



Learn to Cope (LTC) was founded ten years ago in 2004 by Joanne Peterson out of desperation to help her son. Learn to Cope is a support network for parents and family members coping with a loved one addicted to opioids or other drugs. Joanne designed LTC to offer others the support and resources that she would have benefited from when her family was in crisis. Today Joanne's son is in long-term recovery; so there is hope, and Joanne wants families to have the support she struggled to find at the beginning of her family's journey.

Learn to Cope is a non-profit peer-support network that offers **SUPPORT, EDUCATION, RESOURCES** and **HOPE** on both a local and national level. Currently, there are 16 chapters throughout Massachusetts and the newest chapter just began in Rhode Island; branching out beyond state lines for the first time. LTC's online family discussion board is a private place where people from all over the world can communicate confidentially with others who "have been there". With over 6,800 members registered on this forum, there is a wealth of information, knowledge, and resources that can be accessed 24/7. People share their own experiences and strategies from their family's journey through addiction and recovery which supports others and helps them to get strong.

With the support of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Learn to Cope became the first peer-led family support network in the country to train family members in overdose prevention and to certify them in the administration of intranasal naloxone (Narcan). Since Learn to Cope became a pilot program in December of 2011, there have been over 40 successful overdose reversals within LTC.

Joanne and the LTC team work closely with schools, law enforcement, legislature and the medical field to educate the public on opioid addiction. LTC presents to parents and professionals about the signs and symptoms of opioid use, overdose prevention for families and how to cope with a loved one's addiction and motivate recovery.

Addiction is an experiment that turns into a chronic relapsing disease, but there is hope for recovery for our loved ones and our families as a whole. Addiction affects all types of families, no matter where you live, what your income or education level. **You are not alone.** Many young lives have been lost to this tragedy; however people and families do recover. It is a long road but the more we seek and accept support from our peers and educate ourselves on the disease of addiction, the better our lives and the lives of our loved ones become. We eventually become stronger and are able to "cope."

[www.Learn2Cope.org](http://www.Learn2Cope.org)

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