

BELIEVE IN CHANGE. Believe in Recovery.



September is Recovery Month.

It's a chance for our community to celebrate recovery as well as talk about substance use, break down stigma, and focus on what our community can do to support recovery.

The impacts of addiction are felt by many in Northwestern Ontario, all ages, genders, cultures and lifestyles. When we consider the pain of seeing a loved one suffering with addiction, the impact of substance use touches us all. You are not alone. Thunder Bay Counselling's clients are proud of the positive changes they make to better their lives for themselves and their families.

"Doing nothing won't help anything. I think reaching out can be the hardest part," says one client celebrating their recovery. *"Don't let the fear of the unknown stop you from seeking help."*

Since the start of the pandemic, Addiction and Mental Health Ontario has found that 42% of Ontario's adults have increased their substance use or gambling. COVID-19 continues to impact the mental wellness of our community members, and as a result many people are increasing their use of

alcohol and other substances. Throughout the pandemic, deaths due to the Opiates Crisis continue to increase. Now, more than ever, we need to take steps to care for ourselves and each other, to create a safer community for everyone, and to include people struggling with substance use in the change we all want to see.

Disproportionally, recovery can be more difficult to achieve and sustain for people who don't have access to adequate food, housing, income security, health care, and for those who experience trauma and mental health issues. *"These systemic problems look different in Northwestern Ontario and need a local and regional response. Every path to recovery is unique,"* says Nancy Chamberlain, Executive Director, Thunder Bay Counselling.

Services in the Thunder Bay area are connected and work together to find what works for you. Whether it is the first step on your recovery journey, or if you have been walking the path for years, believe in change. If you or a loved one is struggling with substance use, reach out.

Recovery is possible, and that is something to celebrate.