



School
Mental Health
Ontario

Santé mentale
en milieu scolaire
Ontario



**We work together with
Ontario school districts to
support student mental health**

TIMELINES AND TRAJECTORY

We are a provincial implementation support team to help Ontario school boards promote student mental health and well-being using evidence-based approaches. This team of school mental health professionals, senior administrators and implementation scientists works alongside the Ministry of Education to provide leadership and guidance, ongoing coaching support, a suite of resources, and a community of practice for all Ontario school boards and remote school authorities.

We provide our services directly to school boards via their Mental Health Leadership Team, most often through the superintendent with responsibility for mental health and the board Mental Health Leader.

Everything we do is **evidence-based** and **student-centred**.

Our work directly and uniquely connects to and is aligned with the Ontario curriculum.

TIMELINES AND TRAJECTORY

1 PHASE ONE SETTING FOUNDATIONS | 2011–2014

- Provincial and national synthesis of research and scan of existing practices, structures, challenges, and priorities
- Evidence-informed vision and values to develop a sustainable provincial model for supporting student mental health
- Ministry investment in 15 boards and Mental Health Leaders to build a foundation for a scalable and consistent model
- Development of structures and foundational conditions, including coaching model
- Scale up to all 72 school boards and school authorities over three years

RESULT: Systematic and intentional growth and application of a provincial school mental health model that considered input from Mental Health Leaders, Superintendents and provincial stakeholders.

2 PHASE TWO BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY | 2014–2017

- Continuation of phase one practice successes throughout phase two (e.g., implementation coaching, support for Mental Health Leadership Teams)
- Priority focus on (1) organizational conditions for effective school mental health, and (2) school and system leader capacity-building
- Establish organizational conditions and expectations at the board level
- Co-develop differentiated learning and training resources for Mental Health Leadership Teams, principals, and educators

RESULT: Protocols and implementation support for Mental Health Leadership Teams, with role-specific resources and tools to guide decision making, build mental health knowledge and provide student support.



3 PHASE THREE EVIDENCE-BASED MULTI-TIERED PROGRAMMING | 2017-2022

- Continuation of phase one and two practice successes throughout phase three (e.g., focus on organizational conditions, differentiated learning and training)
- Formal process to test and evaluate promising mental health promotion, prevention, and early intervention practices that are evidence-based and implementation-sensitive
- **Tier 1 supports** – Classroom-ready materials and tools for social-emotional learning, student mental health literacy, and universal mental health promotion / self-care
- **Tier 2 supports** – Focus on prevention services, including supporting Ministry-funded Mental Health Workers in Secondary Schools with training in structured psychotherapy
- **Tier 3 supports** – Establish clarity with respect to the school-based Circle of Support and clear pathways to, from and through intensive services for students
- Begin to engage students and parents/families, and encourage student voice in mental health promotion, learning, help-seeking, and stigma reduction

RESULT: Student-centred sustainable model aligned with the tiers of support, including resources, curriculum alignment/support and differentiated training.

4 PHASE FOUR DEEPENING AND DIFFERENTIATING | 2022-2025

- Continuation of phase one, two and three practice successes throughout phase four (e.g., evidence-based, implementation-sensitive programming, student and family engagement)
- A systematic focus on what all students need to build and sustain positive mental health, differentiating for students from specific populations, or who may have complex or unique needs
- Support and encourage cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary partnership building, training, and resource development
- Support and encourage partnerships with community organizations that represent diverse stakeholder groups (e.g., Indigenous mental health, immigrant and refugee mental health, early years mental health)
- Enhance the Circle of Support to respond to serious mental health and addiction needs in collaboration with system partners

ANTICIPATED RESULT: Deep understanding, alignment and coordination of support and services for all students consistently across all Ontario school boards.



5

PHASE FIVE WEAVING INTERCONNECTED SYSTEMS | 2025–2028

- Continuation of phase one, two, three, and four practice successes throughout phase five
- Embedded roles and processes to extend and sustain school board practices for school mental health
- Seamless partnerships for collaboration and pathways among school boards, agencies, hospitals and broader community partners

ANTICIPATED RESULT: Every student has mental health literacy, self-care, and social emotional skills to help them to navigate life’s challenges, and knows where and how to ask for help at school if they require support. Those few students who require services beyond the school receive them through coordinated and well-planned pathways with community partners.



BEYOND 2028 CONSOLIDATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

- All subsequent phases represent the system at maturity and focus on sustainability
- The priority is to ensure embedded, equitable, integrated, and responsive school mental health protocols and supports across the province

