

# Mental Health Lead role

## What is the Youth Wellness Champions Program?

The Youth Wellness Champions (YWC) Program is a partnership between the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) and public health units across the province of Ontario. The program supports students to become mental health champions in their schools.

The main goals of the YWC Program: To improve the health and well-being of youth by promoting mental wellness initiatives, helping to reduce stigma about mental illness and prevent substance use. Health units partner with school boards to identify and implement YWC into interested schools.

## How does the program work?

Youth will be trained and supported to take on the role of "Youth Champion" at their school and will form the Network of Champions.

The Mental Health Leads will work closely with the School Staff Lead(s) (for example, child and youth workers, teachers), Public Health Lead, school principal/vice-principal or designate and Youth Champions to plan and carry out initiatives promoting mental health throughout the school year.

## What is the role of a School Staff Lead?

The primary responsibility of the Mental Health Lead is to be the liaison between the School Staff Lead, Public Health Lead, Youth Leads and the School Board – this will help ensure the alignment of goals with the overall Board of Mental Health strategy. The Mental Health Lead will:

1. Provide support for the program integration within their board as well as support other school boards implementing the YWC Program.
2. Network with other professionals in their board and local communities about the YWC Program.
3. Collaborate with the Public Health Lead, School Staff Lead(s) and school principal/vice-principal or designate throughout the school year to support Youth Champions.
4. Support local training session/workshop for Adult Allies within your school/region.
5. Provide support to the School Staff Lead(s) who are implementing the program.
6. Support the youth engagement principles and practices, as well as demonstrate interest in promoting best practices throughout the program.
7. Be a resource for knowledge transfer and collaborate in the dissemination of local communication plans.

8. Help with event promotion.
9. Participate in evaluation activities, if required.
10. Provide feedback and recommendations to the program for long term sustainability.

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