

Moving On Mental Health

A system that makes sense for children & youth

November 2018

Issue 6



Welcome to our sixth newsletter!

We are pleased to issue our sixth newsletter dedicated to our youth engagement work. Support from the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health's Innovations Grant made it possible to take this commitment to the next level by engaging youth advisors in this work. The final project report "The Story Of Youth Engagement in SDG" is available in English on our website. A summary report is available in French and English on our website.



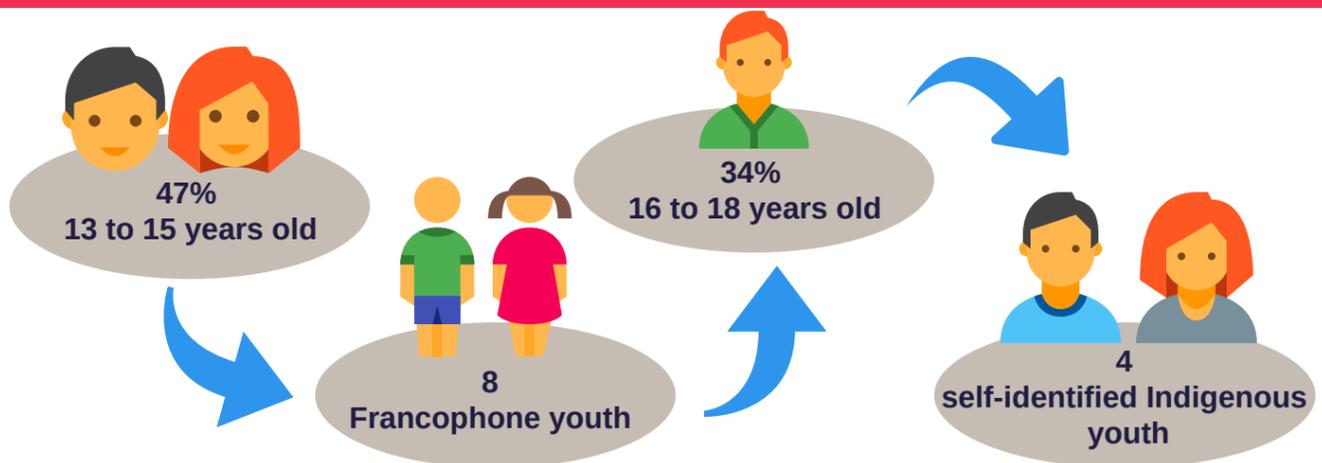
<https://www.cornwallhospital.ca/en/ChildrenMentalHealth>
<https://www.cornwallhospital.ca/fr/santementaleenfants>

What did we do?

Youth advisors took on leadership roles to bring forward the youth perspective and voice to hear what is important to them and how we can improve services in SDG.



Demographics



What Did Youth Say About Mental Health?



- Often defined by disorders or the challenges associated with mental health.
- Youth want more education on mental health.
- Awareness would help end the stigma.
- If youth needed help they would call the police or go to the hospital, even in non-emergent situations.
- There is a lack of easily available information on mental health services in SDG.
- Youth often feel shame and are scared to get help.

"It is something that you have to fight everyday, it's like trying to stand with a pile of bricks on your back"

What Barriers Do Youth Experience?

- Themselves.
- Timing & waitlist.
- Not knowing where to go.
- Downplaying the severity.
- The people in their life (e.g., parents or friends).
- Lack of resources (e.g., money or transportation).
- Confusing age restrictions for some programs and services.
- Lack of services tailored to specific needs (e.g., transgender services).



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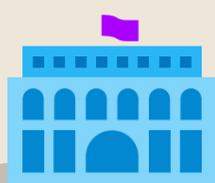
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135 youth



17 agencies



6 months

How Do Youth Define Crisis?

- Being suicidal.
- "Code red" / emergency.
- Needing immediate help.
- In need of a break from life.
- Not being able to be left alone.
- Something that cannot be conquered on their own.
- Not living in a safe environment (e.g., being abused or witnessing parents doing drugs).
- Something bad will happen if help is not received.

"A crisis is a situation where there is a lot of stress and you have to make drastic decisions"



Common Themes

- Youth want to have their voices heard and to see outcomes.
- Ideas on what youth friendly services and places look and feel like.
- Identified barriers such as wait times, fear and stigma.
- Youth want to learn more about what services are available and how to access them.
- Need for local respite services, workshops on various topics and specific needs for LGBTQ+ community.

"Im glad that I was able to be a part of this and I'd like to see the changes and impact that this can make in the community"



When getting help, youth would want....

- Visual aids and fidget toys.
- Common language / no clinical terms.
- To have their voice heard and acknowledged.
- Resources in reach so that they don't have to ask.
- Options so that they can choose their treatment plan.
- To hear that their worker can relate to their circumstance.
- Whoever they interact with to be real, blunt and patient with them.
- Someone who genuinely cares about them.

"We can tell when someone cares and when they're just doing it for the paycheck"



Next Steps



- Youth Council.
- Peer support groups.
- Continue youth engagement in SDG.
- Maintain youth advisor as a member of the child and youth mental health team.

For More Information On Youth Engagement Contact:

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