

Public 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 Public Health Leads will work closely with the School Staff Lead(s) (for example, child and youth workers, teachers), Mental 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 Public Health Lead?

Primary responsibilities of a Public Health Lead are in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation for RNAO's YWC Program, in the local public health unit. The Public Health Lead will:

1. Be the linking agent between RNAO's International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines (IABPG) Centre and their home organization.
2. Participate as a member of the RNAO Advisory Committee.
3. Network with other professionals in their organizations, district school boards and local communities about the YWC Program.
4. Seek, create and coordinate opportunities to promote best practice guidelines related to youth engagement and mental health and substance use.
5. Provide support to other health unit staff implementing the YWC Program.
6. Assist with operational support for the program integration within their organizations, community and schools.
7. Be a resource to the local organization and/or local region for knowledge transfer.

8. Be actively involved in creation and dissemination of local communication plans.
9. Provide support in planning, promoting and delivering all YWC Program initiatives and/or events.
10. Deliver local training session/workshop for Adult Allies within your school/region.
11. Deliver a local training session/workshop to students interested in the YWC Program.
12. Collaborate with the School Staff Lead(s), to develop and mentor Youth Champions.
13. Incorporate youth engagement principles and promote best practices.
14. Communicate with the Mental Health Lead, the School Staff Lead(s) and the principal/ vice-principal and/or designate on action items and outcomes of the YWC Program.
15. Co-chair Network of Champions meetings with Youth Champions and School Staff Lead(s). Meetings will be held once a week during lunch hour at the participating school.
16. Coordinate program evaluations.

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