



# 'Ohana Coaching Program

Presented by Debby Atkinson and Lillian Tavares  
May 17, 2022

# A. Mother

## Feathers in the Soul

A Guide for Families Struggling  
with a Child's Addiction

# My Journey

2010: We find out our 19 year-old son is addicted to opiates/opioids.

We do not understand the disease/disorder, and the adolescent psychiatrist we consult doesn't seem to, either.

We can't find a place here that will admit him, but our HMSA insurance allows us to send him to Hazelden's Family and Youth Program in MN.

We learn that the process will be long, but we have no clue how long.

Several of the local friends with whom he used ODeD and died.

Our son relapses 10-12 times, and we are told this is typical; it is part of recovery.

No matter how bad the family situation gets, let the user know they are loved. Hate the disease, love the person!

2021-2022 He appears to be in long term recovery.

[tinyurl.com/5e5a6u2s](https://tinyurl.com/5e5a6u2s)

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# 'Ohana Coach Program

- Peer to Peer Support program using local, trained volunteer coaches to provide support and resources for **people who have experienced loved ones dealing with substance use issues.**
- Pilot program supported by the Hawai'i Rural Health Association and the Hawai'i Opioid Initiative.

# 'Ohana Coaches

*'Ohana Coaches cannot provide professional counseling or substance treatment services in their peer capacity*

- Trained as confidants and peers, providing emotional support and coping resources for people whose family members or loved ones are dealing with substance use.
  - CMC: Foundation for Change and Partnership to End Addiction
  - Over 25 'Ohana Coaches trained from 2020-2021



# 'Ohana Coach Services

*Referral Committee matches  
person to 'Ohana Coach within  
24 hours*

- 'Ohana Coach and client determine flexible schedule (e.g., weekly)
  - 5 phone sessions (1 hour max)
  - Can continue with another coach after completion
- **FREE!**





# 'Ohana Coach Referrals

**8 AM – 8 PM, 7 Days a Week**

**'Ohana Referral Number  
808-523-7550**



# 'Ohana Stories

Woman's son was arrested while driving high, in possession of an ounce of ice and a loaded gun. She pays a Hilo attorney \$10,000 to defend him, but the attorney dies before the court date, and she has no more money. The attorney's office is disorganized, and she fears they won't help her in time.

58 y.o. Alcoholic still living with his mother, urinates on the floor of his room, sneaks into her bedroom at night to find car keys.

Woman in long term recovery, now a nurse, and all 3 of her children have substance use issues. Oldest is in a mental hospital, but she's calling about her 16 y.o. son who is now selling, carrying a gun, and has been threatened by a gang.

Woman's 28 y.o. meth-using daughter is living with boyfriend, whose mother brings the girl home and drops her at front gate. Boyfriend comes to get her, and they break into the house to steal items. Has happened several times.





# Lessons Learned

from talking with local families

- SUD is a disease of isolation, and it affects entire families, communities. Not much difference among cultures.
- We need to shore up our communities, work on stigma around SUD. Power of community is in families.
- Families and loved ones have a lot of influence. According to SAMSHA, 94% of people with SUD don't think they need treatment. Families facilitate treatment and recovery.
- There is a huge amount of anguish and despair among family members
- Callers are initially cautious, then grateful and often emotional. It takes courage to call and overcome the stigma of the disease.
- Ohana coaches can act as a peer-to-peer bridge to help families interact with their loved ones and get them into treatment
- As a coach, it is vital to have resources and people to contact for information
- Consider genetic component of addiction, studies suggest 10-12% of population
- People need nonjudgmental peers, someone to talk to who has been there
- We need more treatment and detox facilities in HI. Treatment times need to be longer, with better follow-up





# Questions?

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