

Student Wellness and Mental Health

2019-20 Youth Council

WHO WE ARE



October 19, 2019

Youth Council Meeting





Julie Patton



Nate Bergen



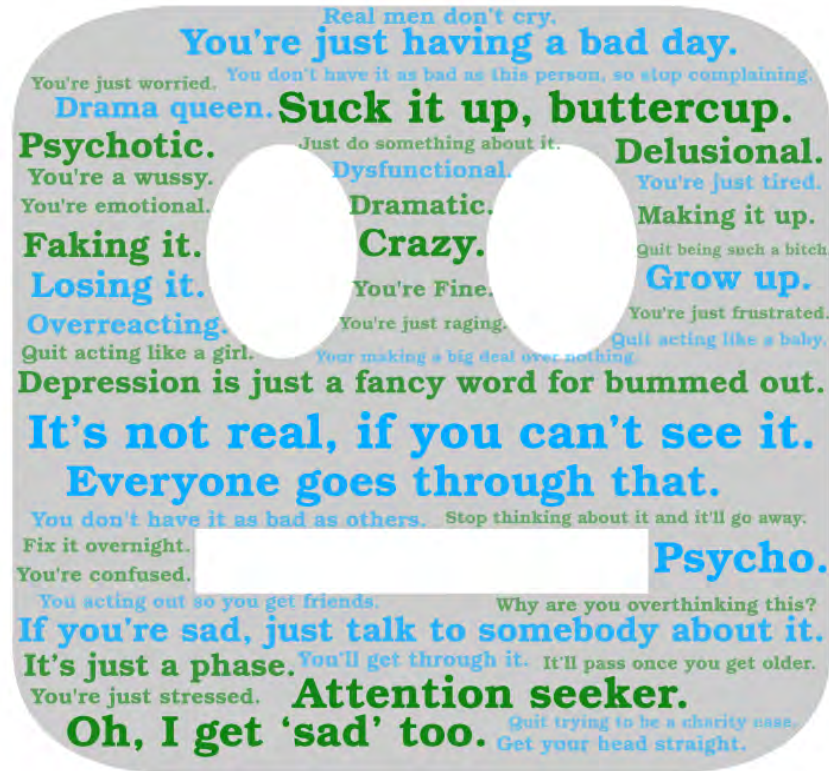
Olivia Maurice

Mental Health Stigma

What is Stigma?

- ▶ Stigma is a negative stereotype that has surrounded the topic of mental health. Those who suffer from mental illness say that the stigma attached to the topic has only made their struggles worse.

How is Stigma Affecting Students?



Statistics

- 50% of mental illness begins at age 14
- Only 1 out of 5 children will receive proper mental health treatment
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Canadian youth
- Canada has the third highest suicide rate in the world
- This accounts for 24% of deaths among those aged 15-24

How Can We Fight Stigma?

- ▶ Educate students on what mental health is
- ▶ Create organized groups that make students feel involved (SRC, clubs, YAC – Youth Alliance Circle)
- ▶ Taking input of students on their homework load
 - ▶ Schedules and needs can both vary

How Can We Fight Stigma?

- Be empathetic and open-minded when listening to someone who may be dealing with a mental illness
- Create a **safe environment** for students

Physical Environment and Mental Health

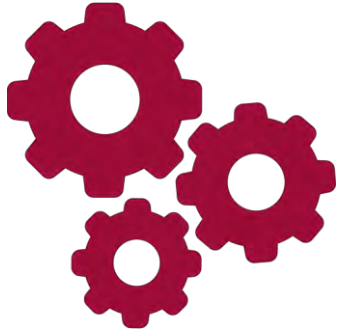
Importance of School Environment

- ▶ Students spend 6-7 hours in school daily
- ▶ Environment may promote or deny:
 - ▶ Stress management
 - ▶ Ability to focus
 - ▶ Happiness
- ▶ Positive environment accommodates wellbeing
- ▶ Students should feel safe, motivated and engaged in a positive school environment

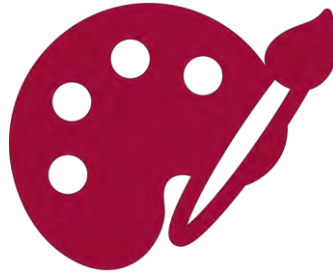
Building a Positive Environment

That supports the well-being of students

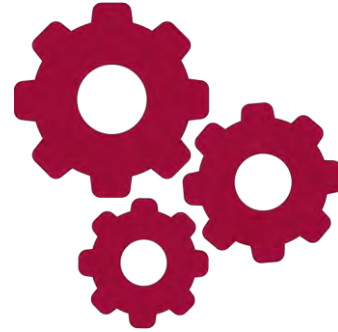
What students need from school environment



Productivity



Creativity



Tranquility

Space for productivity

- ▶ Minimal distraction
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Preferred supports:
 - ▶ Listening to music
 - ▶ Fidgets
 - ▶ Stability balls



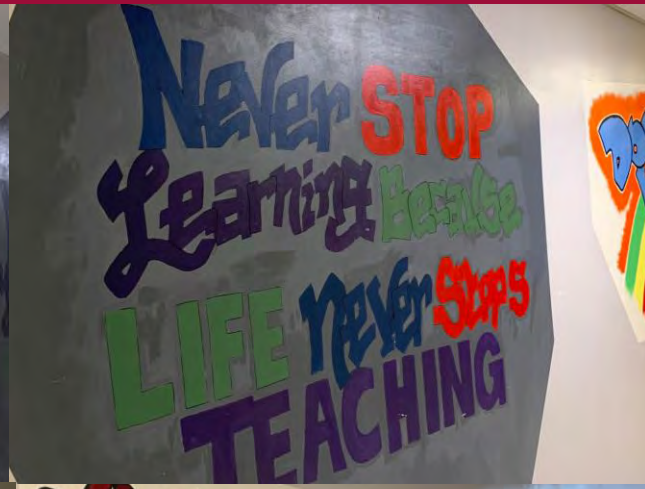


Space for creativity

- ▶ Displayed artwork
- ▶ Space to move
- ▶ Tools:
 - ▶ Instruments
 - ▶ Art supplies
 - ▶ Mentoring







Space for tranquility

- ▶ Silence
- ▶ Calming activities
 - ▶ Drawing
 - ▶ Colouring
 - ▶ Reading
- ▶ Areas to reflect and relax







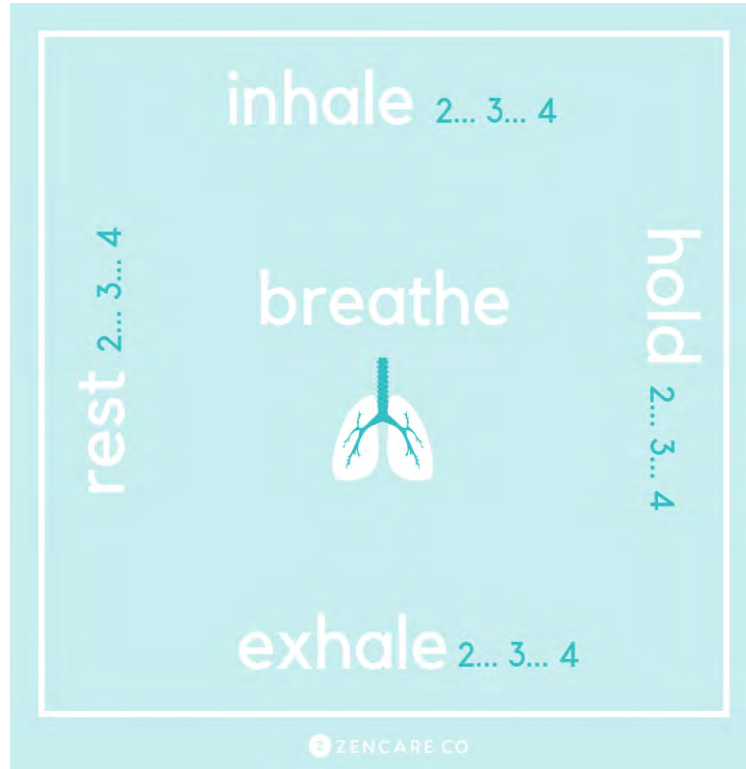
Techniques for Stress Management

Coping skills that can help students

Coping with Stress and Anxiety

- ▶ Aromatherapy
- ▶ Journaling
- ▶ Nature
- ▶ Square breathing

Coping with Stress and Anxiety



Negative Environments

- ▶ Restriction of things that help students
 - ▶ Fidgets, headphones, taking breaks, moving/standing while working
- ▶ Excessive distraction
- ▶ Plainness - trying to stray away from your typical “desk and chair” classroom
- ▶ Lack of resources and inspiration



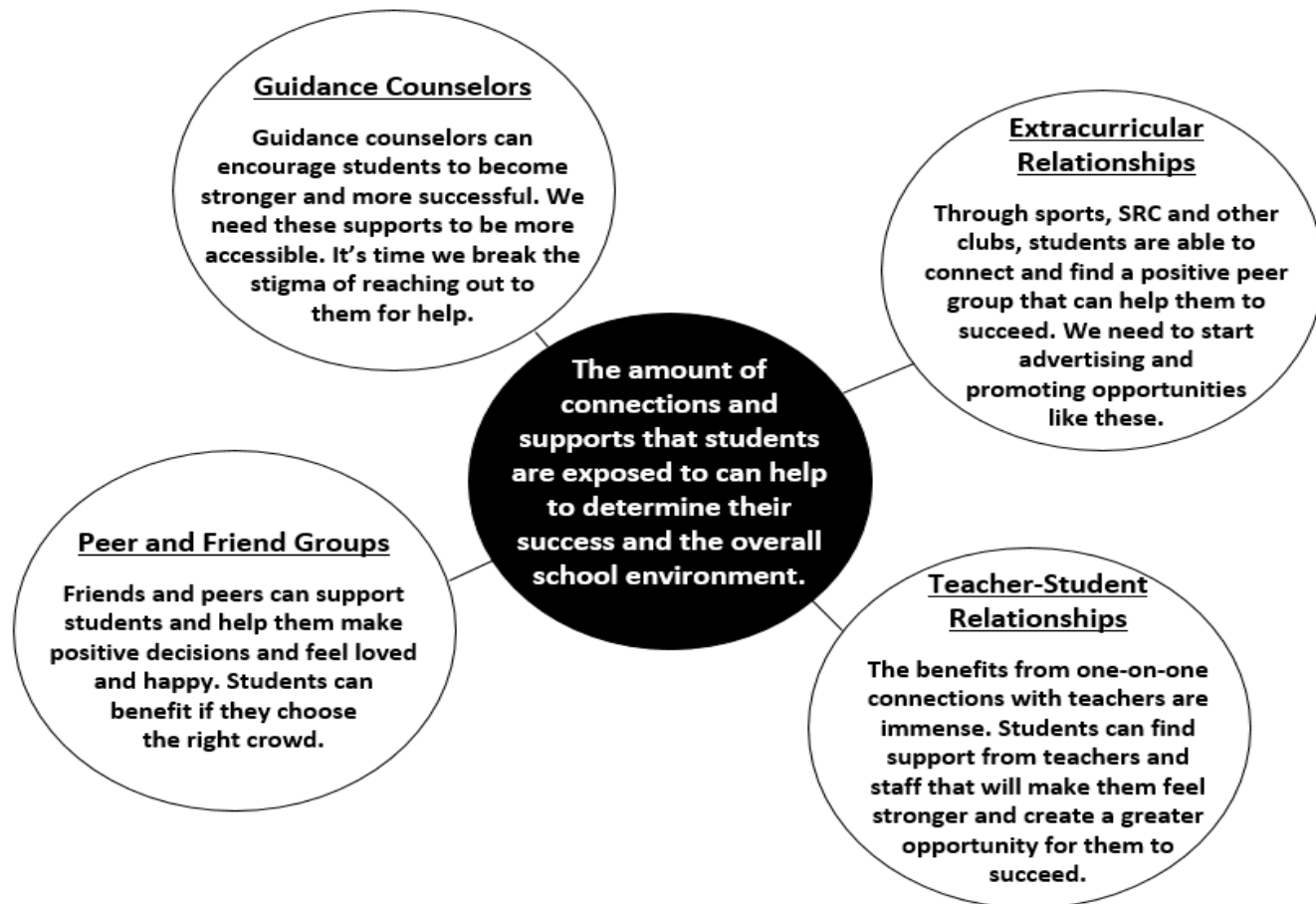
Summary

- ▶ Mental well-being is a concern for everyone
- ▶ Schools should:
 - ▶ Accommodate strategies and activities to cope
 - ▶ Provide spaces that promote:
 - ◆ **Productivity**
 - ◆ **Creativity**
 - ◆ **Tranquility**
- ▶ Make classrooms **fun** and **interesting**

Connections

A student's network of support

Four Types of Connections



Multicultural Education and Mental Health

Access to language, spirituality
and culture is a right.
Not a privilege.

Importance of Multicultural Education

- ▶ Insufficient exposure to various cultures
 - ▶ Leads some students to believe they are the norm
 - ▶ Reinforces the notion that one culture is mainstream
 - ▶ Lays the foundation for students to develop prejudice

Importance of Multicultural Education

Proper representation of culture:

- ▶ Nurtures sense of identity and belonging
- ▶ Makes a student feel valued
- ▶ Benefits academic success
- ▶ Allows all students to flourish

Multiculturalism and Mental Health

- ▶ Students who belong to a minority may suffer from discrimination and prejudice
- ▶ Suicide is approximately **twice as prevalent** in Indigenous communities as in Canada as a whole
- ▶ In Saskatchewan, the rate of suicide for children aged 10-19 is:
 - ▶ **6 times higher** for First Nations boys than non-First Nations boys
 - ▶ **26 times higher** for First Nations girls than non-First Nations girls

Incorporating Diversity in Education

Minahik Waskahigan High School

- ▶ Cultural Days
 - ▶ Trying the activities and cuisine of other cultures
- ▶ Elders' gatherings
 - ▶ Tents with different activities
 - ▶ Entertainment in an arena
 - ▶ Cultural foods
 - ▶ Storytelling by Elders

Creighton Community School

- ▶ Incorporation of cultural learning in curriculum
 - ▶ Indigenous history incorporated in multiple subjects
 - ▶ Native Studies 20/30
 - ▶ Optional Cree classes grades 4-12
- ▶ Teaching students about the backgrounds of their classmates (e.g., Ukrainian)
 - ▶ Students help the teacher teach
 - ▶ Parents volunteer to host cultural activities
- ▶ Encouraging students to explore their cultural background in their artwork
 - ▶ Have art exhibits inside of teepees
- ▶ Cogwagee Therapeutic Running Group
 - ▶ Grade 4-6 First Nations/Métis students, in accordance with the youth/sport Calls to Action from Truth and Reconciliation
 - ▶ Purpose is to run together to learn coping skills and build resilience (cognitive behaviour therapy, mindfulness)

École Valois

- ▶ Focus on francophone culture
- ▶ Activities:
 - ▶ Carnaval d'hiver
 - ▶ Le tintamarre
 - ▶ Cuisine Québécoise
- ▶ Courses
 - ▶ Français fransaskois 10/20/30
 - ▶ Sciences sociales fransaskois 20/30
- ▶ Language courses offered online
- ▶ Annual division-wide events held in French and hosting public events in French

Bert Fox Community High School

- ▶ Course Offerings
 - ▶ Cree Culture Program 10/20
 - ◆ Cree teacher with experience with his own culture
 - ◆ Students perform Experiential Learning (Hands On Work) often
- ▶ Northern Lifestyles / Astronomy
- ▶ Learning From The Land
- ▶ Culture Arts
 - ▶ Learn the art of many diverse cultures

Ways to Improve

- ▶ Culture-based education for Indigenous students
- ▶ Using experiential learning
- ▶ Northern Exposure Trips (NET)
- ▶ Use of proper knowledge keepers
- ▶ Performing different cultural practices to better understand
- ▶ Treating exposure to other cultures as a principal aspect of education as a whole

See us, hear us – before it's too late.

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Any questions?