

ADHD & SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

UNDERSTANDING THE LINK IN ADOLESCENTS

ADHD is characterized as:

- Inability to stay focused
- Difficulty listening
- Making careless mistakes
- Trouble holding attention
- Fidgeting
- Excessive talking
- Never staying still
- Always on the go

5%
of Canadian
Adolescents
are diagnosed
with ADHD.



Young adults with ADHD are at greater risk of substance use and being diagnosed with a substance use disorder.



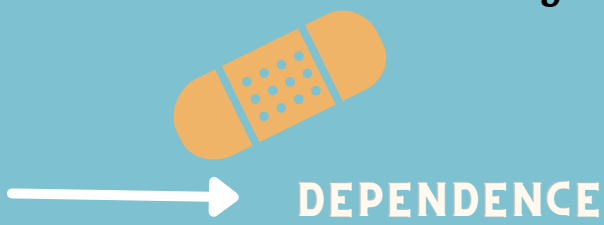
Why is there a strong link?



Below are some risk factors that may help explain why a person with an ADHD diagnosis is at a higher risk of also receiving a substance use disorder diagnosis.

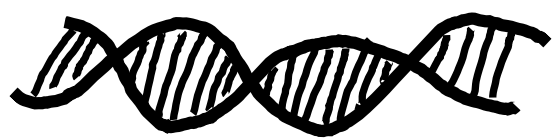
Coping Strategy

70% of adolescents with an ADHD diagnosis are using substances, as a means of self medicating.



Genetics

When ADHD runs in the family, an individual is at higher risk of both ADHD and the onset of a SUD.



Sex Differences

While males receive an ADHD diagnosis more frequently than females, females with ADHD are more likely to receive a SUD diagnosis



Impulsivity

Being impulsive is a shared characteristic of individuals with ADHD and a SUD.



Understanding this link is important to understand who is at risk, so that one can seek early prevention and/or treatment services.