

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is good for baby and has lots of benefits. Breastfeeding can:

- Protect baby from infection and illness
- Provide baby with healthy food
- Help baby to grow strong
- Strengthen bonds with baby



Alcohol and some drugs pass to the breastfeeding baby through breastmilk. This can cause harm to the baby as it takes about 2 hours for one standard drink of alcohol to leave a woman's body.

Drinking or using drugs while breastfeeding can reduce the amount of milk you produce and make baby sleep less.

To lessen the amount of nicotine the baby gets, don't smoke during feedings, and wait as long as possible between smoking and breastfeeding.

Reducing or stopping your use whilst breastfeeding is best for you and your baby.

Healthy choices for pregnancy and breastfeeding

Not drinking alcohol, smoking tobacco and using drugs is the best choice for your baby. Other things you can do to stay healthy and grow a strong baby include:

- Regular check-ups with your health worker



- Daily exercise or physical activity



- Lots of sleep and rest



- Plenty of healthy food and water



- Yarning with grannies, aunts, mums, sisters, cousins and friends about how to keep your baby strong and healthy

- Dads and other family members can make healthy choices too.



Getting help and information



Sometimes women don't get help because they feel shame talking about their alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drug Workers, Aboriginal Health Workers or other health professionals are there to help you.

They can talk with you about ways to help keep you and baby strong and healthy. They can help you stop or cut down your use in safe ways.

It may not be easy to make changes but your family, friends and other people in your community can help and support you.

ABORIGINAL SUPPORT SYSTEM



For more information and help

Local Contact



Alcohol & Drug Support Line

The Alcohol and Drug Support Line can provide information about culturally secure alcohol and drug services in your area. They are a confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

Phone: 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers)

E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au

Website: alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au

Parent & Family Drug Support Line

Confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about a loved one's alcohol or other drug use. Parent callers can speak to a Parent Peer Volunteer with a lived experience of their own son or daughter's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

Phone: 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers)

E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au

Website: alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au

Produced by **Strong Spirit Strong Mind™**
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Artist: Barry McGuire (Mullark).
The Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model (Ngarlu Assessment Model) was developed by Joseph 'Nipper' Roe, who belonged to the Karajarri and Yawuru people.
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STRONG SPIRIT STRONG MIND

Aboriginal Ways of Reducing Harm
From Alcohol and Other Drugs

Strong Babies



ABORIGINAL INNER SPIRIT MODEL



Our Inner Spirit is the centre of our being and emotions.

When our spirit feels strong our mind feels strong.

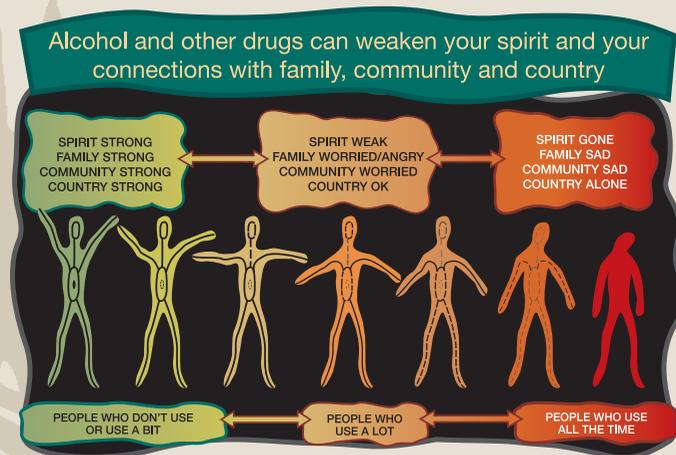
When our spirit feels tangled our mind feels tangled.

Strong Inner Spirit is what keeps people healthy and keeps them connected together.

Strong Inner Spirit keeps our family strong, our community strong and our country alive.

Alcohol and other drugs can weaken your spirit and your connections with family, community and country

Our way of being healthy is to look after ourselves by making good choices, and to care for our family, community and country. Alcohol and other drugs can tangle and weaken our spirit and mind. This can affect our emotional, social, spiritual and physical well-being. This can weaken our connection to family, community and country.



Alcohol and other drugs

There is no safe amount of alcohol and other drug use in pregnancy.



- Not drinking alcohol or using drugs is important. When you drink alcohol, so does your baby. When you use drugs, so does your baby. When you smoke, so does your baby.
- Alcohol and other drugs can cause health issues, like brain damage and birth defects, which could have lifelong impacts for your baby.
- Our children need to be born healthy so they have a strong spirit and a strong mind.

Dads

It's not just up to mums. Dads are important too and can make healthy choices to reduce their alcohol, tobacco and other drug use to support their partners and families.



Research shows that:

- If you are **pregnant or planning a pregnancy, not drinking alcohol is the safest choice** for growing a strong baby.
- If you are **breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is the safest choice** for growing a strong baby.
- There is **no safe level** of smoking during pregnancy. The **safest option** for mum and baby is for mum **not to smoke**, or be around smoke.
- There is **no safe level** of drug use whilst pregnant.
- Stopping or reducing alcohol, tobacco and other drug use during pregnancy will help baby grow strong.**



Have a yarn with your health worker if you are worried or would like to know more about the risks of alcohol, tobacco or other drug use during pregnancy.

Smoking

Quitting cigarettes before or early on in pregnancy provides the greatest benefits for you and your baby. However, even if you quit at any time during or after your pregnancy, there are benefits for you and baby.

Things you can do to protect yourself and children from smoke:

- Avoid smoke and smoking while trying to get pregnant, during pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding.
- Stay away from people who are smoking. Keep children and babies away from smoking areas.
- Don't smoke in the house or the car.



Medicines

When you are pregnant, some medicines can be harmful to your baby.



If you are taking medicine, you should ask your doctor or health care worker if the medication is safe to use during pregnancy or whilst breastfeeding.

Never take any prescription drugs that were not prescribed for you by your doctor.

If you are buying medicine from the chemist, tell them you are pregnant so that they can check if the medicine is safe for you and your baby.