

Facilitator Guide

Implementing grade 6 Healthy Choices modules

This guide provides school boards with ideas for approach, a selection of implementation tools and thoughtful insights to support effective implementation of the modules. It contains:

A list of **five tips** to help to get you started and inform your implementation plan



Insights from the field

— quotes from Ontario implementation team members



An **implementation chart** with resources curated to match your chosen approach



Five tips to inform implementation



1. Build a team

These modules are connected to the work of a variety of colleagues and partners who can make valuable contributions to the implementation efforts of your board. Consider reaching out to:

- Public Health Unit - school nurses, nurses specializing in substance use
- Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching (TELT) contact
- diversity, equity and inclusion team
- student achievement or program team members
- members of mental health leadership team
- others with a connection or interest to these topic areas



2. Know the material

Take time to explore the [implementation supports, lessons and accompanying educator guides](#). There are so many tools ready for you to use as is or customize. All this content is public-facing. Share the links with the members of your implementation team.



3. Determine your approach

Boards differ in size, budget and available space. Work with your team to decide how you'll introduce the learning to teachers and how you'll support them as they get started. Your approach might include:

- in-person professional learning such as dedicated PD sessions, staff meeting overviews or short learning segments during existing training days
- self-directed digital learning, including curated online resources, shared folders, recorded webinars, slide decks and other tools teachers can explore independently
- collaborative professional support through coaching or co-teaching



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4. Consider connections

Examine the learning and initiatives already in place in your board that could align with these modules. Helping teachers see how this learning fits into what they already do keeps it from feeling like ‘another thing’ and instead positions it as complementary. Your implementation team can help identify meaningful links. Possible connections include:

- board policies on privacy and the safe use of technology
- social-emotional skill development
- classroom guidelines for technology use (e.g., creating passwords)
- broader application of decision-making and refusal skills to other life situations
- learning related to artificial intelligence
- learning related to PPM 128 (e.g., vaping education campaigns)



5. Value the opportunity

These modules offer a unique opportunity for proactive, age-appropriate discussions that can support students in developing healthy digital habits and making informed decisions about substances and technology. Grade 6 is a critical time for these conversations—this learning can have a meaningful impact on the lives of students.



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Insights from the field

“It’s important for them (students) to be able to think critically about what they are being exposed to and decide, ‘Does this align with who I want to be as a person? Does it align with my values? Does it align with what my culture teaches, does it align with the messages I’m receiving from parents and guardians?’”

– Ontario teacher

“Approaching these conversations with care, intention and accurate information, even if it feels imperfect, is far more beneficial than remaining silent.”

– Ontario Public Health nurse

“After seeing the learning activities in the digital media module, I’ve decided to expand this learning to several periods rather than just one. I want all my students to experience all the learning!”

– Ontario grade 6 teacher

View:

“The modules offer a feature that makes it easier to find the information I need when I need it. I use the three tabs at the top to change the ‘view’ mode. ‘Present’ mode provides me with just what I need when I’m ready to share with students, and ‘teacher notes’ mode provides me with the supports I need to facilitate conversations and provide instruction to students.”

– Ontario grade 6 teacher



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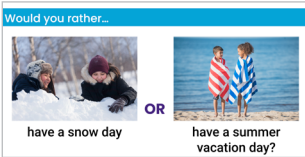
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Implementation chart

The following chart offers one possible pathway for using School Mental Health Ontario implementation tools based on the approach your board chooses. All supports remain flexible and can be used in whatever way best fits your local context. Think of this tool as a starting point—something to spark ideas, help you begin shaping your implementation plan and give you a clear sense of the full range of supports available.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	START WITH THE BASICS	COMPLEMENTARY IDEAS	EXTEND THE LEARNING
In-person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the modules using a selection of slides from the following implementation resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> staff intro slide deck slides from the student-facing slide deck found within the modules (you may wish to model some of the learning activities) MediaSmarts implementation support slides (and companion facilitator guide) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a fun warm-up game of Would you Rather? as a way to introduce decision-making. Select a few slides from the ready-to-use SMH-ON resource. Consider adding a few questions specifically for educators. Here's a version with some slides to get you started. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider including the My Values + Tech (commonsense.org) activity as part of your learning. The printable poster option gets participants moving and encourages them to reflect. Try an activity from Connect Quest. This set of resources includes activities to help students in grades 4-8 build connections that promote balanced device use and substance use health.



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In-person (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide time for participants to locate and explore the modules independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide participants with a printed trifold placemat to support their learning during the session and guide conversations with colleagues back at their schools. Include a clip or ideas from the Ophea webinar video and companion facilitator guide. 	
Self-directed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share an email with a brief description of the Ministry modules, a brief video overview, and the link to access the modules. Download the communication kit for an email template and key messages document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a self-directed learning guide to provide the basic info plus complementary resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a virtual drop-in session for educators to ask clarifying questions and share ideas with each other.



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IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH	START WITH THE BASICS	COMPLEMENTARY IDEAS	EXTEND THE LEARNING
Collaborative support			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This approach will vary depending on the number and capacity of staff available to support.• Staff can prepare to support teachers by becoming familiar with the modules and the many implementation supports so that they can point teachers in the right direction and offer guidance.• A simple first step could be to offer to explore the modules together and point out some of the helpful functions and features (downloadable slides, educator guide, teacher scripts, discussion guides, etc.) available throughout the lessons.

