1.7 billion drug budget for harm reduction (2.2%) and treatment services (22%) from the current allocations.
3. A reliance on criminal sanctions to address drug use only serves to create more problems – drug use is a health issue not a crime issue and families want services that assist their children not punish and criminalise them in a way that creates lifelong penalties. Drug users and their families should always be treated with respect care and compassion.
4. Greater inclusion of family members in the decision making process for families experiencing problematic drug use – For too long families have been left in the cold as they are often seen as part of the problem. Families must be included as equal partners and consulted on all aspects in the development and implementation of drug policies and programs.
5. Family support must be recognized and resourced as a key element in achieving positive outcomes with people experiencing problematic drug and alcohol use, with a much greater emphasis needed to support Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse families – families want services that are there to help them as well as the affected individual.
6. We need to change the language and labels around drug use. Unhelpful comments like – ‘clean’, ‘enabling’, ‘rock bottom’ and negative labels – ‘junkie’, ‘addict’ etc only increase shame and stigma and do nothing to help families.

For more information about National Family Drug Support Day visit www.nationalfdsday.fds.org.au

For requests for interview and further information:

Holly Clark
Media Liaison for FDS
0452 069 936

About the Family Drug Support Service

- Established by Tony Trimmingham in 1997, Family Drug Support volunteers take around 38,000 calls to their support line every year.
- The Service provides 24/7 family support (Phone: 1300 368186).
- Support groups in capital cities and a growing number of regional centres – see the website for details
- FDS also offers the Stepping Stones course for families/friends supporting someone with drug and/or alcohol problems – see the website for course details
- For more information, visit the Family Drug Support website: www.fds.org.au