



UTS
ePRESS

Gateways:
International Journal
of Community
Research and
Engagement

Vol. 13, No. 1
May 2020



© 2020 by the author(s). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

Citation: Bishop, L., Darcy, S., Sinnott, R., Avery, S., Pendergast, A., Duggan, N. 2020. Engaging a community for youth mental health and wellness: Reflections and lessons learned. *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 13:1, Article ID 6862. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/ijcre.v13i1.6862>

ISSN 1836-3393 | Published by UTS ePRESS | <http://ijcre.ePRESS.lib.uts.edu.au>

PRACTICE-BASED ARTICLE

Engaging a community for youth mental health and wellness: Reflections and lessons learned

Lisa Bishop^{1,2}, Stephen Darcy², Rob Sinnott³, Susan Avery², Amanda Pendergast², Norah Duggan²

¹School of Pharmacy, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

²Discipline of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

³Mental Health and Addictions, Eastern Health, Canada

Corresponding author: Lisa Bishop; ldbishop@mun.ca

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/ijcre.v13i1.6862>

Article history: Received 06/11/2019; Revised 06/12/2019; Accepted 02/03/2020; Published XX/05/2020.

Appendix Community Action Plan

Goal #1	Improving access/willingness to access mental health (MH) services
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To improve awareness in the community about existing MH support/services.To have a mechanism for regular updates to the community on MH services for youth.To develop a partnership between the school and health centre to assess and detect MH needs of the youth.To provide the right service to the right child at the right time in the right place.To lessen or remove the perceived stigma of mental illness within the community at large and, in particular, among our young people.To empower our young people to be spokespeople of a new view of MH.To enlist the parents and professionals in the community in the campaign to reduce stigma.

Appendix continued

Goal #1	Improving access/willingness to access mental health (MH) services
Strategies	<p>School-based:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the teachers in our community have the training to recognise risks and symptoms in the children and know how to best address these issues. • Create a school-based anti-stigma campaign. • Offer creative and safe opportunities to explore the issues surrounding MH through art or music. • Encourage peer support groups/MH days in the school. • Facilitate the participation of other professionals/community members in the life of the school. <p>Clinic-based:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the existing MH services offered through the health centre. • Consider outreach services based out of the clinic. • Explore how to facilitate access to and/or develop MH crisis services. <p>Community-based:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster a support group for the youth of the community. • Create a community-based anti-stigma campaign. • Advocate for the MH needs of youth in the community. • Explore the optimal use of social media to influence attitudes and disseminate information to the community. • Facilitate access to resources for parents to help them cope with the problems faced by the youth of the community. • Promote the use of local resources for existing MH support/ services and continue to develop others as the need arises.
Goal #2	Keeping our youth happy and healthy
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote the well-being of our youth in all aspects of development (mental and physical). • To ensure they are given the tools to help deal with the challenges they face. • To ensure they have access to effective role models, including both peers and adults.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'mentoring' program for youth in the community. • Involve and encourage youth to participate in all aspects of the development of any initiatives. • Involve family units at all levels where possible. • Directly address the issues involved in the transition to high school. • Develop programs that include children with varied interests appropriate to their level of development (i.e. sports/non-sports related). • Develop programs that improve students' life skills (e.g. career, self-esteem). • Encourage and support youth community leadership.



Appendix continued

Goal #3	Build the community's own resources for the well-being of everyone
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage the continued development of a self-sufficient and responsive community. • To encourage the participation of all age groups of the community in the future direction of the community. • To strengthen the role of the Community Board as the promoter of participation in the life of the community.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a community-led parent resource group that will provide support and information for parents of youth within the community. • Provide information nights or skills workshops for youth and/or adults in the community. • Form an action group whose mission is to advocate for resources for youth MH and wellness in the community. • Create a mechanism for youth to anonymously submit ideas and feedback about youth activities and programs.