



KENSINGTON PALACE

This Addiction Awareness Week, I am delighted to again voice my support for the campaign and thank all of the charities involved in shining a light on the effects of this terrible illness.

In September, I visited HMP High Down in my role as Patron of The Forward Trust, where they are helping people overcome their addictions. It is conversations like the ones I had with prisoners that day that also fuel my passion for the importance of early childhood. During the earliest years of our lives, we lay the foundations for the sorts of social and emotional skills that help us to navigate life, develop coping strategies to deal with adversity and learn how to establish stable, caring relationships which are such a vital source of support when facing life's complex challenges.

This year, we are reflecting on how 'Everyone Knows Someone' affected by addiction. I hope, by talking more openly, we can consider the people in our own lives and communities who have been impacted. Addiction affects people in so many ways beyond that one person who is experiencing it themselves - be they parents, children, siblings, friends or neighbours. By understanding their experiences, and starting from a position of compassion and empathy, we can help to break the cycle.

Please join me by taking the time to listen to those affected by addiction, and support them as best you can.

Addiction is not a choice. It is a serious mental health condition.

And with the right support delivered by wonderful charities like The Forward Trust, recovery is possible.