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.

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

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

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.