



**Welcome to YouthNet**

# What is YouthNet RéseauAdo?



**YouthNet RéseauAdo offers a wide range of mental health services to youth aged 13 to 20**

# Mental Health Promotion

Presentations  
Discussion Groups  
Info Booths  
SafeTalk Training

# Intervention

8 week group programs  
Bridging Counselling

## Youth Advisory Committee

Student Wellness Committees  
Stigma Reduction Summits

Yearly Trend Review  
Program Evaluation

# Wellness & Stigma Reduction

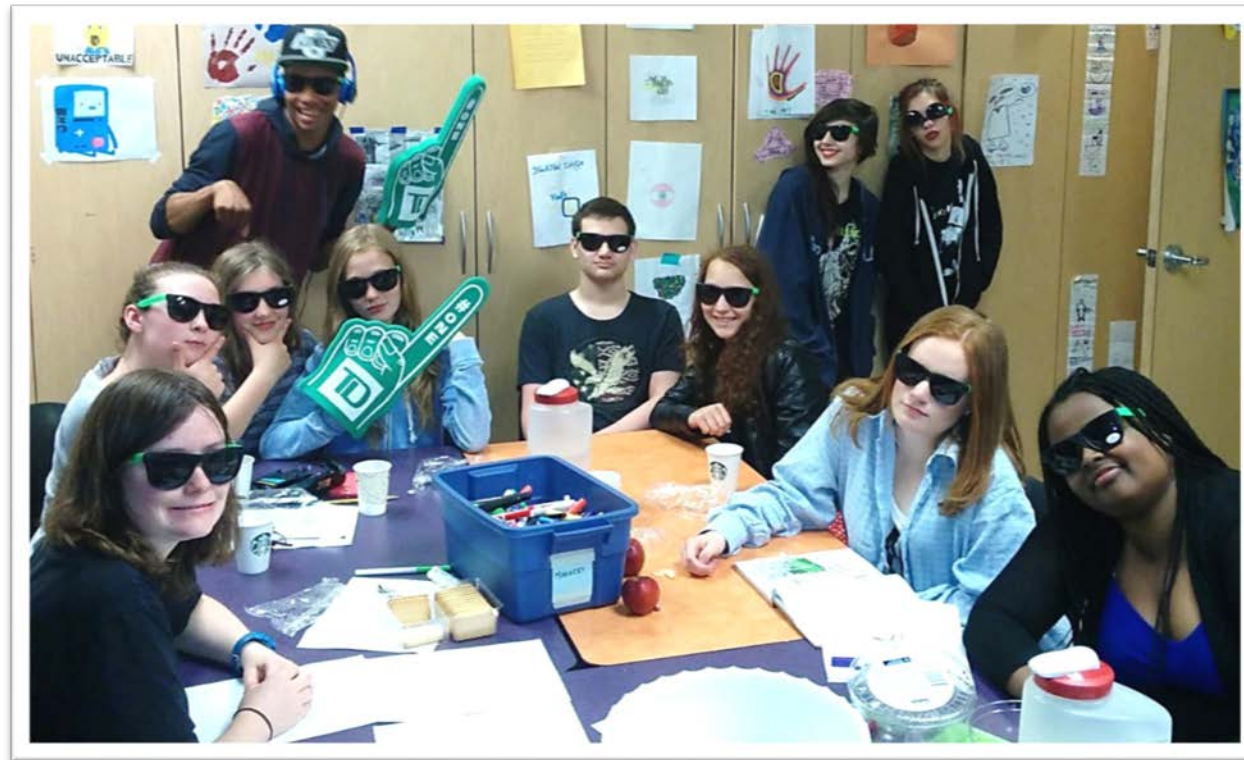
# Research



# Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)

YouthNet programs are designed, informed, and overseen by a Youth Advisory Committee

This volunteer working group is open to all youth mental health advocates



# **Mental Health 101**

Who has a mental health?

What is mental health?

Why do we TALK about mental health?

# How do we talk about Mental Health?

## Physical health

**Balanced:**  
Body reacts in a “normal” range for you!

**Stuffy nose:**  
You might be getting a cold

**A bad flu:**  
It’s not getting any better after a week

**Serious pain:**  
After a serious car accident - you go to the ER



## Mental health

**Balanced:**  
Feelings and thoughts are in a “normal” range for you!

**Feel stressed:** You may be anxious after a fight with a friend

**Really down:**  
Struggling for a while - you may be missing school

**Serious pain:**  
Thoughts of suicide - you call a parent or crisis line

# YouthNet's Magic Formula

Let's  
Talk

+

Let's  
Do

+

Let's  
Connect

Starting the  
conversation /  
understanding  
mental health

How will it be  
engaging?

Resources



## **Did you know?**

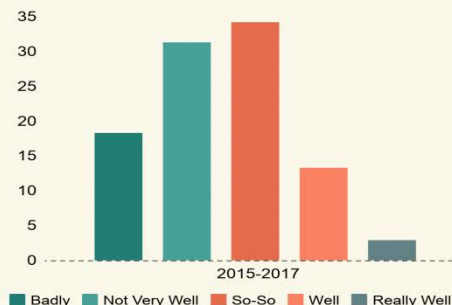
- The fear of stigma often delays diagnosis and treatment, yet early intervention can make a dramatic difference in quality of life.
- One in six children diagnosed with a mental health problem or mental illness will get treatment.
- 40% of parents say they would not admit to anyone, not even their doctor, that they had a child with a mental health problem or mental illness.



# Let's start by talking

## WHAT YOUTH ARE TELLING US COPING ABILITY

Youth Perceived Coping Ability



*"You cannot build a house with only a hammer, and the more you have at your disposal, the easier it is to use one that fits your needs at that moment."*  
YNRA, Facilitator.

The ability to cope is a key component of resiliency and health.

It is considered to be an intentional response to manage an external or internal stressor (Rosen, Glennie, Dalton, Lennon, & Bozick, 2010). According to youth, it is an important part of maintaining one's health and mental well-being.

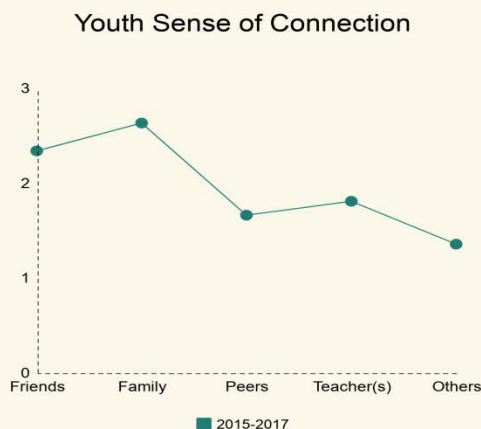
*"Coping keeps us from being unsafe. Far too many youth are crippled by stress, and far too few people know how to maintain their mental well-being. - 16, Non-Binary."*

The majority of youth from 2015-2017 before a YNRA program were ambivalent about their ability to cope or reported coping *Not very well* (31.3%  $n = 75$ ). Only 2.9% reported feeling like they coped with stress *Really Well*. Learning about mental health and ways to cope is important since it is shown to be a key part of resilience. For example, it was a protective factor against risky behavior where youth who participated in extracurricular activities, were less likely to drop out (Randolph, Fraser & Orthner, 2004). Also, in a Québec study of 297 high school students, resilient youth scored higher on coping strategies than well adjusted and vulnerable youth (Dumont & Provost, 1999). When youth know that they have the skills and strategies to manage stressors in their life, they are more likely to use them. For youth programming, coping is considered a key part of a successful intervention program to improve resilience in at risk youth (Kitano & Lewis, 2005). That is why it important to help youth develop intentional coping strategies to help learn steps they can take when faced with a stressful event. It is through learning to be adaptive in the face of adversity that will help youth become more resilient.



# Let's start by talking

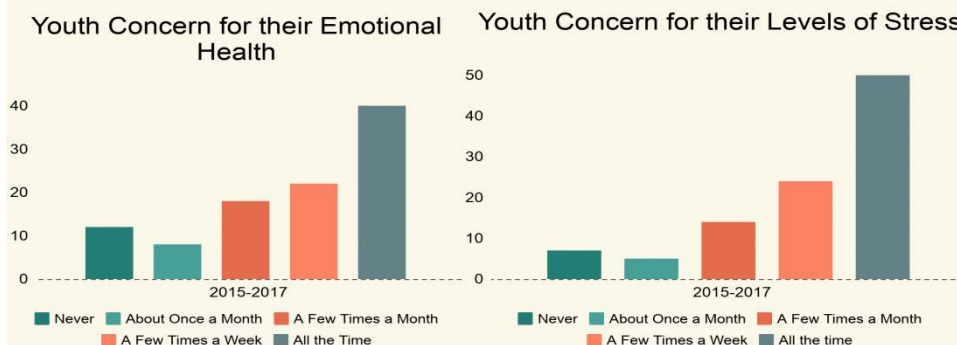
## WHAT YOUTH ARE TELLING US CONNECTION TO OTHERS



Youth sense of connection to sources of support were measured using a self reported measure asking how connected youth feel to Friends, Family, Peers, Teachers and Others in the community. Responses were measured on a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (Never), to 5 (All of the Time). On average, Youth felt most connected to Family and secondly to friends. The majority of youth felt connected to Family reporting feeling how connected at Very Much ( 28.9%, n = 70 ) and 2ndly to Friends (21.5%, n = 52). A sense of connection to others is important for people across ages, and particularly for youth connection to peers. A study of 733 adolescents from San Diego found that the more positively youth rated their sense of connection to their peers, the less behavioral problems they had (Newman & Newman, 2007). Since youth are more likely to seek support from other people their own age, it is important to offer opportunities for youth to develop supportive relationships with one another.

# Let's start by talking

## WHAT YOUTH ARE TELLING US YOUTH CONCERN FOR THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



Youth reported being concerned with both their emotional health and levels of Stress. Questions were self-reported and were measured on a five point-Likert Scale to assess frequency over the last 3 months. Findings indicated that youth were highly concerned with their mental health, where the majority reported being concerned about their emotional health *All the time* (n = 97) and 50% were concerned with their stress *All the time* (n = 121).

In other words, youth were most frequently and highly concerned with their stress and mental health before a program. This is particularly problematic since youth reported low coping ability. They have high concern for their emotional well-being and levels of stress but feel as if they do not have the ability to cope with it. Therefore, before a program, youth expressed a concern for their mental well-being and a high need to learn more about their mental health and coping strategies to help maintain their mental well-being.



# **Common Stress Factors Affecting Youth School**

- test taking
- pressure on excelling academically
  - friendships
  - lunch time
- managing conflict in school
  - romantic relationships
- gender identity and disclosures in school
  - bullying
  - cyberbullying
  - electronics



# **Common Stress Factors Affecting Youth Home**

- family conflict
  - siblings
- siblings living with a mental illness/physical illness
  - autonomy vs dependency
- divorce / separation / loss of parent
  - anxiety and leaving the home
- gender identity and disclosures in the home
  - cyberbullying
- electronics and disconnecting at home

# **Common Stress Factors Affecting Youth**

## **Individual Changes**

- social changes
- emotional changes
- understanding hormonal changes
- growing pains
- managing expectations
- managing own way of coping
- understanding stress and the response in ones body
  - learning how to adapt in stressful situations
- creating online / social media presence and managing those expectations

# Recognizing potential mental health concerns

Youth will experience a lot of emotional and social changes so the most important thing to note are:

- 1. *Intensity:*** *Have there been major changes in your youth's mental health?*
- 2. *Duration:*** *Has this been persisting over a period of time?*
- 3. *Interference:*** *Is this interfering with your youth's daily life?*

# Recognizing potential mental health concerns

Youth will experience a lot of emotional and social changes so the most important thing to note are:

**1. *Intensity:*** *Have there been major changes in their mental health?*

Are you noticing changes in their speech, their emotional reactions to situations? Detaching from family and friends?  
Losing interest in hobbies?



# Recognizing potential mental health concerns

Youth will experience a lot of emotional and social changes so the most important thing to note are:

*2. Duration: Has this been persisting over a period of time?*

How long are these changes? 1 week? 1 month? Is it triggered by an event?

# Recognizing potential mental health concerns

Youth will experience a lot of emotional and social changes so the most important thing to note are:

**3. *Interference:*** *Is this interfering with their daily life?*

Is this interfering with their daily functions? Are they having a hard time leaving the house? Getting out of bed? Ignoring friends? Spending too much time online?

# **Let's Do: Implementing**

We found that talking to youth about mental health and teaching them strategies is easier and more effective when you implement activities.

Let's try it out.

# The “do-ing” in Mental Health

- Roses and Thrones
- Mindful Check Ins (use online apps to help)
- Coping wall strategies – take one, leave one
  - Gratitude Wall Challenge
- Find a quote and talk about its meaning and what you like about it
  - Adult Ally conversation
- Contact based education – go to talks, watch documentaries on mental health
  - Modeling self-care
- Gadget Free outings and activities



# Let's Connect: Resources

Know your resources in the community

- Walk in clinics

- Youth Services Bureau

- Talk to your school about their guidance counsellor / social worker

- YouthNet and PLEO

- BeSafe App

# **Most Importantly,**

Patience, gratitude and being kind to yourself

Use the resources available to you and your family

Talk to your family doctor about mental health

# Learn more about us

Come check out our  
website!

[www.youthnet.on.ca](http://www.youthnet.on.ca)



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@CHEOyouthnet



## Need more information?

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