

August 21, 2018

Concurrent Sessions

Updating the Evidence - Presentations and Conversation

Five concurrent sessions will be offered in thematic areas to share evidence that complements and adds to our understanding of child and youth mental health promotion. Each session will include three presentations on evidence followed by a moderated discussion of the questions:

- *How does this work fit into and advance the 2017 Call to Action?*
- *What are the implications for upstream investment and a whole society approach to mental health promotion?*

Results of these discussions will contribute to advancing the [Call to Action](#).

Session 3: Youth Engagement in Promoting Mental Health

a) Developing Spaces and Places for Youth Mental Health: The Role of Community Development

Presenters: Linda Liebenberg, Dalhousie University; Daphne Hutt-MacLeod, Eskasoni Mental Health Services ACCESS Open Minds

Spaces & Places (S&P; www.youthspacesandplaces.org) explored how communities can facilitate cultural engagement of youth in supporting improved mental health outcomes. This presentation will review the findings from Eskasoni, NS, one of three participating Indigenous communities. The research was partnered with *Eskasoni Mental Health Services* (EMHS; www.eskasonimentalhealth.org). This participatory study made use of researcher produced video-observation and participant produced photographs in elicitation interviews with 8 youth participants (12-18 years old). Youth collaborated in thematic analysis of the data and dissemination activities. Findings highlight the importance of relationships that instil connection to cultural practices and facilitate strong personal attributes in supporting positive mental health. Critically, findings underscore the importance of mental health service provision for youth that is grounded in community development. The work of EMHS reflects these findings. While many activities are aimed at re-establishing community connections, youth specific activities are used to provide all youth with informal social resources and supports that augment formal service provision. EMHS have used findings to refine their service provision. Our team is now exploring the experiences of gender and sexual-based violence. This presentation will highlight findings of relevance to policy makers, practitioners and community leaders. Implications for better supporting earlier intervention will be emphasized.

Connection with the ASI theme:

Findings emphasise the need for integrated efforts between service providers and communities. Findings highlight the importance of mental health services fostering community-based relationships that instil connection to cultural practices and development of personal capacities. Schools can play a role in extending more formal curriculum aimed at supporting cultural engagement (such as Mi'kmaq immersion), establishing connection to culture and community through sports and recreational resources. Collectively these resources work together to support young people's mental health.

Participants will learn:

Community-development activities mental health practitioners can use to move service provision out of the office and into the day-to-day lives of community members. Recreational community-based activities targeting the community at large that can assist in reducing stigma. Implications for policy include support for informal community-based recreation resources attached to mental health service providers that target not only clients of mental health services, but all youth. In this way, earlier intervention can be better supported.

Evidence for policy and practice:

Evidence is established through the rigorous use of culturally appropriate participatory data collection. 32 individual interviews were conducted-- 4 with each of the 8 youth – together with one focus group interview. Interviews were guided by the critical reflection fostered through the use of participant produced photographs and researcher produced observation videos. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. Youth were included in this process in ways that ensured inter-rater reliability and assured member checks.

Presenter:

Linda Liebenberg
Adjunct Professor, Dalhousie University
Linda.Liebenberg@dal.ca

Linda Liebenberg is a researcher and evaluator focused on children and youth with complex needs, and their communities. Her work explores the promotion of positive development and mental health through community development, focusing often on initiatives driven by organizations and service providers. In this work, Linda reviews how best to conduct research and evaluations with children and their communities, including participatory action research using image-based methods; sophisticated longitudinal quantitative designs; and the design of measurement instruments used with children and youth across multiple cultures. Linda has presented internationally and published extensively on these topics of research and youth.

Co-presenter:

Daphne Hutt-MacLeod
Director, Eskasoni Mental Health Services and ACCESS Open Minds Site Lead
dhuttmacleod@eskasonihealth.ca

b) **Pathways to Mental Health: Youth Speak Up**

Presenters: Anik Dube, Professor-researcher, Université de Moncton; Laure Bourdon; Ann Beaton

Background:

Foundations for positive mental health strategies and healthy social relations among growing youth are an important part of building resilience and healthy development trajectories in life. ACCESS Open Minds is a national research and evaluation network for youth mental health services with three points of access in New Brunswick. Purpose: As part of this national network, the present study is seeking to describe the different access points to mental health services in three different regions of the province (i.e. urban anglophone, rural francophone, and First Nation communities).

Methods:

During the five focus groups, the youth (i.e. 26 participants) were allowed to draw different services thus, mapping a portrait of the different pathways to mental health. The research team undertook a thematic analysis to two levels of abstraction, with results presented to the larger team for validation. Results: Participants describe the challenges and rewards within the different mental health points of access. An overarching theme was identified in which the youth describe an imperfect and somewhat challenging journey to reap positive mental health outcomes.

Conclusion:

This study concurrently highlights the challenges experienced by youth living with different mental health issues and the strategies they have developed during their life span.

Connection with the ASI theme:

ACCESS OM NB study uses a socio-ecological perspective as basis for its study, therefore building a multi-level understanding to mental health services in society. Building on the voices of youth from different cultural backgrounds, the study is trying to highlight the appropriate mental health services for youth.

Participants will learn:

Through a socio-ecological perspective, the audience will learn about the current state of mental health strategies, programs, and services for youth. Through discussions and drawings participants describe the challenges and rewards within the different access points for mental health in three different regions.

Evidence for policy and practice:

Understanding the present state of youth targeted mental health services in New Brunswick, will inform policy makers and program planners to their delivery models of care and present practices.

Presenter:

Anik Dube
Professor-researcher, Université de Moncton
anik.dube@umoncton.ca

Anik Dube is a professor and nurse-researcher at the School of Nursing at the University of Moncton. Her research interest focus on health promotion and disease prevention among youth, community-based health services, harm reduction strategies and interprofessional approach to community health.

Co-Presenters:

Laure Bourdon
laure.bourdon@umoncton.ca

Ann Beaton
ann.beaton@umoncton.ca

c) **How the Youth Engagement Toolkit Brings Youth Voice and Inclusion into School Communities**

Presenters: Katherine Kelly and Susan Hornby, Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH)

The Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH) seeks to present a workshop on its Youth Engagement Toolkit (YE Toolkit). Both research and experience have demonstrated that youth engagement and youth-adult partnerships can change a young person's life for the better. The Youth Engagement Toolkit is designed to provide the reader with insight into the 'how' and 'why' of youth engagement, as well as expected outcomes. Developed for the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health by and with the Students Commission of Canada, the Youth Engagement Toolkit (developed in 2014 / redesigned in 2017) provides definitions of youth engagement, a 'how-to' guide for authentic and sustained engagement practices, and video clips, an indicator framework, and an evaluation model, with an extensive list and web links to Resources. The Toolkit's aims are threefold: (1) To help communicate the importance of youth engagement as a key approach in implementing comprehensive school health; (2) To provide research and rationale for practicing youth engagement in schools, school boards and districts, government ministries, health regions, and community organizations; and (3) To provide a 'how-to' resource of effective practices to support youth engagement in these contexts.

Connection with the ASI theme:

This presentation will provide an overview of the Toolkit and a review of the extensive literature review and background that came with creating it. The presentation will explore the benefits of collaboration across policy, practice, and research in order to bring youth engagement to the comprehensive school health approach in all schools in Canada, regardless of size, location, or socioeconomic constraints. Processes and initiatives in applying youth engagement to comprehensive school health will be featured.

Participants will learn:

Session participants will be able to recognize youth engagement as a culture and practice that can enhance comprehensive school health, as well as define what is meant by youth engagement and the difference between participation and engagement. As well, session participants will explore the best practices in initiating, sustaining, and implementing youth engagement.

Evidence for policy and practice:

JCSH has long been committed to being a bridge of research, policy, and practice leading to improved children and youth health, well-being, and learning. The YE Toolkit exemplifies that collaboration in action and lends itself to the meaningful contribution of youth to all levels of school health - from teaching and learning, to improving the physical and psychosocial environments, to decision-making and healthy school policy development, to partnerships with parents, the wider community, and services.

Presenter:

Katherine Kelly
Executive Director, Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH)
kakelly@gov.pe.ca

Katherine Kelly was appointed Executive Director of the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH) in 2010. Katherine holds an M.Ed in Leadership and Learning from the UPEI, as well as a B.Ed from the University of Regina and a B.A. from the University of Saskatchewan. She has held variety of senior level positions in the health and education systems including Director of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Relations, Chief Executive Officer of a regional health authority, and Director of Child and Family, Mental Health and Addictions. She has also been a lecturer in the UPEI Faculty of Education and a classroom teacher.

Co-presenter:

Susan Hornby
sjhornby@edu.pe.ca