

Using Drugs and/or Alcohol

Alcohol and substance use, including some prescription drugs, can make individuals more vulnerable to experiences of violence and abuse. Abuse and violence can also play a role in triggering increased or problematic substance use as individuals attempt to cope with their feelings and experiences. As well as directly causing problems, substance use may impair your ability to protect yourself, decrease your ability to take positive actions and impact your ability to heal.

When using substances (drugs and alcohol)

- ☐ Consider reducing, limiting or stopping substance use.
- ☐ When using, be aware of people/places/things that are unsafe or increase danger or risk.
- ☐ If going to use, try to do so in a safe place and with people who understand the risks of violence and are committed to safety.
- ☐ Learn strategies to reduce the amount of drugs and alcohol used i.e. monitor use, limit available quantities, skip days, change routines, ensure you have eaten and are hydrated.
- ☐ If using opioids, ensure access to Naloxone to prevent overdose and avoid using alone. Be aware of changes in your tolerance.
- ☐ If using injection drugs, avoid re-using needles, i.e. utilize the needle exchange program.
- ☐ If (ex)partner is using/drinking, consider plans for risk/safety, i.e. avoid, leave.
- ☐ Consider seeking counselling and/or support for substance use, including those that offer a trauma informed approach and harm reduction model.
- ☐ If also experiencing mental health struggles, consider a concurrent disorder program which may be able to work with both issues at the same time i.e. CMHA, ADAPT.
- ☐ Halton has organizations that specifically focus on treating substance use. ADAPT addresses all forms of substance use, as well as gambling, meets with men, women, and youth in the community. Hope Place Centres serves women and men, offers residential treatment programs, and community programs.
- ☐ It may be hard to ask for help when using or drinking. Consider calling a support person or sponsor.
- ☐ Consider risks associated with sharing or selling drugs.