



CONCURRENT DISORDERS

— CAPACITY BUILDING TEAM —

February 2025 Newsletter

CSAM Call for Submissions Information Extended to Monday, February 3, 2025

Special Notice: CCSA has extended the Call for Submissions for CCSA's Issues of Substance 2025 by one week. The final day to submit an abstract is now Monday February 3, 2025.

"We invite you to participate in the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction's (CCSA) Issues of Substance 2025 conference as a speaker. The conference will take place at the Halifax Convention Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, from November 17 to 19, 2025. "

The conference provides a platform for all voices to share knowledge and experience. With this in mind, They welcome submissions for presentations on:

- Research, programs or policies related to substance use health; and
- Personal experiences related to substance use health.

They are now accepting submissions until **Monday, February 3 at 11:59 p.m. EST**

Refer to the [Research, Program or Policy Abstract Submissions](#) to learn about submission guidelines, presentation format, evaluation criteria and other details. Refer to the [Personal Experience Submissions](#) to learn about submission guidelines.

[Click here for access to the full article](#)

Young Adult Segment

Evidence-based Interventions for Youth With Concurrent Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders: A Scoping Review...

A comprehensive scoping review investigated the treatment approaches for mental health and substance use disorders that often occur simultaneously, otherwise referred to as concurrent disorders, within youth aged 10 to 29 years. These co-existing conditions present significant challenges for healthcare providers, yet there remains a lack of clarity regarding best practices for their management.

The review meticulously analyzed 30 peer-reviewed studies, with a substantial majority (63.3%) classified as randomized controlled trials (RCTs), considered the gold standard in evaluating treatment effectiveness. Among the participants, a significant proportion (56.7%) presented with unspecified substance use disorders. When specific substances were identified, alcohol use was noted as the primary issue in 23.3% of the studies, while cannabis use disorder was reported in 20% of cases.

In terms of co-occurring mental health conditions, mood disorders—such as depression and dysthymia—were the most frequently encountered, making up 50% of the studies. This was followed by behavioural disorders, including Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), represented in 30% of the research, and unspecified psychiatric disorders found in 16.7% of the studies.

The review highlighted that 60% of the included studies investigated the efficacy of various non-pharmacological interventions, such as behavioural therapies and counselling, suggesting a growing interest in holistic treatment approaches. Meanwhile, 40% of the studies focused on pharmacological treatments, examining the effects of medications on the participants.

Despite identifying several relevant studies, the review underscored significant diversity in participant characteristics and research methodologies, indicating a heterogeneous landscape of existing evidence. This variability emphasizes the pressing need for more rigorous RCTs targeting younger populations with concurrent disorders. Such studies are crucial for establishing more precise clinical practice guidelines and informing future systematic reviews and meta-analyses to improve outcomes for youth facing these complex dual challenges.

[Click here for access to the full article](#)

[Click here for YA-SUP Loved Ones education Flyer](#)

“

We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us.” — J. Campbell

Cannabis Column — Approach Bias Modification for reducing Co-Occurring Alcohol and cannabis use among treatment-seeking Adolescents: Protocol of a randomized controlled trial

This article explores an important study focusing on the rising concern of substance use among adolescents, particularly the simultaneous use of alcohol and cannabis. Given that these substances are among the most commonly used by young individuals, the study underscores the importance of interventions during adolescence—a crucial period of brain and personal development that renders youths especially vulnerable to the negative consequences of substance use.

The research involves a randomized control trial designed to evaluate an innovative mobile-based approach bias modification (ApBM) intervention. This intervention aims to reshape adolescents' implicit biases toward alcohol and cannabis through a computerized task. Participants aged 13 to 17 and seeking treatment for substance use will engage in activities that train their responses to drug-related stimuli by

pushing or pulling the images based on their orientation, effectively retraining their automatic reactions toward these substances. Participants will be recruited both nationally and locally from outpatient treatment programs, and the study employs rigorous selection criteria to ensure that only those who report co-occurring alcohol and cannabis use in the past three months are included. The trial follows a mixed design, comparing the ApBM intervention against a sham (control) condition over four days, with follow-up assessments conducted at one and three months post-intervention.

To incentivize participation and maximize retention, each participant was compensated up to \$400, rewarding them for completing sessions and assessments throughout the study. This financial support encouraged consistent engagement and adherence to the study protocol.

[Click here for access for the full article](#)

Clinical Corner — Alcohol-related deaths and hospitalizations spiked during the pandemic. Could policy have made a difference?

A recent study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal indicates a significant rise in alcohol-related deaths and hospitalizations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Between April 2020 and December 2022, deaths attributable to alcohol increased by about 18%, with a notable 24% spike in the first two years. Hospitalizations saw a similar trend, rising by around 14% during the same period.

Dr. Peter Butt, who shifted to an inpatient addiction consulting role during the pandemic, observed a doubling in the number of patients requiring help for alcohol

-related issues. The research suggests younger adults, particularly women, were highly affected, with alcoholic liver disease leading to most cases.

Factors contributing to these increases include heightened stress, boredom, declining mental health, and easier access to alcohol. Although the trend began to decline by 2022, experts warn of potential long-term health consequences, particularly related to liver disease and alcohol-related cancers. The findings align with trends observed in other countries, emphasizing the need for policymakers to consider more balanced approaches to alcohol sales during future emergencies.

[Click here for full access to the full article](#)

The Young Adult Substance Use Program (YA-SUP)

LOVED ONES EDUCATION GROUP

Community Reinforcement Approach Family Training

The YA-SUP Loved Ones Education Group is a group for the parents and other supporters of young adults (17-25) with substance use problems. This may include immediate, extended, or chosen parents and family members or close friends and partners.

This group is based on **Community Reinforcement Approach to Family Training – Support and Prevention (CRAFT)**. CRAFT is an evidence-based approach to change the way you interact with your child or loved one to promote positive relationships and recovery. Substance use can be difficult to understand and challenging to cope with. CRAFT talks about how **behaviour makes sense** and how the environment, community, and social support can play a powerful role in recovery.



This group includes 8 sessions:

- Group Overview, Safety, and Self Care
- Understanding Substance Use
- Understanding Co-occurring Mental Health Concerns
- Positive Communication
- Past Patterns & New Strategies
- Rewards & Coping with Intoxication
- Allowing Negative Consequences
- Review, & Next Steps



Sign up today to participate in one of our future group sessions.

If you are interested in participating in a Loved Ones Education Group, please register here: <https://rsjh.ca/redcap/surveys/?s=EAMLYJ3DD7>

St. Joseph's
Healthcare  Hamilton

Loved Ones Group

[Click here](#) for information on The Loved Ones Education Group



CONCURRENT DISORDERS FAMILY NIGHT LAST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH: 6:30- 8:30PM

The Concurrent Disorders Family Night series is a 4-session group (Does Not have to be attended in order) that focuses on supporting families and loved ones of individuals with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders. Family Night is largely based upon the therapeutic interventions of CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) and ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy).

**No Referral Required* Do not need to attend in order!*

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**All loved ones, friends
and family members
welcome!**

**Week 1: Values, Recovery
and Acceptance**

**Week 2: Effective
Communication and
Support**

**Week 3: Boundaries,
Limits, and De-Escalation**

**Week 4: Doing For,
Motivation, and Self-Care**

**MORE INFORMATION AND
ZOOM LINK AT**

<https://www.cdcapacitybuilding.com/online-group-link>

Tobacco Addiction Recovery Program

New Cycle Starting in March 2025 - Now Taking Referrals!

The Tobacco Addiction Recovery Program (TARP) is an 8-week group program for clients living with mental illness and/or addiction who are motivated to quit smoking.

Participants are able to receive up to a total of 26 weeks of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) at no cost!

Self-referral or referral by a health care professional is required.



For More Information Go To:

<https://www.cdcapacitybuilding.com/smoking-cessation>



VIRTUAL PEER SUPPORT GROUP

FRIDAYS | 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

[Online Group Links | CDCBT \(cdccapacitybuilding.com\)](#)

Meeting ID: 651 4695 9053

Password: 664071

- A weekly drop-in group for mutual support
- Discuss recovery goals, challenges, and healthy coping strategies
- Open to clients of CPC and ERMHS
- Facilitated by a Peer Support Worker with lived experience of mental health issues

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Health Promotion Days & Celebrations This Month

- [Black History Month](#)
- [Aboriginal Story Telling Month](#)
- [National Flag of Canada Day](#) — February 15
- [Family Day](#) — February 17
- [International Mother Language Day](#) — February 21

* If you would like more information on the days and weeks we are celebrating this month, please feel free to click on the available links.

Your CD Capacity Building Contacts

CDCBT Located at CPC West 5th Campus, Level 0 Outpatient		Fax: (905-521-6059)
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The Young Adult Substance Use Program (YASUP) Located at CPC West 5th Campus, Level 0 Outpatient		Fax: (905-521-6059)
Emily MacKillop Psychologist for Concurrent Disorders Outpatient & YASUP		Ext. 36877
Paige Hastings, RSW, Community Support Counsellor—Addiction Specialist		Ext. 34912
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Opioid Replacement Therapy consultations available through Addiction Medicine Service Team		Contact Paging