Minds Connected

C.O.M.P.A.S.S.
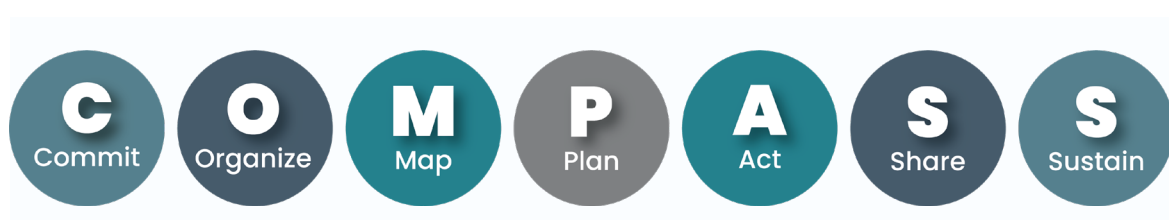## MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION
WORKSHEET

Lambton
Public Health

Compasses don't tell us which direction to go...

...but they help us to know where we are and where we should go!

Compasses don't tell us which direction to go but they help us to know where we are and where we should go. Lambton Public Health has developed this resource to support school boards in Lambton County with their mental health initiatives. This worksheet can be used as a starting point to help you identify supports and resources to implement within your organization.Although this worksheet is not exhaustive, Lambton Public Health has identified these strategies to support your organization on your path to greater mental wellness at work. Use this worksheet independently or with a group to help you create a mentally healthier space, step by step.

Links, videos, and other resources are available at: MindsConnected.ca

C Commit **O** Organize **M** Map **P** Plan **A** Act **S** Share **S** Sustain

Schools and Mental Health

School boards across Ontario are increasing their resources to support students' mental health, but more support is needed

Universal mental health promotion programs in schools and classrooms can help, not just with students experiencing mental health problems but with everyone. Evidence has shown these programs to improve: (Centre for School Mental Health, n.d.):

✓ **Gradepoint average**

✓ **School attendance**

✓ **Commitment to school**

✓ **Standardized reading and math test scores**

✓ **Social competency**

✓ **Behavioural and emotional symptoms**

✓ **Commitment to school**

✓ **Access to care and utilization**

The Aligned and Integrated Model or **AIM** is a triangle with three equal sides that shows the three levels of student mental health support in Ontario.

The bottom of the triangle is the Foundation and includes school and classroom leadership. The second level is Notice and represents early identification.The third level is the top of the triangle. It is Bridge and represents mobilizing board and community supports.

This model helps to organize mental health promotion efforts offered in a universal way for all students.

(Tier 1), services for students who may be at risk and needing a "higher dose" of targeted skill development (Tier 2) and supports for students who have a diagnosable mental health problem who need treatment and ongoing care (Tier 3).

Aligned & Integrated Model (AIM)
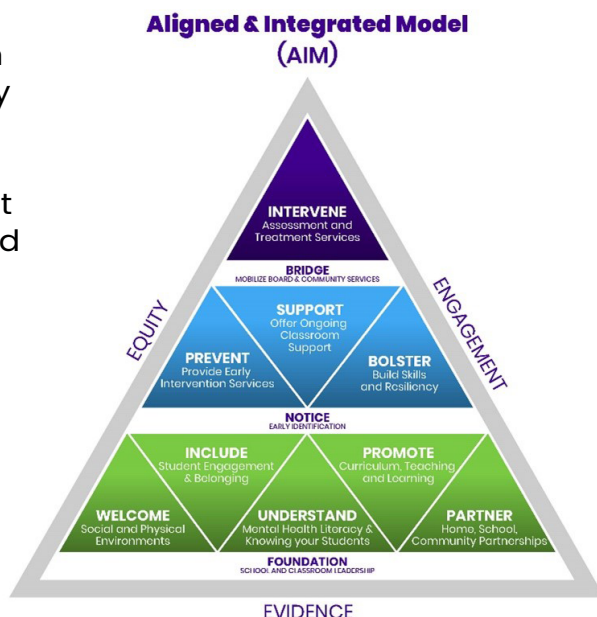
Schools and Mental Health

Investing in students' mental health pays off in the time, and money, that we spend. Research also suggests that providing students these tools now can help improve their chances of maintaining good mental health for the rest of their lives to continue being active and engaged adults (Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017).

Adults and educators can support students by:

- recognizing the symptoms of mental health problems
- connect them to mental health professionals who can provide care
- offer them tools and opportunities to learn how to foster good mental health.

There are a number of resources available that share evidence-based programs, strategies, and supports for increasing student mental health in your school and board. This worksheet can help you navigate to find the best approach for you.

Visit [www.MindsConnected.ca,](www.MindsConnected.ca) and your School Board's website for more links, videos and resources.

Commit

In order for an initiative to be successful, commitment from decision-makers is important.

Speak with your school or board leader about the benefits of fostering a mentally healthy class and school and commit to action.

Who needs to approve programs to support student mental health? How can you connect with them to get involved?

Organize

Organize to find supports to help foster a mentally healthy space

Depending on what kind of program or outcome you want to see, it's important to bring people with different perspectives along.

Which mental health experts and school or board leaders can provide support and expertise?

Who is doing similar work in your school or board that you can learn from?

Who can help support your initiatives elsewhere in the school, board, or community?

Map

What work around mental health is already happening in your school, board, and community? Mapping can help you to avoid duplicating work and find allies to help.

What is our school's/board's ultimate vision for mental health and education? What plans or strategies already exist that might already be or help to address well-being?

What does our school/board already know about mental health and mental illness? What do you want to know more about?

What data or information do we have access to and what does it tell us about student mental health?

      Climate Data

      Office visits

      Anecdotal information from staff, students, and parents

      Other:

What is our capacity to deliver mental health awareness education? What people or services do we have access to that can help?

What mental health services exist, either in your organization (Employee Assistance Program) or outside (in our community)?

Plan

Choosing the right program is important.

This [resource](#) from School Mental Health Ontario has important questions to consider.

You should also bring this to your school leadership, board mental health lead, other mental health professionals, and the group you put together in the ORGANIZE step.

School Mental Health Ontario has a number of [checklists that can help you to choose an activity](#). When choosing and planning a program, evidence shows (Grover et. Al, 2021; Sanchez et al., 2018; Browne et al., 2004):

> How you deliver it is just as important as what you're delivering. Talk through the who, what, where, when, how, and why of it all. But be prepared to adapt! If it isn't working with your situation, acknowledge it and shift.
>
> Action at multiple levels of the young person's environment is often more impactful (think classroom, school, community, caregivers). Similarly, a universal approach (good for all) is effective but based on the need in your setting, there may also be programs for a targeted or selected group.
>
> Being specific and intentional about your outcome is important but doesn't mean you have to put on a "program" per se. An approach or program that doesn't rely on teaching lessons or part of the fabric of the day with a specific goal and sound theory can also create change.
>
> One-time events and presentations build awareness but don't last long. Smaller, repeated activities with a consistent staff presence will go farther.
>
> Psychological safety is important when talking about mental health problems. If you think a conversation may become emotional, make sure you know who can help or invite a mental health professional in to be available on site.
>
> Plan to evaluate your initiatives before you start acting (see "outcome" in the chart below).

Sample Activity Plan

Activity/Program (What?)	Timeline (When?)	Outcome (What impact was made?)	What is needed (Who and what resources?)

Act

And.. GO! The plan is in place so it's time to execute it.

Keep note of any changes, bumps, and successes so you can adapt and improve. Most importantly, keep at it. Change doesn't happen all at once and each organization is unique, so do what works for yours.

What will you do to learn "How do we know if the program helped"?

Staff surveys

Student information is appropriate

Program feedback, interviews or focus groups

Attendance and engagement in activities

Other:

Share

Sharing how the program went and what you learned with staff, stakeholders, and others reminds people you're doing this work and its important.

It can also help to focus your efforts and rally support from allies for the next step, sustain. And take the time to celebrate!

Who can you share this information with?	How can you share it with them?
Eg. Students	Eg. Age-appropriate information sharing
Eg. School community	Eg. Email, report, newsletter update, social media

Sustain

Learning about mental health doesn't just happen one time. Like math, languages and sciences, we get more scaffolded information every year, so too for mental health.

How will you keep mental health programs going?

Connect with a multi-year strategy so that learning can build on each other and it becomes routine.

Embed mental health-related content into orientation for new employees and annual education (eg. Health and safety training).

Engage a wide variety of people in activities such as new staff, Board of Directors, and even patrons.

Give training and expertise to specific staff members who may need to know more about mental health and connecting folks with the help they need.

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