


# Supporting Parents of Children Using Ketamine



## Understanding Ketamine



Ketamine is a dissociative anaesthetic that can have hallucinogenic and sedative effects. It is commonly used recreationally for its mind-altering effects but can lead to dependence, cognitive issues, and serious bladder damage (Ketamine Bladder Syndrome).

## Common Effects and Risks

- **Short-term:** Confusion, hallucinations, dizziness, nausea, and dissociation.
- **Long-term:** Cognitive impairment, addiction, depression, and severe bladder damage requiring catheterisation or surgery.
- **Mixing Risks:** Combining ketamine with alcohol or depressants can cause breathing difficulties and unconsciousness.



## How to Support Your Child

### 1. Keep Communication Open:

- Approach conversations with **care and curiosity** rather than anger.
- Use **open-ended questions**, e.g., "Can you help me understand why you're using ketamine?"
- **Listen without judgment** to encourage honesty.



### 2. Educate Yourself:

- Learn about **ketamine's effects and risks** to have informed discussions.
- Avoid scare tactics—stick to **factual, balanced information**.

### 3. Set Healthy Boundaries:

- Express concern and establish clear but **compassionate boundaries** around drug use.
- Offer support, but avoid **enabling behaviours** (e.g., giving money that may be used for drugs).
- Encourage **responsible choices** and **safer use** if they are not ready to quit.

### 4. Encourage Professional Support

If ketamine use is becoming problematic, encourage:

- **Specialist services** (e.g., drug and alcohol support services like EDAS and REACH).
- **Mental health support** if they are using ketamine to cope with anxiety, trauma, or depression.
- **Medical advice** for signs of addiction or bladder damage.



### 5. Take Care of Yourself:

- Dealing with a child's substance use can be overwhelming. Seek **support for yourself** from parent groups, counselling, or helplines.
- **Stay patient**—change takes time, and relapses can be part of the recovery process.



## Harm Reduction Tips (If They Are Not Ready to Stop)



If your child is unwilling to stop using ketamine, share these harm reduction tips:

- **Use in a safe environment** with trusted people.
- **Avoid high doses** to reduce bladder and cognitive damage.
- **Stay hydrated** and urinate frequently to prevent bladder issues.
- **Do not mix** with alcohol or other depressants.
- **Seek medical help** if they experience urinary pain, blood in urine, or difficulty urinating.



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## Support Services and Resources

### Helplines & Support Groups

- **EDAS (Essential Drugs and Alcohol Services)** – Local specialist support for Carers and Parents ([www.edasuk.org](http://www.edasuk.org))
- **REACH Young People's Specialist Substance Misuse Service** – local specialist support for young people who reside in Dorset under 18 years of age ([www.edasuk.org/support/yp/](http://www.edasuk.org/support/yp/))  
Tel: **0800 043 4656 opt 2**
- **Adfam** – Support for families affected by substance use ([www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk))
- **FRANK** – Confidential drug advice ([www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com))
- **Young Minds** – Mental health support for young people ([www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk))

## Practical Help for Parents

- **Book a family support session** with a local drug and alcohol service.
- **Join a parent support group** to connect with others facing similar challenges.
- **Seek counselling** to help manage stress and emotions.

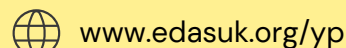
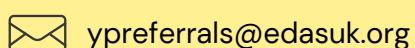
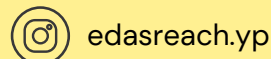
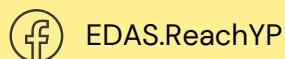
### Final Thoughts

Helping a child who uses ketamine can be challenging, but you are not alone. Support, patience, and education are key to encouraging positive change. If you need guidance, reach out to professional services who can assist you in navigating this journey.

For more information or direct support, contact **EDAS** or **REACH YP Service**.



**The EDAS REACH Young People's team is here to help!**  
**Get in touch with us on 01202 741414 or 0800 0434656 - option 1.**



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