

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.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Starling Minds?

Starling Minds is an online mental health and wellness toolkit that provides education and training to manage stress and prevent anxiety and depression. The Starling program was developed by 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 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/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 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.

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

No, The Government of Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment has sponsored full access to the program from January 2016 through December 2019.

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

Yes, Starling Minds is committed to protecting and respecting the privacy rights of its visitors and users. Please visit our Privacy Policy page for more information.

### 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 unless you have consented to such disclosure. • Starling Minds does not sell, rent, share, trade, or disclose your personal information to or with any third parties except in the following limited circumstances: we receive your consent; to enforce applicable Terms of Use including investigation of potential violations; or we are required or authorized to do so by applicable law. Please visit our [Privacy Policy page](#) for more information.

### What are the symptoms of depression?

Depression is a medical condition when people experience a decline in their mood, motivation, and engagement in life. It can be accompanied by significant changes in appetite, sleep problems, concentration problems, feelings of guilt or worthlessness, or suicidal thoughts/ attempts. A diagnosis of depression is warranted if a person has experienced a significant number of symptoms for a set amount of time and a clear decline in at least one area of real-world functioning (i.e. emotional, occupational, relationships, household/finances, personal grooming, hobbies).

### What are the symptoms of anxiety?

There are many different types of anxiety including Panic Attacks, Social Anxiety, and Generalized Anxiety. The most common is Generalized Anxiety when people worry/think excessively and have difficulties controlling or reducing it. Typically, people with Generalized Anxiety have difficulties delegating tasks to others, look for a lot of information, become indecisive, look for reassurance, overprotect others, and

procrastinate. Similar to a diagnosis of depression, there must be a sufficient number of symptoms and a decline in functioning for a set amount of time in order to warrant a diagnosis.

### **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.

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

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

### **Why am I not seeing improvements?**

Learning a new skill, takes time and practice. Mental health symptoms develop over months and even years. It takes time and effort to break the behavioral and thought patterns. Starling can help you but it requires effort.

### **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. You can try to pick up where you left off but you may need to review earlier videos/modules to refresh your memory.

### **How long does a module/activity take?**

Modules tend to have an average length of 20-30 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.

However, if you find a session particularly helpful, we encourage you to return to it as many times as you'd like.

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

• Yes! We recommend completing the course in the order it is presented to get the greatest benefit from it.

### **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.

### **Can I access Starling from my phone or tablet?**

Yes, Starling is accessible from your computer, tablet or phone.

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

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

### **What do I do 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)

Contact [members@starlingminds.com](mailto:members@starlingminds.com) if you need assistance.

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