

Young Health Programme in Canada

The emotional and mental well-being of adolescents is a serious and under-served Canadian health issue. Only one in five young Canadians who need emotional and mental health services currently receive them but, we also know that 70% of mental health cases that appear in youth, can be addressed through early identification and intervention.¹

The Young Health Programme (YHP) in Canada aims to foster the emotional and mental health of adolescents aged 10-19. A strong champion for youth engagement, YHP Canada works in partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, **mindyourmind** and Physical and Health Education Canada and alongside youth to develop mental health programming that is relevant, accessible and evidence-based.



PHE Canada
Physical & Health Education Canada



AstraZeneca

Young Health Programme

A global community investment initiative



in partnership with

Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada
Clubs Garçons et Filles du Canada



mindyourmind

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What do we want to achieve through the Programme?

By focusing on prevention and early intervention, and with a commitment to youth engagement, the Programme aims to help 50,000 adolescents by connecting them to positive conditions and experiences that foster emotional and mental well-being.

Objectives:

- Improve access to timely and evidence-based information, resources and support services to strengthen coping skills and build resilience among youth.
- Enable professionals, mentors and peers to identify, assess and support the emotional and mental health needs of youth through evidence-based curriculum, training and resources.
- Advocate for policy initiatives that foster adolescent emotional and mental health and well-being.

What activities are taking place locally?

- **“Flex Your Head”**, a 12-module mental health programme, has been developed for delivery in communities across Canada through programme partner, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada (BGCC). Guided by best practices in youth learning, engagement and therapy, Flex Your Head offers a series of group-based activities that promote mental health and address difficulties with depression and anxiety. More than two thirds of BGCC’s member clubs have received training to deliver the programmes which has the potential to reach 80,000 youth. Evaluation data has shown that Flex Your Head influences positive behaviour change for the youth who participate. In 2015, the programme will be made available to community organisations outside of the BGCC family.
- **“Mental Health A to Z”** is an interactive, evidence-based online resource designed with the active engagement of young people to enhance the capacity of professionals to effectively engage and support youth. These resources are currently being used by registered

nurses and health units as part of Ontario’s Youth Mental Health and Addiction Champion Project. Two modules have been developed: one with a focus on mental wellness and a second with a focus on stress. Both modules are available at www.mytoolkit.ca.

- **“Mind Your Mood”**, a free mobile application for Android and Apple mobile devices which allows youth to proactively journal their day-to-day moods with an option to add notes and create a historical record that could be shared with a support person in their lives. The app is available on iTunes and Google Play.
- **“Teach Resiliency”**, an advocacy initiative led by Physical and Health Education (PHE)Canada, has developed 5 recommendations for government and school boards to increase the mental health literacy of pre-service and in-service teachers.

What has been achieved so far?

The Canadian Programme was launched in 2011 and has provided information on adolescent mental health directly to more than 15,000 people and more than 100,000 people indirectly.

Local partners

The Programme is a partnership with three leading Canadian charities:

- The Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada (www.bgccan.com)
- **mindyourmind** (www.mindyourmind.ca)
- Physical and Health Education Canada (www.phecanada.ca)

For current information on Canada’s Young Health Programme, please visit: www.younghealth.ca

Twitter: @YHPCanada

YouTube Channel: www.YouTube.com/YoungHealthCanada

References:

- 1) Leitch, K. Reaching for the Top: A Report by the Advisor on Healthy Children and Youth (2007) References: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/child-enfant/advisor-conseillere/index-eng.php>