

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

11:45 p.m.

Northeastern Catholic District School Board

MINUTES

PRESENT: Joel McCartney, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre / Chair
Kim Bordignon, Cochrane Temiskaming Children's Treatment Centre / Vice-Chair
Mackenzie Carrier, Community Living Timmins
Ellen Renaud, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired
Heather Demers, The Lord's Kitchen
Stan Skalecki, NCDSB Trustee
Ron MacInnis, NCDSB Trustee
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher
Katie Mundle, Special Assignment Teacher
Jean Ethier, Education Services Officer / Recorder

EXCUSED:

1. Welcome and Prayer

Joel McCartney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: S.Skalecki

SECONDED BY: K.Bordignon

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: K.Bordignon

SECONDED BY: B.Richer

THAT the minutes of September 23, 2020 be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

4. Mental Health Presentation : Kim McEntee

Kim presented to the committee the NCDSB Mental Health Strategy via a PowerPoint presentation. Kim described the professional learning that took place during the school closure during Covid-19. The ongoing mental health focus for Educators during 2020-2021 and the overarching Mental Health Strategic Priorities for 2019-2022. The presentation has been included in the minutes of the meeting.

5. New Students/New IPRC Data

Catherine Hoven and Katie Mundle each presented the Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) statistics for their respective area. A meeting takes places with the Parents, Principals, Resource Teacher and Classroom Teacher to discuss the identification and placement of the student with Ministry of Education requirements.

Psychological assessments are moving forward for students in need. The assessments were postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The contract services used for the assessments have been notified to complete in school visits.

New IPRC Data for: **Central Region & Northern Region**

Number of Initial IPRCs **as of October 21, 2020: 28**

Communication:

Autism: 3

Learning Disability: 15

Intellectual:

Mild Intellectual Disability: 2

Developmental Disability: 1

Gifted: 1

Behaviour:

Behaviour: 2

Physical:

Deaf/Hard of Hearing: 1

Multiple:

Multiple: 3 (all 3 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) & Learning Disability (LD))

New IPRC Data for: **Southern Region + Moosonee**

Number of Initial IPRCs **as of October 21, 2020: 28**

Communication:

Autism: 1

Learning Disability: 16

Speech Impairment: 2

Language Impairment: 3

Intellectual:

Mild Intellectual Disability: 1

Behaviour:

Behaviour: 1

Physical:

Physical: 1

Multiple:

Multiple: 3 (1 Learning Disability (LD) + Behaviour, 2 Language Impairment + Learning Disability (LD))

6. Fall IPRC Reviews During a Pandemic

For the first time the reviews were conducted over the phone. The Resource Teachers reached personally out to each family to establish a time and date that was convenient for the call. As a result of this process many of the schools had a 100% participation for IPRC's for the 2020-2021 school year. Historically the participation rate is around 90%, some families were unreachable or failed to make the appointment time. The feedback from the schools is that parents really appreciated the new process and felt the meetings were more efficient. The downside of the process is there was no agency participation. Which maybe a result of parents now reaching out to agencies for support or a service distribution due to the pandemic. Each school has requested that the new process be continued moving forward. If over the phone reviews are adopted an in person option will also be offered if families choose.

7. Agency Reports

Cochrane Temiskaming Children's Treatment Centre

The center is currently working with school boards in phases. Phase 1 and 2 are for children who require therapy immediately due to pain or equipment needs. Phase 3 will soon be implemented to allow therapists to provide direct therapy visits in schools. The Ministry of Health and regulatory of colleges guidelines advise to continue virtual sessions whenever possible. Centre based clinics are restarting; including neonatal, complex care clinics, serial casting and orthotics. For cases deemed priority home and school based visits are being completed. Safety protocols have been put in place for both staff and families. The therapists have been advised to not reach out to the schools at this time as the teachers may be overwhelmed with all the additional protocols. If a teacher contacts the agency for assistance, it will be provided to the teacher. Virtual sessions may be offered in the future.

Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre

CTRC staff are continuing to work virtually from home. Staff can continue to connect with teachers in schools via telephone or by making an appointment. Each case is evaluated on a case-by-case basis and completed virtually whenever possible. Eligibility assessments have just begun to take place face-to-face using Plexiglas and PPE safety protocols. Each case will be assessed to ensure safety measures can be maintained. If not maintainable, the assessment may need to be delayed to a later date if not deemed urgent.

A discussion has begun regarding Behaviour intervention referrals and how best to proceed while maintaining safety measures. Clinicians in their respective areas have been advised to contact the school of the student to discuss the risks and safe guards in place. If a one to one session is required is there a safe location designated for it to take place. The decision to proceed with a one to one session is determined by the clinicians' supervisor if the appropriate safety measures are met.

Psychological and Development Disability assessments are beginning to take place. The clinicians have contacted the school and completed the screening to confirm the eligibility of the student to participate in the assessment. The student may be required to take part in the assessment at a later date due to the amount of interaction between the clinician and the student. If it is determined, it is safe for all parties the assessment can proceed. In the coastal area the assessments are being held virtually at this time.

Speech and Language services has been connecting with the schools to offer virtual sessions with the students and school resource staff.

VOICE

The annual general meeting is being held virtually on Saturday November 21, 2020.

The Lord's Kitchen

The Lord's Kitchen has continued to serve the needs of clients during the pandemic. On average 125 clients are being served on Thursdays between 4:00pm-5:30pm. The Friday morning breakfast service serves 65-75 clients. The plan for winter service is currently being drafted and should be finalized soon. A prepacked meal is provided to each individual, while maintaining safety protocols.

8. **Date of Next Meeting** – November 18, 2020 at 11:45am via WebEx Invite

9. **Other Business** – None

10. **Adjournment**

MOVED BY: S. Skalecki

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

CARRIED.

NCDSB Mental Health Strategy

Kim McEntee and Jennifer Dunkley

SEAC Meeting

October 2020



Today's focus

You will know about...

- Professional Learning during Covid-19 School Closure (March-June 2020)
- On-going mental health focus for Educators during 2020-21
 - School relevant, implementation sensitive resources
 - New: Standardized Referral Process
- Overarching Mental Health Strategic Priorities (2019-2022)

Setting the Tone

- Mental health and well-being is our priority
- We lead with compassion and empathy
- Schools are an excellent place to promote and protect student mental health
- We have strong mental health foundations to build on
- We need to work together



Professional Learning

- Collaboration between Mental Health Lead & Indigenous Lead Portfolios
- Opportunity for staff learning during Covid-19 school closure
- Approximately 81 staff engaged in mental health focused learning
- Groups involved included Mental Health Worker, Child & Youth Workers, Educational Assistants, ISW, Autism Behaviour Specialists, Principals/VP
- Learning themes grouped by category:
 - Trauma informed for schools
 - Mental health promotion
 - Responding to mental health concerns
 - Responding to heightened emotions
 - Attendance matters

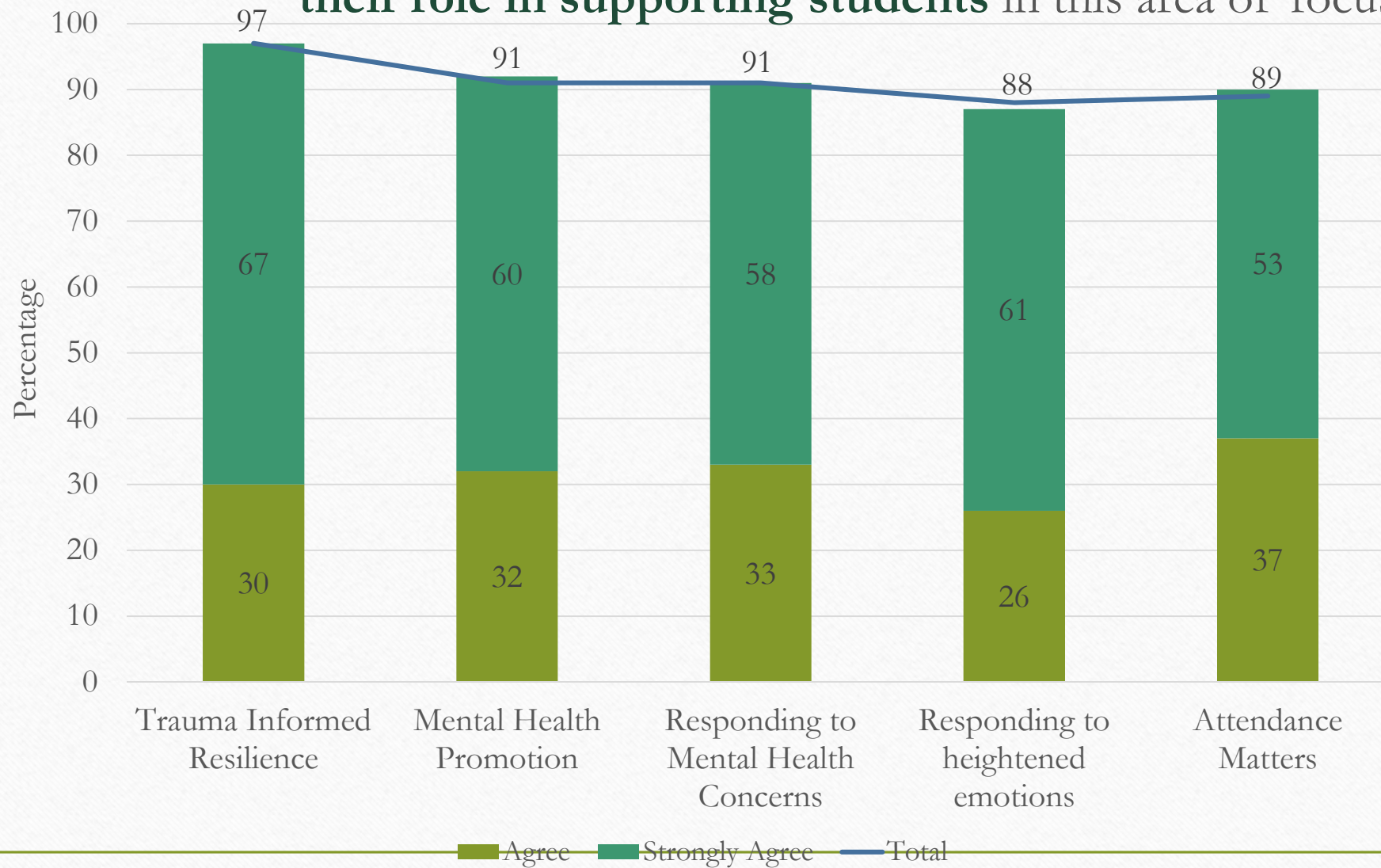
Session Learning Goals

- All learning related to the mental health portfolio is prepared with an intentional and explicit end in mind (learning goal)
- Following the learning cycle (March-June), respondents were asked to consider a specific learning theme in relation to the following:
 - Understand their role in supporting students in the specific area of focus
 - Have increased confidence in the specific area of focus
 - Are likely to apply the learning to their work with students
- Participants were asked to rate the above based on the following criteria:
 - Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

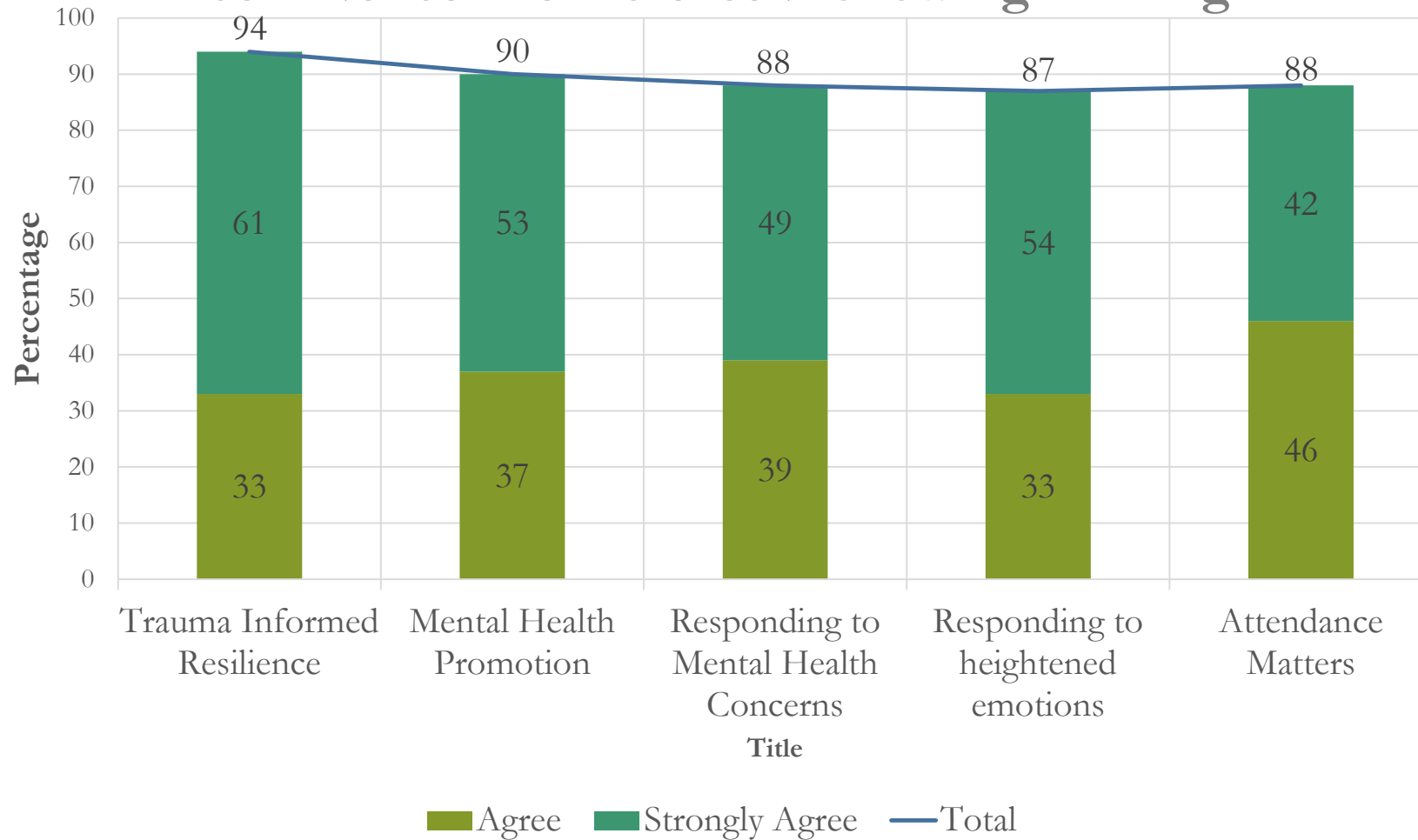
General Summary

- No one Strongly Disagreed on any measure:
 - Highest scores were Strongly Agree
 - The lowest score were Disagree (and there were only 2)
- The range was mostly Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
- The majority of staff strongly agreed on most questions
- No one training was more effective at increasing confidence, clarifying roles, and offering useful tools than another. They were all appreciated.

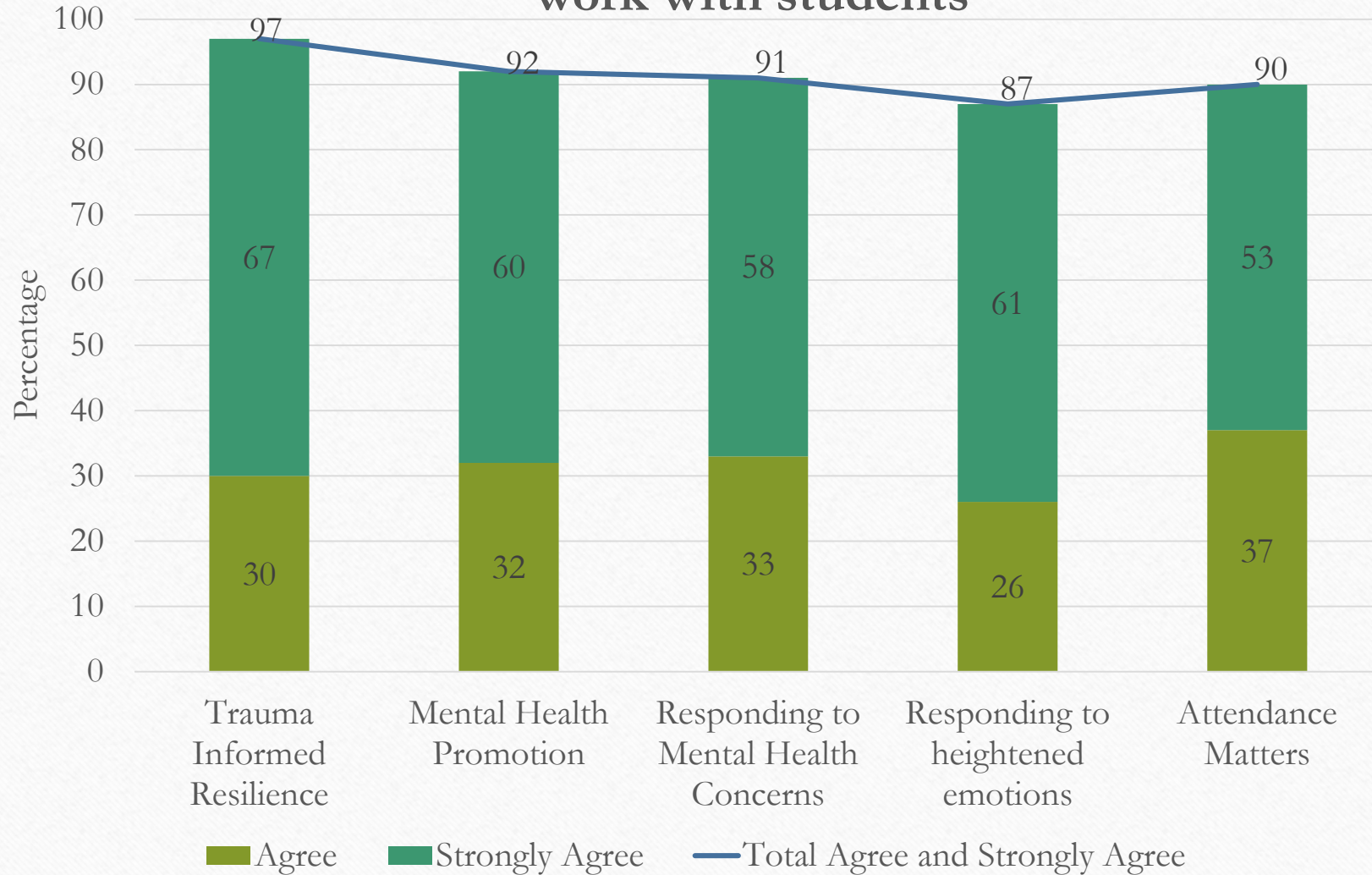
Staff who Agree or Strongly Agree that they **understand** their role in supporting students in this area of focus



Staff who Agree or Strongly Agree their confidence has increased following training



Staff who are likely to apply the learning to their work with students



Notable Comments: Trauma

- “Eye opening”
- “Really enjoyed this course and loved the speakers”
- ”These trainings (...) are crucial to improving the learning environment for our students”
- “This course was excellent with just the right amount of info, then video, then worksheets/reflection and continue/repeat throughout.”

Notable Comments: Mental Health Promotion

- “I love that these are being taught and offered to support staff. It will make such a huge difference in the approach staff take in addressing issues with children.”
- “This was a nice refresher on mental health. With the everyday rituals sometimes we get stuck in the moment and forget things we have learned to assist our students.”
- “I am a certified Mental Health first Aid person so some of this I already knew.”
- “This course was very helpful in the fact that I will be able to support in all areas of mental health more effectively”

Notable Comments: Responding to students experiencing mental health concerns

- “I have a broader understanding of the causes of focus issues now and because of this I will dig deeper to try to understand why a student has this issue and how we can go about helping the student.”
- “This course was an eye opening and I have more confidence”

Notable Comments: Emotion-coaching

- “I feel that this approach/strategy was very useful and I have tried this approach within my own family network and have seen success. It truly does help with those that you have a rapport with and who experience higher levels of emotion”
- “Using the Emotional Coaching language is crucial to building a solid and trusting relationship with the students. Taking care of the emotional needs before the cognitive, makes it easier for the student to be calm and later rationalize the situation.”
- “Really enjoyed the live webinar with co-workers experiences and going through each one.”

Note: This project, in particular, demonstrated that in an imaginal situation, school staff are able to improve upon their capacity to emotion coach a student with heightened emotions. A significant jump in capacity was noted.

Notable Comments: Attendance

- “I now have a better understanding how absence can become chronic. It not only affects the student but also the teacher, and the class”
- “During the module *Attendance Matters* it focussed on contacting parents / guardians. As an Educational Assistant we are not allowed to do this.”
- ...” did not realize the ripple effect “...

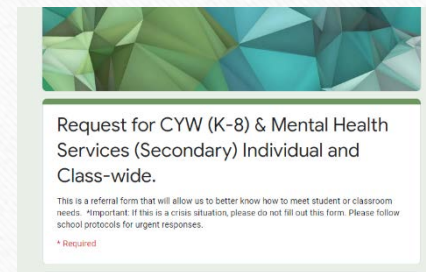
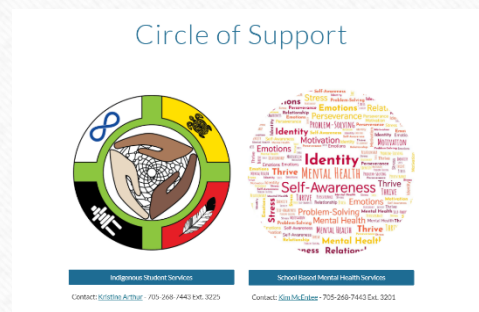
Mental Health Focus for 2020-21

- Share, promote and support the implementation of School Mental Health Ontario Resources
 - Resources have an Ontario context, school relevant
 - Implementation is supported via the Mental Health Lead (me 😊) and the Superintendent responsible for this portfolio (Jen 😊)
- Continue alignment to NCDSB's mental health strategic priorities which include:
 - Mental Health Capacity Building
 - Evidence-based programming
 - Equity for specific populations
 - System coordination & pathways
 - Youth engagement

I am happy to come back to provide updates on any of the above!

New: Referral Process

- Supporting Educators & Clarifying Roles
- Referral Site and Referring Guidelines – District wide



I am seeking services for: *

Choose

Individual-Student

Whole-Class programming

Resources to Support Educators



Supporting a Mentally Healthy Return to School

A Resource for NCDSB School Teams
2020 PA Day Material

Catholic District SCHOOL BOARD

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Welcome to the Mental Health & Well-being Resources page

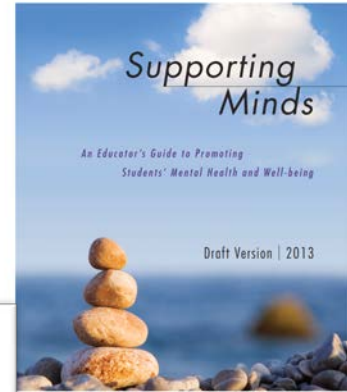
Are you looking for information about services in your community? Find a wide range of services and programs in your area with the help of Ontario 211. The service can be accessed by calling 2-1-1 or via email or live chat by visiting <https://211ontario.ca/>

Resources designed to provide easy-to-access tools, support and reliable information. A result of a partnership between School Mental Health Ontario, Jack.org and Kids Help Phone. For more information please visit the COVID-19 Mental Health Resource Hub



Other Useful Links & Resources

- Need Help Now?
- ↑ Covid-19 Supporting a discussion with Children & Youth
- ↑ Everyday Mental Health Activities (Elementary)
- ↑ Everyday Mental Health Activities (Secondary)



Supporting Minds Strategies at a Glance:

Ideas to Support and Bolster students with Mental Health Problems in the Classroom

Little things can make a big difference
Easy-to-implement, evidence-informed mental health practices for Catholic elementary classrooms

Explore by skill category

- Stress management and resilience
- Identification and management of emotions
- Positive motivation and perseverance
- Healthy relationship skills
- Self-awareness and sense of identity
- Critical and creative thinking (executive functioning)



SUPPORTING MINDS / SMH-ON TUTORIAL SERIES

Tutorial #2: Recognizing and Responding to Anxiety in the Classroom

ONLINE SMART SERIES TUTORIAL #2 | INTRODUCTION



<https://smho-smsso.ca/>

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