

## About Intervention

If a friend or family member needed help solving a business problem, or was sick, or needed help watching the kids, it would be easy to lend a hand. However, when a friend or family member shows signs of abusing alcohol or other drugs, sometimes it is hard to know what to do or say.

Chemical dependency is more than just a "problem"-- it is a medical disease that is life-threatening if left untreated. This disease is clinically referred to as a Substance Use Disorder (SUD). While the symptoms of other diseases are mostly physical, people with substance use disorders experience emotional and social symptoms that are atypical of other diseases. This often results in hurting their friends and families, jeopardizing their jobs, or harming themselves.

It is hard to be a friend to someone abusing alcohol or other drugs, yet this is the time when an individual needs friends the most. While many messages on alcoholism and other drug addictions have been presented to the American public, The Council of Southeast Pennsylvania, through a partnership with the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependency's National Intervention Network (NCADD-NIN), brings a different message: that help is available for friends and family members who have drinking and/or other drug problems, through a process called **Intervention**.

Intervention is a process, NOT an event. For friends and family members it is a process of learning more about alcoholism and other drug addictions; how it affects those with addiction issues; how it affects the families and friends of persons with an addiction issue. It also means presenting the affected individual with the facts about his/her problem; trying to get the person to accept the fact there is a problem and that help is needed to deal with it.

To intervene means to "step in" or "disrupt." An intervention brings reality to the chemically dependent person (CDP) affected in a way that they can accept that reality. The reality, for example, is that the people close to the chemically dependent person are fed up with his/her drinking or use of other drugs. The reality is that the CDP is missing work as a result of hangovers or too much "partying" and may even lose his/her job

To be successful, an intervention must be about care, love and the concept that those involved are getting help and really hope the CDP will also get help. Intervention concentrates on impacting the system through education. It is based on the belief that chemical dependence is a family illness, which calls for treatment for the entire system.

In a "formal" intervention, family members, friends and co-workers are prepared, through coaching and training, to present "reality" to a person who is drinking too much and/or abusing other drugs. Instead of making excuses, blaming each other or covering up for the CDP, a formal intervention provides an opportunity to present clear, factual information about the effect the person's drinking or drug use has had on those who care about him/her. The most successful interventions take place when family, friends and coworkers have been well prepared by an Intervention Professional.

The Council of Southeast Pennsylvania is a member of The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD). NCADD operates the National Intervention Network (NIN), which is comprised of numerous local Affiliates from around the country. As an NCADD Affiliate, we abide by a code of ethics and specific professional protocols to prepare for one of the most important things we will ever do for another human being – help them disrupt and get treatment for a serious, often deadly, problem.

For more information please contact **The Council's Drug and Alcohol Information/Referral line** at 800-221-6333