

ADDICTIONS WEEK PREVENTION SURVEY

Please complete the Addictions Week Prevention Survey
to be entered into a draw.

NOTE: Must complete ALL Questions CORRECTLY to be
eligible to be entered into the draw

Deadline to enter the draw is December 1, 2025
Limit: 1 entry per household

Prizes to be won:

- Gift Card for Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara
- Tickets to Ripley's Aquarium
- Movie Night (Gift Card for Ciniplex for tickets and snacks)

To be eligible to win the prizes:

- 1 person in the household must be an MBQ member (On or Off Territory)

Information prepared by the NNADAP Program
Questions? Contact Brad Stoddart at brads@mbq-tmt.org



MY FAMILY MEMBER IS CHOOSING NOT TO SEEK HELP, WHAT CAN I DO AS A FAMILY MEMBER?

People experiencing mental health or addiction concerns do not always choose to seek treatment. They may not believe there is a problem. They may feel that they can address the issue on their own, without treatment. They may have fears about the mental health system or concerns about the stigma of a mental health or addiction diagnosis. This is a difficult situation for family members who are witnessing the situation and feel that their family member needs support. As a family you can learn about mental illness and addiction, talk to your family member and encourage them to seek support, get support for yourself, and get to know the Mental Health Act and Crisis Resources. Learn more about these options

WHAT IS A SAFETY PLAN?

Safety plans help to establish goals around safety, address fears, and identify coping mechanisms. It is most effective to collaborate on a safety plan when your loved one is not in crisis.



What is Addiction?

Addiction refers to the problematic use of a substance. The harms of substance use can range from mild (e.g., feeling hungover, being late for work) to severe (e.g., homelessness, disease). Treatment options for addiction include self-help, counselling, medications and withdrawal management.

One simple way of describing addiction is the presence of the 4 Cs: What are they?

- **CRAVING**
- **LOSS OF CONTROL OF AMOUNT OR FREQUENCY OF USE**
- **COMPULSION TO USE**
- **USE DESPITE CONSEQUENCES.**

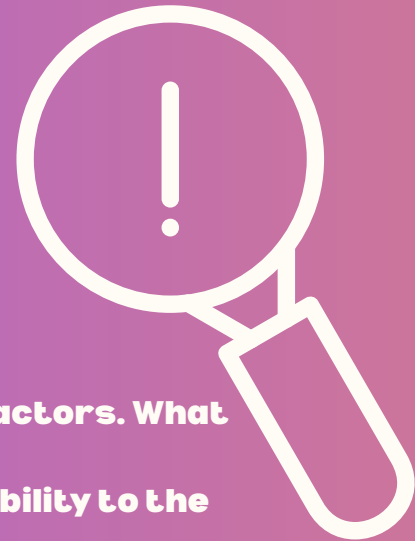
THE HARMS OF SUBSTANCE USE CAN AFFECT EVERY ASPECT OF A PERSON'S LIFE. TRY AND LIST 3? THEY INCLUDE:

- injuries while under the influence
- feelings of anxiety, irritability or depression
- trouble thinking clearly
- blackouts
- problems with relationships
- spending money on substances rather than on food, rent or other essentials
- legal problems related to substance use
- loss of hope, feelings of emptiness.



WHY?

Causes & Risk Factors



People become addicted because of a combination of factors. What are some?

- **Genetic factors:** Some people may inherit a vulnerability to the addictive properties of drugs.
- **How drugs interact with the brain:** People use alcohol and other drugs because they stimulate the brain in ways that "feel good." This immediate rewarding experience makes people want to repeat it. All substances with addictive potential stimulate the release of dopamine, a chemical in the brain that is associated with reward and pleasure.
- **Environment:** Peoples' home and community and the attitude of their peers, family and culture toward substance use can influence whether or not they develop substance use problems. People who experience prejudice or marginalization may use substances to cope with feelings of trauma or social isolation.
- **Mental health issues:** More than 50 per cent of people with substance use disorders have also had mental health problems at some point during their lifetimes. When people have mental health problems, even limited substance use can worsen the problem.
- **Coping with thoughts and feelings:** People may turn to substances as a way of coping with difficult emotions or situations. They start to rely on substances to regulate their emotions



WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?

To reach out to people who may not be ready, willing or able to give up substances, some treatment programs have adopted a harm reduction approach.

Examples of harm reduction strategies include:

- **helping people learn safer ways to use substance**
- **helping people learn how to recognize the signs of an overdose**
- **providing clean needles and other injection equipment (“works”) for injection drug use (to reduce transmission of infections such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C through needle sharing)**
- **helping to ensure that people’s basic needs, such as for food, shelter and medical care, are met**
- **substituting a safer drug for the one a person is using (e.g., substituting methadone for heroin)**

WHY DO PEOPLE KEEP USING SUBSTANCES?

- One thing that makes change so difficult is that the immediate effects of problematic substance use tend to be positive. The person may feel good, have more confidence and forget about his or her problems temporarily. The problems caused by substance use might not be obvious for some time.
- When the person uses substances to escape or change how he or she feels, using can become a habit, which can be hard to break. Continued substance use, especially heavy use, can cause changes in the body and brain. A person who develops physical dependence and then stops using may experience distressing symptoms of withdrawal. These changes may explain why people continue to crave the substance long after they have stopped using, and why they may slip back into patterns of problematic use.



How do I know if I need treatment?

If you feel that substance use is causing problems in your life and that you are unable to control your use, see a trained counsellor for an assessment. This assessment gathers information about your use and related problems and other factors in your life, such as your personal strengths and supports. This information will help you and your counsellor decide whether you might benefit from treatment or other support.