

# Substance Use and Mental Health

*October is National Substance Abuse Prevention Month*

How are substance use and mental illness associated?



Both mental health and substance use may impact the ability to function; co-occurring disorders affect each other. When mental health goes untreated, substance use usually worsens. When substance use increases so do symptoms of mental illness.

Risk factors for both substance use and mental illness:

- Genetics
- Environmental Factors
- Stress
- Trauma

What are the most popular substances among teens?

- Marijuana
- Prescription Drugs
- Tobacco (vaping)

Why substance use is dangerous among teens?

- It affects growth and brain development
- It often happens with other risky behaviors
- It increases the chances of developing an addiction
- Can lead to continued substance use later in life

Early intervention helps prevent substance abuse and addiction.

A CDC study suggests when teens felt connected to family and school, they were 65 percent less likely to use illicit drugs or misuse prescription drugs as adults.

**Ways to Say NO to alcohol or drugs:**

- I do not like the taste
- If I get caught, I will lose my privileges
- I do not drink or get high
- No thanks, it makes me tired
- No, I am really trying to be clean

## Resources:

SAMHSA's National Helpline: Treatment referral routing service: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

HELPLine 24-hour Crisis/Suicide Intervention: (951)686-4357 (HELP)

Crisis Text Line: Text "START" to 741-741 or visit <https://www.crisistextline.org/>

<https://keltymentalhealth.ca/substance-use>

<https://drugfree.org/>

<http://www.smartrecovery.org/teens/>

References: CDC.gov, drugabuse.gov