



REPORT

Mental Health Plan



Rainy River District School Board

Mental Health Plan

The Rainy River District School Board recognizes the significant impact a mental health issue or illness can have on a young person's life. Affecting one in five Ontario children and youth, mental health problems can create considerable barriers to learning, developing and maintaining healthy relationships, and achieving an overall sense of well-being. Acknowledging the importance of early identification and connection to care, the Rainy River District School Board seeks to build internal capacity to better recognize and respond to students who may be experiencing a mental health problem and promote positive mental health and well-being for all students.

As highlighted in the Strategic Plan and the Director's Annual Operational Plan, "the emotional well-being of all students is the foundation for their achievement." Building on steps already taken to address student mental health and well-being, the Rainy River District School Board Mental Health and Addiction Strategy was developed in 2014.

Mental Health and Addiction Strategy Areas of Priority and Actions Taken:

Capacity building: Increase mental health knowledge and skills across the RRDSB.

- Continuation of Mental Health First Aid for Adults who interact with Youth and EGALE trainings
- Monthly "Mentally Healthy Schools" newsletter shared with educators

Broad Collaboration: Collaborate with stakeholders in child and youth mental health to address needs.

- Mental Health Steering Committee meets to work on items contained in the Mental Health and Addiction Strategy
- Community Partners Mental Health Meeting Group meets to enhance cross-organizational understanding and enhance collaboration on items related to child, youth, and community mental health
- Mental Health Champions in RRDSB schools work to support student engagement initiatives, liaise with the Mental Health Leader, and share ideas and concerns related to student mental health and wellness
- Mental Health and Addiction Nurse program is active with partnership from the North West Community Care Access Centre

Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention: Increase ability to recognize and respond to students at risk for suicide.

- Training RRDSB educators and administrators in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) and SafeTALK (Suicide Awareness for Everyone)
- Development of suicide response guidelines
- Involvement with regional youth suicide prevention working group

Stigma Reduction and Student Voice: Enhance both student and educator understanding of mental health and illness.

- Each school asked to identify a safe space for students
- Recognition and celebration of Children's Mental Health Week with school based activities

- Mental Health Champions in each school will seek opportunities to increase student voice related to mental health and wellness

Evidence-Based Mental Health Programs: *Selection and implementation of evidence-based mental health programs*

- MindUp Curriculum piloted at 4 sites across the RRDSB with Mine Centre School implementing the program in every classroom
- School Support Services Counselling Program active with 2.5 counsellor positions funded to serve students across the Rainy River District School Board