



Key messages about Connect Quest

These key messages can be adapted for presentations, newsletters or promotional materials to highlight the value and purpose of Connect Quest.

Introducing Connect Quest

- Connect Quest is a set of ready-to-use activities and resources that help students build connections to promote balanced device use and substance use health.
- Developed for and with insights from students in grades 4-8, Connect Quest focuses on building skills that promote balanced device use and substance use health through age-appropriate discussion, shared learning, hands-on learning and reflection.
- Connect Quest is designed to be student-led. It offers leadership opportunities for students to choose, adapt and facilitate activities with their peers, building connections and promoting wellness through balanced device use and substance use health in their school communities.

What Connect Quest offers

- [Connect Quest](#) contains 26 ready-to-use activities that focus on three areas of connection:
 - connection with yourself (reflect on personal values and habits)
 - connection with community (friends, school, family)
 - connection with nature
- Supportive resources such as a student leader guide, school implementation materials, parent/caregiver resource, communication materials and background document with further research and information.

Why Connect Quest matters

- Students are navigating increasingly complex choices related to substance use health and device use. Connect Quest is designed to respond to this reality.



- It focuses on the theme of connection because we know that when students have strong positive relationships at school, home and in the community, they are more likely to make helpful choices and less likely to develop harmful habits related to the use of substances, social media, gaming and so on.
- Informed by youth, Connect Quest meets students where they are using relevant and engaging activities that are interactive and reflective.
- Connect Quest activities aim to strengthen skills such as self-reflection, critical thinking, coping, relationship-building and help-seeking – all supporting students to navigate challenges in a variety of ways.

Connection is foundational to well-being

- Self-awareness, supportive relationships and a strong sense of school connectedness are protective factors that reduce the likelihood of substance-related harms and promote positive mental health.^{1,2,3}
- When students feel connected (to themselves, peers, trusted adults and nature), they are more confident in seeking help and making informed choices that support their well-being.^{4,5}

School and district goals

- Connect Quest is aligned with priorities within the mental health and addictions strategy in many districts, as well as with key elements of PPM 169 (e.g., social-emotional skill development, mental health literacy, attendance).
- Connect Quest supports positive school culture and shared responsibility.
- When students experience a sense of belonging and connection at school, they are more engaged in learning.
- It provides a platform for student engagement, leadership and agency.

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada. (2021). Blueprint for action: Preventing substance-related harms among youth through a comprehensive school health approach. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/blueprint-for-action-preventing-substance-related-harms-youth-comprehensive-school-health.html>

² Raniti, M., Rakesh, D., Patton, G. C., et al. (2022). The role of school connectedness in the prevention of youth depression and anxiety: A systematic review with youth consultation. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1), 2152. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14364-6>

³ Mertens, E. C. A., Deković, M., van Londen, M., & Reitz, E. (2022). Parallel changes in positive youth development and self-awareness: The role of emotional self-regulation, self-esteem, and self-reflection. *Prevention Science*, 23(3), 502–512. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-022-01345-9>

⁴ Jhumi, M., Ooi, L. L., Roberts, K. C., & Varin, M. (2024). Coping and positive mental health in Canada among youth and adults: Findings from a population-based nationally representative survey. *Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention in Canada*, 45(5), 238–248. <https://doi.org/10.24095/hpcdp.45.5.02>

⁵ Raniti, M., Rakesh, D., Patton, G. C., et al. (2022). The role of school connectedness in the prevention of youth depression and anxiety: A systematic review with youth consultation. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1), 2152. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14364-6>



- Connect Quest provides proactive, student-centred tools to achieve goals within PPM 128.

Student engagement and leadership

- Connect Quest centres student voice, agency and leadership. Students are encouraged to be leaders who choose, adapt and facilitate activities and plan initiatives in ways that make sense for their school communities.
- Connect Quest can provide activity ideas for existing student mental health leadership groups or can be used by a new group of students just getting started in supporting mental health programming and initiatives in their school.⁶
- When students have meaningful opportunities to lead, adapt activities, develop initiatives and shape how learning happens, participation and impact increase.

Flexible and can be used in several ways

- **Individual student use:** “Connect with yourself” activities can be done independently to reflect on emotions, build wellness habits and work toward personal goals.
- **Student-led initiatives:** Alongside caring adults at school, students can create a “Quest” or campaign where they choose, adapt and lead Connect Quest activities across their school to promote connection, balanced device use and substance use health.
 - Quests can be carried out over several months, or over a short period of time (e.g., daily activities during Mental Health Week in May).
- **Classroom integration:** Educators and student support staff can embed activities into lessons, group opportunities or clubs.
- **Family engagement:** Parents and caregivers can use activities at home to support healthy routines and conversations about device use and substance use.

How to access

Activities and support materials are publicly available at connectquest.ca, a student-facing website with youth-friendly language and imagery throughout.

Adult allies can visit connectquest.ca/adult-allies for supportive resources.



⁶ Public Health Agency of Canada. (2021). Blueprint for action: Preventing substance-related harms among youth through a comprehensive school health approach. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/blueprint-for-action-preventing-substance-related-harms-youth-comprehensive-school-health.html>

