Tips for Talking with a Loved One About Their Substance Use

• **Talk** with them in a quiet, private place when both of you are sober and calm.

• **Try to understand** the person’s own perception of their substance use. Ask if they believe their substance use is a problem.

• **Consider** the person’s readiness to talk about their substance use.

• **Do not force** the person to admit they have a problem.

• **Express** your point of view by using “I” statements, like “I have noticed...” or “I am concerned...”

• **Identify and discuss** their behavior rather than criticize their character.

• **Let the person know** that you are concerned and willing to help.

• **Listen** without judging the person as bad or immoral.

• **Do not label or accuse** the person of being an “addict.”

• **Treat the person with respect and dignity.**

• **Have realistic expectations for the person**—their behavior won’t change right away.