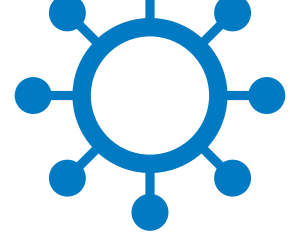




MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DURING COVID-19



Spotlight on Youth

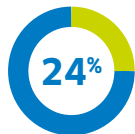
According to recent surveys¹ conducted by Leger on behalf of the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) and the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), young people ages 16 to 24 years living in Canada are more likely to report mental health and substance use concerns and greater difficulty managing pandemic stress than the general population.



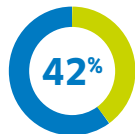
Youth reported experiencing more symptoms of depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic



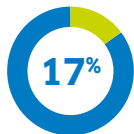
Only 1 in 4 youth report excellent or very good mental health



Moderately severe to severe depression



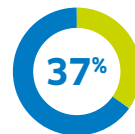
Moderate to severe anxiety



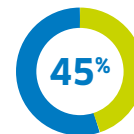
Suicidal ideation



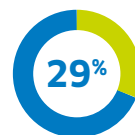
Youth who use alcohol, cannabis or both were more likely to report increased use



Increased alcohol use



Increased cannabis use



Problematic alcohol use²



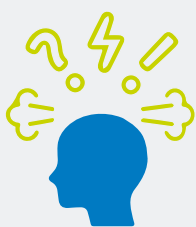
Problematic cannabis use²

Top 4 pandemic-related stressors for youth:

- School (19%)
- Personal mental health concerns (14%)
- Financial situation (13%)
- Social isolation (11%)

Confidence in ability to cope with pandemic stress:

- Youth (55%)
- General population (62%)



Access to formal treatment services,³ whether virtual or in-person, is lagging behind the need for services

- Only 1 in 4 youth with mental health symptoms accessed treatment services
- Less than 1 in 3 youth with problematic use of alcohol, cannabis or both accessed treatment services



1. Leger has conducted six surveys of people living in Canada ages 16 years and older (n = 10,097) who signed up to complete an online survey from October 2020 to July 2021.
2. Problematic alcohol or cannabis use refers to a pattern of use that might affect a person's health and safety, and increase the risk of other problems related to alcohol or cannabis use.
3. Formal treatment services include receiving care or support from a medical doctor, psychologist, social worker, counsellor, support groups or a peer counsellor on the internet, by phone or in person to help manage mental health, substance use or both symptoms.

Do you need support?

Suicide Prevention



When you can't talk about it,
text about it.



Kids Help Phone

Text **CONNECT** to 686868

Mental Health and Substance Use



Visit

Wellness Together Canada

Ways to cope



Keep yourself busy with activities you enjoy: pets, volunteering, community activities.



Stay connected with friends and family while still practising physical distancing.



Find balance by staying informed but know when to take a break from COVID-19 news and topics.



Be kind to yourself by remembering that this is a difficult time, and you're doing your best to manage a challenging situation.



Take care of your body by eating and sleeping well, exercising and meditating. Try this [breathing exercise](#) to calm your nervous system.



Reach out for help by talking with a family member or friend, and seeking professional support, if needed. See tips for students [here](#).

If you use substances

- 1 Monitor your use (especially during the holidays), paying attention to the frequency, amount and context.
- 2 Follow *Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*.
- 3 Avoid stockpiling alcohol, cannabis, and other substances.
- 4 Reach out for help if you are concerned about your consumption.
- 5 Find youth cannabis and vaping resources.

For more information on **COVID-19, mental health and substance use**, visit our resource hubs:

[Mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic \(MHCC\)](#)

[Impacts of COVID-19 on substance use \(CCSA\)](#)