To keep yourself and others safe, we encourage you to practice bystander intervention. This involves developing the awareness, skills, and courage to step into a situation when someone needs help. This could mean stopping a friend from drinking too much or misusing substances.

**HOW TO HELP A FRIEND:**

- Be a friend... share that you’re concerned with their substance use.
- Use a distraction... sometimes the best way to intervene is by distraction. Ask them to leave the party to go get a snack and hangout.
- Ask for help... if you’re not comfortable saying something, ask someone to go with you.
- Encourage responsible behavior... take keys early so friends don’t get too drunk and think they can drive home.

**HOW DO I HELP SOMEONE WITH A DRINKING PROBLEM?**

**WHAT TO SAY – WHAT TO DO**

Keep track of specific, observable behaviors that are inappropriate, unacceptable, and/or irresponsible that cause you to be concerned.

- Step #1 – I care...
- Step #2 – I see...
- Step #3 – I feel...
- Step #4 – Listen...
- Step #5 – I want...
- Step #6 – I will...

**STEPS TO TAKE**

**Talk:** Talk to the person you’re concerned for. Find a time when they are sober and you’re both calm.

**Communicate:** State the issue specifically. Discuss the impact it is having on you and others. Tell them what changes you expect.

**Listen:** Hear their response and find out how they feel. Be polite, do not interrupt, and be fair.

**Build solutions:** Explore all options. What changes are you both prepared to make?

**Decide actions:** Specify actions to be taken. Help them to be realistic and don’t encourage anything that may be hard to keep.

**Put into practice:** Try out what you agreed on.

**Review progress:** Did the agreed actions happen? Did you acknowledge them?

**LEARN MORE:**

Alcohol and Other Drugs Services
www.gvsu.edu/aod
(616) 331-2537

**BE THAT FRIEND, BE THAT LAKER.**