

Family Testimonials

EDAS welcomes feedback from families

The EDAS Family Program provides support to families affected by substance use. The family workers believe that in order to improve the program and to keep services relevant to families, feedback from people who have used the service is vital.

The following testimonials from family clients show that there is hope for change and improvements in the family despite the distress, hardship, difficulties and challenges that substance abuse creates.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM A FAMILY...

Our family was at breaking point as we struggled to cope with our alcoholic adult son. He was becoming increasingly more abusive and aggressive and nothing we could say would cause him to change. We were strongly considering selling our family home and moving to a small unit in order to escape him. The catalyst for him seeking to change was the threat of losing his job and therefore his car and family.

He sought counselling and with the assistance of a counsellor at EDAS and his doctor, he entered rehab for a week. Under their caring and highly professional guidance he has not touched alcohol for almost four months.

We are so grateful to have our son back and also for the support the counsellor has given us. We realize this is not a 'miracle' cure but take each day at a time and keep encouraging him in a positive way.

Anonymous, 2010

DEAR EDAS COUNSELLOR...

I want to thank you again. Prior to seeing you I felt hopeless and things would never improve for me and my son. His addiction to cannabis has reduced somewhat since I first came to see you.

While we still have our "off days", we are talking to each other more often and arguing a lot less since the two sessions we had with you. As you know my son didn't want to come and only came cause he thought it would get me off his back. That's changed a bit since we saw you, and things are a bit calmer at home now.

I know the journey is still ongoing and that we have a long way to go, but without your help I don't think I could have gone on. So EDAS thanks again, I have learnt a lot about drugs, addiction, parenting and most of all how to love my son with all of his problems.

P.S. Thanks for giving me permission to look after me too.

"Bob", June 2010

BILL and ANNIE

No one could have prepared us as a parents for the gut wrenching feelings of shock, horror & disbelief when we found out that the daughter we thought we knew, was using drugs, gambling, and stealing from her employer. Watching our distraught drug addled daughter being lead away by police has to be every parent's night mare; and for a time, our world as we knew it began spinning out of control.

We were overcome with a myriad of feelings. Anger, - 'how could she do this to her family?' Fear - 'what will become of her?' Shame, - 'what will people think?' Guilt - 'what did we do wrong?'. Despairing, worried out of our minds. And trying to make sense out of a situation that made no sense to us.

Thankfully over time we are gradually learning to manage how we cope with our situation. There has been no fairy tale happy ending. Our daughter continues to struggle with her demons.

Of course we continue to worry about her, but we have been fortunate to have support from some wise & compassionate counsellors who have helped us to survive as a family. We will always love & care about our daughter, she knows this; but we do not love her drug taking behaviour, nor do we support it any way. We respect that she must find her own way, and we hope and pray that she will find the courage to do so.

So a heartfelt thank you to EDAS for being there when our family was in crisis. Your support and wise counsel, has helped to sustain us through some very difficult times, and we would recommend your service to other families who are in similar situations.

"Bill & Annie", 2010



FAMILY TESTIMONIALS

I have a daughter who has suffered from heroin addiction for 6 years; alcohol for 3 years plus the dual diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. She is now 26 years old.

It has been a very long and painful road for both of us, and I would like to thank EDAS for the vital role they played in helping me deal eventually and effectively with the problems I encountered as they presented one by one.

In 2008 I was referred to the family therapy division, and to my very good fortune Margaret (Family Therapist). At the time my daughter was suffering from addiction to both heroin and cocaine. She had recently returned from a study trip in the USA and was out of control.

Margaret through her gentle and informed approach gave me, for the first time in my journey the necessity, awareness, courage and ongoing support I needed to take the appropriate steps to do the hardest thing I had ever had to do so far in my life... to lovingly detach, stand back and hand over to my daughter the responsibility for her own life.

My daughter did not want to live. She had already made over a dozen intentional suicide attempts over the previous 6 years. I had resuscitated her 6 times to that date. It was with enormous pain, guilt and sense of foreboding that I made this decision. But I had come to the realization with Margaret's help, that the way I was handling the situation was not working; and even though my methods had, what I thought were her best interests at heart, I came to realise that she would never take responsibility for her own life, or even start to value it, if I kept living her life for her through my enabling behaviour. I learned to see my own behaviour through the lens of understanding my own childhood responses to my early family situation. Armed with these insights, I found the courage to face (even with the knowledge that she would most probably attempt suicide yet again) my decision to ban her from the house.

In fact my daughter did overdose again, and yet again, I resuscitated her. That was her last overdose attempt.

She managed bravely to overcome her cocaine and heroin addictions over the ensuing 18 months. She is still grappling with her alcohol problems for which she has recently taken full responsibility. She has arranged, and is currently in rehabilitation in an attempt to re-track her life. In fact, she now wants to live, and have a productive life.

I will never be able to thank EDAS and Margaret enough. Without her vital knowledge, compassion, input and ongoing support, both my daughter and I would not have the quality of life which we are now both able to claim.

With warm regards and thanks,

Anonymous, July 2010

1300 650 705



FAMILY TESTIMONIALS

MORE NOTES FROM A COUPLE...

A very powerful, poignant experience reported from the family. And for me the EDAS counsellor, another just as powerful example of the learning in the work that I am given from the family story.

I hadn't seen this couple for awhile. They'd all been to hell and back with a lengthy history of family issues from their eldest son's intoxication. They called to come in and talk some more. I had a sense from the call that something had happened and again when I welcomed them in the waiting room....I was curious.....

Me:

What's changed?

Dad:

Well nothing much really. He's still using and living what seems to us to be a wasteful and chaotic life. We still worry about him. Sometimes he turns up and he's ok. We have a meal and we can talk about the footy and a few things. Other times he's not ok at all and sometimes we've had to ask him not to come over when we can tell he's been using or when he's in one of his angry and blaming moods. In fact we've been quite consistent in maintaining our limits on what we decided is unacceptable.

But really something has changed because we've worked out that it just doesn't make sense. We've spent so much time trying to work it out. Trying to understand why this has all happened, what it's all about, why and when did it start. Trying to make sense of it so that we could find out how to help, what to do. Trying to find out the reasons and the causes so we could work out how to get things right.

But we've realised that it just doesn't make sense...(at this point he reached over and took his wife's hand and they looked at each other)...and we've stopped trying to make sense of it..... and we've found some relief in this. We've accepted it.

He spoke in a very measured tone, with an emphasis on each word:
It just doesn't make sense.

Their soft sad teary eyes were evidence of the depth of the lingering sadness that remained for this father and mother. The firmness in their voices and the freedom they had experienced at the insight they had shared with me were indicative of their resolve. They were grateful for the resolution of the mental turmoil and anguish they had experienced over the journey.

EDAS Counselor 2010

Referring to the Eastern Drug and Alcohol Service

EDAS provides free, confidential counselling to adults, young people and families and who live, work or study in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. Phone our duty worker on the number below to make a referral, or to arrange to speak with a youth drug and alcohol counsellor in your area for more information or assistance.

1300 650 705

