



starling™

BUILDING RESILIENT MINDS.



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I'm a member of Toastmasters, which is great for someone with social anxiety. People there have said to me, 'You seem so comfortable up there.' And I laugh and say, 'Actually, I have anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety.' And they can't believe it. Because you're so careful about how you present to the world, and no one knows you're dying on the inside. I think people need to know. So I'm quite open with people about my mental health.

My kids always say, 'Mom, why do you tell people that?' And it's because I want people to know there's no shame in it. If more people would talk about it, there would be less shame, less stigma.

It's that stigma that's keeping people from speaking up, and seeking help when they're struggling. Whether that be seeing a counsellor or therapist, or logging onto to Starling Minds. We need to normalize these topics, so everyone knows there's no shame in accessing these supports...

I think anyone could benefit from Starling, especially educators. Whether you have diagnosed mental health issues or not. Just log in, do the assessment, see where you land. You may not even know that what you're experiencing isn't normal, that you're struggling without even realizing it. That external perspective is really useful. So are the techniques to help you get back on track.

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- **Jeanne**, Educator

# Welcome to Starling. We're glad you're here.

## What is Starling?

Starling is an online mental health toolkit that provides education and training for teachers in Northwest Territories to improve mental health, build stress resilience, and boost mental fitness. The Starling program was developed by practicing clinical psychologist, Dr. Andrew Miki, and is based on Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT).

## What is CBT?

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) is a scientifically based treatment that helps people learn how their thoughts, behaviours, and physiology affect how they feel. It views mental health management as a skill that can be learned and improved. Similar to learning to read or ride a bike, CBT teaches basic concepts about mental health and views training exercises as a key component to mastering skills such as breaking negative behaviour patterns, regulating emotional reactions, and balancing thoughts.

## Is there proof that CBT works?

Yes, CBT is considered to be an "evidence-based" form of treatment for many mental health issues including stress, anxiety, and depression. There are thousands of research studies that have demonstrated its effectiveness and have been published in peer-reviewed medical, psychological, and academic journals. Many organizations (i.e. National Institute of Mental Health, Canadian/American/Australian Psychological and Psychiatric Associations) view CBT as the "gold standard" for psychological treatment.

## **Is online CBT as effective as in person?**

Evidence has shown that online CBT can be just as effective as CBT done in person with a trained mental health professional. Starling has attempted to make it even more effective for NWTTA's members by creating a unique case study of a teacher who is experiencing realistic stressors.

## **Who is using Starling?**

Currently, Starling is only available to members of organizations that have a subscription. Based on the feedback we have received, we know that many of our members are individuals who want to learn how to manage their mental health, increase their coping skills, and become more resilient to stress.

## **I might have signs of anxiety or depression. How will Starling help?**

Starling will provide you with a personalized training program complete with educational videos, community support, and evidence based tools to help you build a resilient mind, manage emotions better, improve decision making, and develop focus and clarity.

## **Why should I use Starling?**

Managing your mental health is much like managing other areas of your health – by keeping tabs on your health and engaging in healthy behaviour, you can reduce your chances of struggling with health issues in the future.

Whether you feel great, just okay, or lousy, we suggest that you start with an assessment. It's like a check-up for your mental health. It's quick, it's easy, and it will help you evaluate how you're

doing. If it shows that you're struggling in any of the main areas (like sadness or anxiety), we'll help you get back in the healthy range so you can be the best version of yourself.

## **Where should I use Starling?**

Try to find a quiet spot where you feel comfortable and safe. Make sure you have a stable Internet connection. Otherwise, it's up to you where you use Starling.

## **I haven't used Starling for a while, where should I start again?**

This depends on how far you got in the modules and how much of the information you were able to retain. The program will remember the progress you made so you'll be able to pick up where you left off. However, you may need to review earlier videos/modules to refresh your memory.

## **How long will the program take me?**

Modules tend to have an average length of 10-15 minutes but the time is broken down into short videos. You do not have to complete a module at one set time. Certain activities may take some people longer than others. It depends on the person.

Starling recommends additional modules based on your assessment results. You decide how much information and training you need at any time. The program is flexible so that you can use it continuously or just for a few days.

## **Can I re-do courses I've already completed?**

Yes! We recommend completing the program in the order it is presented to get the greatest benefit from it. However, if you find a session particularly helpful, we encourage you to return to it as many times as you'd like. Starling will generate personalized recommendations based on the ways you interact with a course, which means completing a course on separate occasions can produce different results.

### **Can I use Starling without an Internet connection?**

No, the Starling program requires an Internet connection at all times.

### **Can I download the videos to watch later?**

No, the videos can only be accessed online on the Starling website.

### **Do I have to pay for the program?**

No, NWTTA has provided you with full access to the program.

### **Can I use this program while taking medication (or seeing a psychologist)?**

Yes – Starling is an educational tool that can be used as an adjunct to medication and/or therapy.

## How can I measure my improvement?

Starling will chart your progress over time, providing you with an easy to read visual representation of your journey with the program.

## Is the information I enter on the Starling website kept private and secure?

Your privacy is very important to us. Mental health is highly stigmatized so we are committed to keeping everything you share with us confidential.

Other than your name and e-mail address we do not collect any other personally identifiable information. As a member of Starling, you'll be given an anonymous id number so that you can safely interact with other members.

Your manager, HR department or union will not receive any personal information about you. They will only receive summaries of how your entire organization has used it. This means you can explore the program risk free.

Starling's program has been fully developed in Vancouver, Canada. Our data is stored locally in Vancouver.

If you would like more information, please review our [Privacy Policy](#).

## Can anyone else see what I enter on Starling?

No. Your assessment information or any other personally identifiable information you enter will not be disclosed to your Sponsoring Organization unless you have consented to such disclosure.

Please visit our [Privacy Policy](#) page for more information.

## How do I edit my information or change my password?

Once you've logged in to your account, click your name on the top menu bar, then click on "Account". This will direct you to the profile page. Make any changes then click the orange "Save Changes" button on the bottom of the page after editing your profile.

## What if I forgot my password?

It's simple! Just click on "Forgot Password?" and enter your email address when prompted. You should receive an email from the Starling Minds team to the email address you provided. Click the "reset password" button and enter a new password of your choice.

## Why am I not receiving emails from Starling Minds?

First, check your spam or junk email filter to make sure that emails coming from Starling Minds aren't being placed in this folder. If they are, make sure to add the @starlingminds.com email domain to your email account's safe senders list. If the issue continues please contact us at [members@starlingminds.com](mailto:members@starlingminds.com).



The Northwest Territories Teachers' Association together with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, through the NWT Education Renewal Initiative, are proud to support the Starling Program for NWT educators.



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