

CBT+ Screening and Brief Intervention for Substance Use

**Remember to Keep the Discussion Collaborative and Do Not Judge!
Ask Questions as Much as You Can!**

1. What

- a. *“Today I would like to talk with you about your use of alcohol (or name the other substance they use) for the next 10-15 minutes, not a lot of time. Would that be OK with you? I can assure you that it is completely confidential.”*
 - i. If the client says NO, ask the question again in a different way ONE TIME ONLY.
 1. *“Okay, I do not want to push you on this, do you think we could have just a short conversation? Then we will move on to talking about other things. What do you think?”*
 - ii. If the client still says no, provide the WHY below, and ask if you can bring it up another time that you meet together.
 1. Ask the client again in 1-2 weeks, starting again at Step 1.
 - iii. If the client says no a THIRD time, do not ask about substance use again.

2. Why

“It is important that we are able to talk openly about your use of alcohol or drugs, because it can make a difference for your health and for relationships in the family and community”.

3. Describe what will happen in this discussion

- a. *“I want to give you some feedback about some questions you answered, risks related to drinking and give you some options and choices. What you decide about options and choices is up to you and your parents, [if a court is involved] or the court.”*

4. Find out what the client knows about alcohol or drugs, how much people drink, and health risks. Reflect back or repeat what the client says.

- a. *“First thing I would like to ask, what do you know about alcohol or drugs and any health risks? What are you familiar with, what is your sense about how much drinking or drug use goes on among kids your age?”*

5. Show the handout/picture of problems associated with alcohol or drug use.

- a. *“We have a list of the different things that can happen as a result of drinking and using drugs. When you look at these, you might be familiar with some things for some people, some things for other people.”*

- i. Specifically describe some of the problems on the list: health, mental health & relationships

“As you can see here, alcohol and drugs can affect people in many ways....”

1. *Anxiety, paranoia, panic, depression*
2. *Decreased memory and problem solving ability*
3. *High blood pressure*
4. *Asthma, bronchitis*
5. *Sleep problems*
6. *Mood swings*
7. *Family relationships—leading to more fighting and arguing*
8. *Getting victimized*
9. *Getting in trouble with the law*
10. *Accidents and injuries*

6. Give feedback on the client’s ASSIST results

“You filled out a checklist about your substance use, and we can get a score from your answers. Your score was in the [low, moderate, high] risk group. I talk to everyone with a moderate or high risk score.”

7. Ask what the client thinks of this. Reflect or repeat back whatever the client says.

- a. *“What do you make of this information?”*

ELABORATE, summarize, and encourage anything the client says suggesting that he/she thinks drinking might be a problem, AND/OR the client might want to change.

“You’re drinking or drug use is something you like to do with friends but you’re having some problems keeping focused at school, and that is making you feel stressed”

“It seems to you like everyone else is doing what you are doing, but you are also aware that it could cause you problems with your parents or the courts.”

If the client says nothing, describe what you see the client do or the look on the client’s face.

1. *“You look surprised” or “I saw you shrug your shoulders” or “Looks like this was not what you expected.”*

8. Summarize what you have done so far.

- a. *“So I’m just giving you a little feedback which I’ll summarize. We talked about how alcohol or drug use affects the body, how it can affect feelings and behavior, and relationships with family and friends, and can lead to other problems, and how your drinking falls in a risk zone. We talked about [anything else client said about how drinking is a problem for them]”.*

9. Ask a question about next steps.

- a. *“At this point, given this information, do you have any questions?”*
- b. *“Is there anything you would like to try or do differently?”*
- c. *“Would you like to talk about alcohol or drugs a little more now, or later?”*
 - i. Client may want to talk later—if so, that is a good outcome! You can do the following steps in the NEXT session.
- d. If the client would like to talk more about alcohol or drug now, go to step 10.

10. If the client says talk now, give advice about changing drinking.

Use: Ask, Tell, Ask format.

- a. You already asked (above) if it was okay to talk, now tell some advice
 - i. *“As your counselor, I would like to give you a little feedback. I would advise you to stop drinking or using drugs”*
- b. Ask client’s thoughts about this feedback
 - i. *“What do you think about this feedback?? We have a number of options. Think about the advice, try reducing your drinking, try quitting altogether, make a change by yourself or with some professional help or peer support...what do you think?”*
 1. *“What do you think would work for you?”*
 - ii. Generate options from these with the client.
 1. If the person says do nothing or talk later, ask if you can ask again in the next meeting.

11. Discuss any change options that the client mentions.

- a. THROUGHOUT THIS DISCUSSION get the CLIENT talking, honor and go with the client’s choice!
 - i. You may end up with a plan for homework, you may not.
 1. Both options are okay! You got the client thinking about change and you can bring up this discussion in a later session as long as you ask for permission to bring it up again.
- b. Ask for more information about any change option the client mentions—explore options they mention. Reflect and repeat what the client says.
 - i. *“What have you thought about _____?”*
 - ii. *“Great, tell me more about what you are thinking.”*
- c. If the client has ideas about changing drinking or using drugs (quitting or cutting back) go with the client’s ideas.
 - i. *“Great! Do you think you would want to start trying this change? Maybe this next week?”*

12. If the client asks for options or what you think about possibilities for changing, you can provide more information.

- a. Quit drinking or using drugs.
 - i. *“This is the healthiest option, may be easier than reducing, but it can also be hard socially. Some people say it would be hard and too much of a life change, some say not hard.”*
- b. Reduce drinking or using drugs significantly.
 - i. *“There are some good and not so good things about this option. At least you are cutting down. And it can be easier socially, but it can also make it a lot harder because it is more work to reduce when around others who are drinking or using drugs.”*
- c. Remind the client it is his/her choice and decision [although parents and courts may get involved].
 - i. *“Only you can say what might work best for you, different things work for different people.”* **If yes...**Make a plan that is consistent with CBT+ [use coping skills for urges to use, cognitive coping for thoughts about how using would make them feel better or fit in, practice behaviors such as refusal, separating self from risk situations, engaging in a positive opposite from using, etc]
 1. The plan is a homework for this week
 - a. *“Okay, so what exactly do you want to do?”*
 2. Identify helpful homework reminders as needed (e.g., a tracking sheet to self monitor, phone reminders, engaging a friend or parent to check in on goals, placement of motivational self-statements, etc.)
 3. Problem solve anything that might make it hard to do the plan
 - a. *“Is there anything that would make it hard to do this plan this week?”*
 - i. Talk about things that would make it hard,
 - ii. Get client’s ideas about how to resolve problems
 4. Ask the client to monitor his or her drinking or drug use in the next week and if he/she would be willing to talk with you about it the following week
 - a. *“Will you keep track of how much you drink or use drugs next week so we can see if the plan is working? **“If no...Ask for permission to bring up making a plan in a later session**”*
“Okay, that’s fine. Would it be alright if I brought this up again in another session when we meet?”