



Atlantic Summer Institute on Healthy & Safe Communities

Promoting Child & Youth Mental Health: Engaging All Generations

CURRICULUM PATHWAYS 2016

Curriculum #1: “Building & Using Evidence for Collective Impact on Child & Youth Mental Health!”

Objective: To develop skill in finding and using evidence to build a case for investing in the promotion of child and youth mental health and access to care.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

This workshop will introduce concepts and tools for finding, evaluating and building evidence as the basis for knowledge-based programs and policies to address child and youth mental health promotion and access to services when needed. It will identify the factors that contribute to positive mental health in Atlantic Canada and how to measure them. It will introduce the model of “collective impact”¹ for collaboration around a common agenda as a way to address complex social problems. Participants will work in small groups to practice using the tools presented by the workshop facilitators to develop shared measures of positive outcomes for child and youth mental health.

Learning Objectives

After completing four interactive, 2-hour modules participants will:

1. Have a better understanding of evidence, including:
 - a. What evidence is and is not;
 - b. Different kinds of evidence;
 - c. Why we need evidence to support child and youth mental health promotion and access to services.
2. Know more about gathering evidence on child and youth mental health in Atlantic Canada, including:
 - a. How to develop shared measures for collective impact;
 - b. How to find evidence;
 - c. How to interpret and assess evidence.
3. Know more about using evidence in the development and evaluation of various actions, including:
 - a. Using evidence to identify policies, programs and practices to support child and youth mental health;
 - b. Using evidence to evaluate results and impact of policies, programs and practices.
4. Apply knowledge of how evidence can contribute to child and youth mental health in Atlantic Canadian communities, including:
 - a. Learning how to interpret evidence and report results for collective impact;
 - b. Moving from conversation to evidence to action;
 - c. Exploring collaboration and partnerships for collective impact;
 - d. Applying tools from the curriculum to assess the role of evidence in participants’ work and their communities.

¹ See <http://www.collaborationforimpact.com/collective-impact/>

Module 1 - Understanding Evidence

The use of evidence is becoming increasingly important in our society. Daily we are bombarded with information when we read the newspaper, surf on the Internet, engage with our colleagues at work or volunteer in our communities.

But many of us know little about evidence – what it is, where it comes from or why it's important. Therefore, the first module in the evidence curriculum is an introduction to evidence. Participants will explore the meaning of evidence, become familiar with different kinds of evidence and why we need to pay attention to evidence.

Introduce Collective Impact model, with shared measurement on progress toward a shared agenda.

Module 2 - Finding and Evaluating Evidence

There are many competing demands for funds to support mental programs and services. Organizations in the voluntary sector are especially familiar with these challenges, but policy analysts in government must also compete for limited resources and for the attention of decision makers. Results may take time to manifest themselves. In order to make these hard choices, decision makers are expecting more compelling evidence of need and of the potential for positive change at both the program and policy levels.

The second module in the evidence curriculum is designed to help participants become familiar with collecting and using evidence to identify and respond to mental health issues in their communities. It will also explore how to share evidence to build a common agenda toward collective impact on child and youth mental health promotion.

The National Collaborating Centres (NCCs) supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada are working together to collect evidence about child and youth mental health. This project will start in the spring of 2016 and be completed a year later. A representative of the NCCs will present their project, focusing on the kinds of evidence they will be looking for, their plans for evaluating evidence, and dissemination of the results.

Module 3 - Applying Evidence

Whether we work in the field of mental health, education, crime prevention, or social development, many of us are deeply committed to child and youth mental health promotion and access to services. WellAhead is a philanthropic initiative that aims to improve child and youth mental health by integrating wellbeing into school communities. Jamie Gamble, one of Canada's leading consultants in developmental evaluation and an evaluation advisor to WellAhead, will speak to the *knowns* and *unknowns* that WellAhead has encountered, and how it has thought differently about evidence in each of these areas as a result.

The third module in this series will share lessons from both WellAhead and other organizations Jamie has worked with to explore how we understand and interpret the idea of "evidence" in complex situations, and the lessons and challenges in working with existing research while building the conditions for use of evidence, evaluation and learning. Jamie will examine the unique approach WellAhead has taken to gathering evidence at multiple levels, which includes the use of prototyping and developmental evaluation. He will also speak to the application of evidence in the context of scaling as a way to take learnings and use them to influence broader systems.

Module 4 - Using Evidence for Child and Youth Mental Health Promotion

Evidence is a critical component of change in our communities and society. Compelling evidence is particularly important for convincing decision-makers in government, communities, public institutions and the private sector to make or change policies to support mental health promotion and better access to services for children, youth and their families.

The fourth module of the evidence stream is designed to help participants understand how to work collaboratively to use evidence to support policies that will create supportive environments in schools and communities for child and youth mental health promotion and access to services when needed. It will provide an opportunity to apply what participants have learned for use in their own communities.

FACILITATORS:

Malcolm Shookner has an extensive background in community development, social research, health promotion and public policy in the non-profit, academic and public sectors. He has worked on many projects that use indicators to measure the quality of life, sustainability, health and well-being of communities. Malcolm is President of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Summer Institute on Health and Safe Communities Inc. He was formerly the Chief Statistician for Nova Scotia Community Counts (retired), a provincially supported website that provided information for and about communities.

Doug Crossman has 35 years of involvement in the mental health, public health, and population health promotion fields. From September 2008 to December 2014, Doug served as a Senior Policy Advisor with the Public Health Agency of Canada, becoming one of the 'architects' of the Innovation Strategy (IS) with lead responsibility for the design, implementation, and evaluation of the mental health promotion component of the Strategy. Doug has recently established P3R Consulting in Stratford, Prince Edward Island. He is a member of an Advisory Committee for the McConnell and Carthy Foundations which lead the development of a 'social lab' framework to explore best practices in social-emotional learning based school policies and programs to be applied across the country. He has also completed a Certificate Program with the Institute of Social Emotional Intelligence in Colorado.

Jamie Gamble is the Principal of Imprint Consulting. He is a pioneer in the field of developmental evaluation and has supported innovation and development in a wide range of issues including poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, food security, public health, citizen engagement and the arts. Many organizations that wrestle with truly complex issues get so immersed in the details, the paradoxes, stakeholder differences and uncertainties of their work, that they become paralyzed. Jamie has the rare ability to work with people to uncover the essence of their most pressing challenges and to support the productive use of critical thinking and data as a way to move forward. In 2008 the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation published Jamie's Developmental Evaluation Primer. For more information, please visit www.imprintinc.ca

Dianne Oickle, knowledge translation specialist at National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, and adjunct professor, St. Francis Xavier University.

Dianne has a MSc and BSc. She is a dietitian with over 15 years' experience working in public health in Ontario focused on reproductive and child health in a mostly rural setting. Her work involved development of practice guidelines for health professionals, train-the-trainer initiatives, public presentations, educational resource development, working with the media, community coalition and network support, writing for the public and professionals, and program planning, implementation, and evaluation. She Dianne has taught university nutrition courses, worked with provincial networks, and precepted students. Dianne earned her BSc in Nutrition and Consumer Studies (now Human Nutrition) at St. Francis Xavier University, and her MSc in Nutrition from the University of Saskatchewan.