

# BounceBack and Substance Use

**Q** Is the BounceBack program appropriate for individuals with substance use challenges?

**A** To participate in the BounceBack program, one of the eligibility criteria is that the person is not significantly misusing drugs or alcohol to the extent that it would impact their engagement in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) treatment. Currently, a person is not excluded from participating in the program if they are “addicted” to substances (alcohol and other drugs). **A person with a diagnosis of substance use and substance dependence can participate in BounceBack if they:**



- 1** Can concentrate sufficiently on the material during and outside of the telephone coaching sessions
- 2** Are willing to read the workbooks and complete the CBT homework assignments
- 3** Can engage in skills practice outside of the telephone coaching sessions
- 4** Are not impaired during the telephone coaching sessions so they can participate fully on the call
- 5** Are consistent in attending the telephone coaching sessions

BounceBack is currently not suitable for individuals whose primary concern is substance use.

BounceBack is a free, guided self-help program that's effective in helping people aged 15 and up who are experiencing mild to moderate anxiety or depression, or may be feeling low, stressed, worried, irritable or angry. The program is grounded in CBT, which is the recommended approach to managing depression and anxiety. CBT is also used to treat substance use disorders. CBT helps individuals better understand how their thoughts, emotions and behaviours are connected. By learning practical coping skills and techniques, individuals can start to gain insights into their behaviours and alter the way they think and react to troubling thoughts or situations.

Participants in the BounceBack program receive telephone coaching, skill-building workbooks, and online videos to help them better manage their symptoms and gain new skills to regain positive mental health. Individuals can choose from 20 different workbooks, such as *Understanding worry and stress*, *Unhelpful things you do*, and *Alcohol, drugs and you*. Shorter or condensed booklets and youth booklets for individuals aged 15-18 are also available.

The BounceBack program is not designed to specifically target problematic substance use. However, there are some factors related to substance use that can be addressed by the program:

- 1 The program can help individuals identify the impact of their substance use on their mood, behaviours, thoughts, relationships and unpleasant situations
- 2 Individuals can learn to identify and address their unhelpful thoughts and behaviours that make them vulnerable to substance use
- 3 Individuals can develop plans with their BounceBack coach to recognize and reduce unhealthy patterns and develop more adaptive ones

To learn more about the BounceBack program, and to refer your clients, visit  
**[bouncebackontario.ca](https://bouncebackontario.ca)**