

# 2024-2025 ACTION PLAN

# STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2023-2026



# 2024-2025 ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION

UGDSB is committed to providing culturally responsive, evidence-informed student mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention supports and services that respect students as individuals with diverse needs and experiences. School boards are the ideal place for mental health promotion, the prevention of mental health issues, and the early identification of mental health concerns through school-based intervention services. Schools provide students with knowledge and skills to care for their mental health and well-being as well as how and when to seek help when they need it (mental health literacy). UGDSB also works closely with regional children's mental health agencies to develop a coordinated system of care for children and youth to move to, through and from school settings when they require more significant mental health services and treatment.

We continue to monitor and evaluate our action plans through point of learning surveys, consultations, WHY Survey and other regional and local data as well as assessing the utilization of websites curated for students, parents/caregivers and educators. Our Mental Health Leadership Committee and Student Mental Health Leadership Committee both monitor and review actions and outcomes throughout the year. Creating opportunities for student leadership and engagement in mental health and well-being enhances our understanding of student's needs, includes new perspectives and solutions and is a primary protective factor for student well-being.

***“Students have the knowledge and skills to understand and support their mental health and have access to high quality mental health and addiction services that provide appropriate supports for their diverse needs and experiences when and where they need them across the provincial mental health continuum of care”.***

Vision Statement for Student Mental Health across Ontario, PPM 169, Ministry of Education

# PRIORITY: Mentally Healthy Classrooms

## Goals

Enhance mentally healthy classroom practices to ensure students feel valued, supported and equipped with the skills to manage stress and promote wellbeing.

Enhance social emotional learning and skill building in the grade 3-8 classroom setting through increased CYC support.



## Outcomes and Monitoring

Schools report integration of everyday wellness activities into classrooms and site analytics show educator access.

80% of classrooms 3-8 will receive targeted social emotional learning presentations from CYCs and students will report an increase in their knowledge post presentation.

Through surveys and focus groups, students will report feeling valued at school; feeling supported at school; an increase in their stress management skills and knowledge.

# PRIORITY: Trauma Informed Practices

## Goals

Enhance the knowledge of staff to recognize, understand, and respond to the impacts of trauma.

Bolster student centered, asset based planning, support and instruction.

## Outcomes and Monitoring

School staff attend presentations, lunch and learns and other learning opportunities and report an increase in their understanding of trauma informed practices..

Staff involved in the piloting of the Student Centered Instructional Tool report enhanced confidence to support and understand their students.

# PRIORITY: Mental Health Literacy

## Goals

Bolster the capacity of the parents/caregivers and school staff to recognize and respond to mental health concerns.

Increase the knowledge and confidence of school staff in the area of life promotion and suicide prevention.

Enhance student mental health literacy through the implementation of Mental Health modules in grade 7-8 Health and Physical Education classrooms and grade 10 modules in Careers.

## Outcomes and Monitoring

Following professional learning opportunities, educators indicate an increase in knowledge and understanding in early identification and support.

Staff who complete the Prepare, Prevent, Respond training report an increase in knowledge and confidence in suicide prevention.

Caregivers participating in mental health learning opportunities indicate an increase in knowledge relating

Students report an increase in their knowledge and understanding as it relates to identifying mental health struggles and knowing how to seek support.



## **PRIORITY:** Indigenous Wellbeing

### **Goals**

Increase opportunities for staff to listen and learn about the impacts of western colonial mental health systems on Indigenous peoples so as to increase awareness and understanding as it relates to supporting Indigenous student mental health.

Increase access to identity affirming mental health supports to Indigenous students K-12.

Engage with Indigenous community members and Elders to develop strategic directions for the continued support for indigenous students as well as opportunities to bring a more wholistic approach to supporting all students.

### **Actions and Outcomes**

Social work, Psychology and Child and Youth Counsellors who receive training report an increase in knowledge and understanding as it relates to how they can support Indigenous students.

Students are utilizing the supports available from the Indigenous Social Worker and CYC.

Mental Health Leadership Committee is able to identify key areas of focus for strategic planning and development.

## **PRIORITY:** Identity Affirming Mental Health

### **Goals**

Bolster offerings of brief, evidence-informed interventions (individual, group, virtual when needed) to students requiring prevention and early intervention services.

Continue to enhance the knowledge and skill of MH staff to delivery culturally responsive, identity affirming MH services and support..

### **Actions and Outcomes**

Students participate in identity affirming mental health supports both individually and in groups both virtually and in person.

Students report that their supports were helpful and that there was a decrease in symptoms.

Regulated mental health staff are provided with training in various modalities to support brief clinical interventions and report increase in knowledge and understanding.

## PRIORITY: Addiction Prevention & Early Intervention

### Goals

Enhance knowledge for students on the risks of addiction, strategies for prevention, and resources to support.

Enhance knowledge for parents/caregivers on the risks of addiction, strategies for prevention, and resources to support.

### Actions and Outcomes

Parent and student mental health websites will include SMHO resources and links to support learning and site analytics will indicate uptake.

Following learning opportunities, students will report an increase in their knowledge and indicate an increase in confidence to make healthy choices following learning opportunities.

Following learning opportunities, parents/caregivers will report an increase in knowledge relating to addictions as well as increased confidence in identifying and supporting their children/youth.

## PRIORITY: Student Engagement & Leadership

### Goals

Enhance opportunities for student leadership and engagement across the board.

Amplify student leadership and engagement in the development and monitoring of the board's Strategy for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing.

### Actions and Outcomes

The Student Mental Health Leadership committee will meet and identify key recommendations for actionable steps to support the Mental Health Strategy.

Students participating on the Mental Health Leadership Committee report that the work they are involved in is meaningful.

A framework is developed to support schools in establishing wellness teams that include youth voice.

Students participating in school Wellness Teams report that they were included, valued and supported.

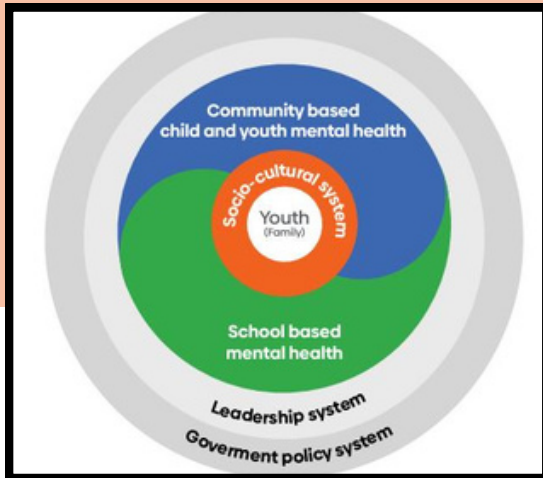


# PRIORITY: Mutli-Tiered, Coordinated System of Care

## Goals

Strengthen the coordinated, multi-tiered model of mental health supports and services available to students from classroom based wellness, skill building, brief intervention and complex case coordination and bridging to community services and how to access.

Enhance understanding of the multi-tiered system of care for children and youth mental health and addictions using the framework of Right Time Right Care and identify key actionable steps.



## Anticipated Outcomes

Increased access to social workers in schools will result in access to more short term clinical services for students.

Introduction of regional complex mental health social workers will enhance bridging to, through and from community mental health services for students.

Meet regularly with community mental health agencies and hospitals to identify gaps and take actions to support a coordinated system of care.

Continue to participate at community planning tables and committees to support the wellbeing of students and identify key trends and actionable next steps.

For students struggling with attendance, the UGDSB offers many supports including access to Social Workers/Attendance Counsellors, referrals to community agencies and support staff in schools, in addition to many ways to ensure students keep connected and on top of their learning for periods when they have to be absent from school and/or to re-enter school. There is also an attendance manual and a board wide campaign to provide supports and resources to students and their caregivers as well as staff in relation to attendance.