



# IMPACT REPORT

2020

# About Adfam

Adfam is the only national charity tackling the effects of alcohol, drug use or gambling on family members and friends. We do this by:

- empowering families and friends affected by drugs, alcohol or gambling to get the support they need.
- building the confidence, capacity and capability of frontline practitioners to provide effective services.
- influencing decision-makers to understand the needs of thousands of people coping with the effects of a family member or friend misusing alcohol or drugs, or gambling.

## Our reach

This year we have connected with more people online than ever before.



6,698 followers  
7% increase since 2019



1130 people like our page  
20% increase since 2019



394 followers  
62% increase since 2019



209 followers  
24% increase since 2019

*Engagement with content has increased across all social platforms.*



254,357 website users (98% of users are new users)  
2257 new users on our online peer support forum  
2457 families and friends received 'The Family Angle',  
our monthly newsletter

# How we responded to the Covid-19 pandemic

2020 and the global pandemic brought about new challenges for Adfam, with many of our support services, training sessions, and policy and research events not able to go ahead face-to-face.

We demonstrated our adaptability and resilience by moving our support services (one-on-one and groups), training modules and policy events online to ensure that we could connect with and continue to support families, friends and practitioners throughout this difficult year. Here are some highlights:

Our frontline staff continued to check in with families over the telephone, and provided monthly Family Activity Packs, based on the 7 Cs of resilience. These included educational games and activities for all age-groups to try at home. The packs are now available to download free from our website.



## #6 Exercise or move around



We created a series of 10 Top Tips for staying at home and 6 Ideas for Mental Health and wellbeing, as well as a video on Self Care for families affected by someone else's substance use, which were launched on our website and social media to support families during lockdown.

We surveyed 250 people affected by someone else's drug, alcohol or gambling problem during lockdown, publishing the results in a research report with policy recommendations which we sent to government, commissioners and partners so that they could respond accordingly.

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I have to lock myself in my bedroom or bathroom...  
I feel like a prisoner in my own home

**Family Member**

# We directly supported over 250 people affected by someone else's drug, alcohol or gambling problem

We empowered women around the UK by training them to support other women who have also been affected by domestic abuse and substance use.

We worked with One Recovery Bucks, in Buckinghamshire, to integrate family support across their treatment centre.

We provided one-on-one support and activities for children of alcohol dependent parents in Swindon.

We provided one-on-one support and activities for children of alcohol dependent parents in the London Borough of Haringey.

We provided a monthly support, information and advocacy group for families affected by a loved one's co-occurring mental ill-health and substance misuse across the UK.

We worked with kinship carers in Peterborough, providing them with support, networks and information, and provided them with ipads so that they could access support online during the lockdowns.

We provided one-on-one support for families affected by someone else's substance use in Essex and Suffolk.

We started a new project, Adfam East Sussex, to provide support to families caring for those with substance misuse problems; training to develop the skills of professionals to work with family carers; and advocacy to ensure that local strategy and planning work recognises and addresses this need.

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***Had I not been able to find Adfam 6 weeks ago I do not think I would have been able to get through this... with Adfam support I was able to set boundaries, have confidence to open up to my family and friends.***

# We also developed these resources for families and friends

- We drew guidance from both practitioners and family members to produce a [toolkit for those affected by someone else's co-occurring mental ill-health and substance use conditions \(dual diagnosis\)](#), which contains information, self-help resources and suggestions. The toolkit has been downloaded by 110 people in 2020.
- We upgraded and re-launched our [online support forum](#), a safe-space for families and friends to share their experiences online and support others going through similar situations. We had 1,887 new users in 2020.
- We created a series of [10 Top Tips](#) for staying at home and 6 Ideas for Mental Health and wellbeing, which were launched daily on social media during the first lockdown, and were also downloaded by 232 people from our website.
- We produced a short [video for families and friends on self care](#), which was viewed by 200 people.
- We continued to update our [online support map](#), which was used by 9,389 people, created a list of online support groups, and signposted over 100 families and friends towards support via the telephone, email and social media messages.

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***The forum helps me realise I am not the only one going through this and other families' stories have given me strength.***

**Online forum user**

# We worked with and supported over 950 practitioners in services working with families

- We held monthly virtual national forums, featuring a range of guest speakers, for practitioners working with anyone affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use. Topics included; multiple vulnerabilities; diversity and inclusion in services; supporting families affected by co-occurring mental ill-health and substance use conditions; implications of lockdown on families affected by substance use.
- We held quarterly virtual national forums for professionals supporting families affected by someone else's gambling problem.
- We delivered our accredited training courses virtually to over 200 practitioners who work with families affected by substance us across the country. Topics included; Children, parenting, families, drugs and alcohol; Supporting families raising a child with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder; Families, drugs and alcohol- essential or advanced skills; Supporting families affected by problem gambling.
- We produced an online toolkit on Child to Parent Abuse (CPA), for practitioners working with parents who care for a child (including adult children) who uses drugs or alcohol and is also abusive towards them. It was downloaded by 120 practitioners.
- We ran a virtual peer buddy scheme for practitioners across England to support one another's professional development and share best practice.
- As part of our Women's Project, we held training for practitioners working with women affected by someone else's substance use and domestic abuse to better understand the interface between drug use and abuse, facilitate networking and identify systemic problems and strengths of the sector.

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***The information on trauma and child-parent violence was really useful and now I feel more confident about approaching it with clients.***

# We worked with over 200 strategic partners to effect positive structural change

- In 2020 we refreshed our brand and updated our mission statement to reflect the voices of the families we support.
- We gave evidence for the Independent Review of Drugs by Dame Carol Black on the impact of drug misuse on families and friends and responded to the AHA Commission on Alcohol Harm's call for evidence.
- We influenced the new Domestic Abuse Bill, holding a roundtable discussion event as part of the Alcohol and Families Alliance to bring together organisations working in the alcohol and families sector with those working in the domestic abuse sector to discuss how best we could work together going forwards. The event was chaired by Nicole Jacobs, the domestic abuse commissioner and culminated in a briefing paper which was launched ahead of the Domestic Abuse Bill's second reading in the House of Lords in early 2021.
- We surveyed people affected by someone else's drug, alcohol or gambling problem during lockdown. We published the results in a research report 'Families in Lockdown' with policy recommendations which we sent to government, commissioners and partners so that they could respond accordingly.
- We set up our Lived Experience Advisory Group to ensure that family members, who are at the heart of our organisational mission and purpose, are formally incorporated into Adfam's governance structure.
- We carried out an online survey and series of consultation events to help us identify how we can deliver better support to the families of children with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and worked with 5 local areas across the UK to develop local pathways of support for these families.
- We surveyed professionals to tell us what impact Covid-19 is having on the services they provide for families and friends, in order to provide evidence to influence the development of local and national government.
- In collaboration with the University of York, and funded by the Forces in Mind Trust, we launched a new research report outlining the experiences and needs of families of veterans with substance use problems (FVSUs), along with a new model of support specifically for FVSUs.

# #Forgotten5Million Campaign

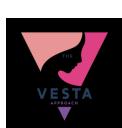
We launched our [new campaign](#) #Forgotten5Million to raise awareness of the 1 in 10 adults in Great Britain affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use. We launched two videos across our channels and our campaign had three simple elements- [share](#), [lobby](#), [donate](#).

**Share-** We asked partners and member of the public to share a tile of support on social media to raise awareness and break down stigma. We saw an increase in followers on all social media platforms during the first 3 months of the campaign (Twitter: 1%, Instagram: 41%, Facebook: 5%). We also saw a 14% increase in website users during the same 3 months.

**Lobby-** We asked the public to lobby government for better family support, by writing to their local MP or councillor. We wrote a letter to Kit Malthouse, Minister of State for the Home Office calling for family support to be on the policy agenda. It was co-signed by 13 organisations who supported our campaign. As a result of the letters and online lobbying, we arranged meetings with 10 politicians and civil servants including those from the Department of Health and Social Care, the Troubled Families Lead and Members of Parliament to discuss how they can work with us to commit to improving support for those affected by someone else's substance use.

**Donate-** We are continuing to run an appeal encouraging people to donate to provide a digital lifeline to families. So far we people have donated more than £15,000 to Adfam (including our Festive Fundraising event) since November 2020 when the campaign launched.

Organisations who pledged their support for our #Forgotton5Million campaign in 2020:



# Thanks to our funders and partners



## Get in touch



[www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)



@AdfamUK



[admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)



020 3817 9410