

Cascading Leadership across the System to Promote Scale-Up and Sustainability in School Mental Health

Canadian Conference for Promoting Healthy
Relationships for Youth

Western University, February 2017



## **Session Outline**

- Everyday Leadership
- School Mental Health in Canada
- Leadership across Levels
- Tools for Growing Leadership
- Stories and Reflections



https://www.ted.com/talks/drew\_dudley\_everyday\_leadership

## Re-Defining Leadership

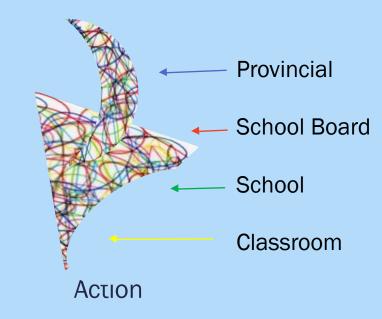
Traditional Leadership (in theory)

Vision and decision



Everyday Leadership (in real life)

Vision and decision



## **Everyday Leadership is...**

- Shared...across positional leaders, influential individuals, influential groups, key stakeholders
- Messy...and iterative and sometimes uncomfortable
- Aligned...with the big picture and the local context
- Relationship-driven...where connectors and mobilizers are as important as positional leaders
- Tiered...across levels of the system



Rather than "heroic leadership", the focus is on interconnection & relationship

True leadership becomes "a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situation" rather than "as a product of a leader's knowledge and skill" (Spillane, 2006).



# Everyday Leadership Happens... But Does it Happen Optimally?

Unfortunately not.



How can we use leadership as a tool for systematic uptake of evidence-based practices in school mental health?

## The Promise of School Mental Health

- Most mental health problems are treatable, but a relatively small proportion of children and youth seek/receive treatment in community and hospital settings
- Early identification and intervention improves prognosis



### Schools are an optimal setting in which to:

- ▶ Reduce stigma
- Promote positive mental health
- Build student social-emotional learning skills
- Prevent mental health problems in high risk groups
- Identify students in need
- Build pathways to care

# The Beginning of a Movement in School Mental Health

Interest amongst policy makers and funding bodies

 Taking Mental Health to School Provincial Study in School Mental Health

http://www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/sites/default/files/position\_sbmh.pdf

http://www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/sites/default/files/position\_sbmh\_practice\_scan.pdf

 School-Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse Consortium National Study in School Mental Health

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/system/files/private/document/ChildYouth School Based Mental Health Canada Final Report ENG.pdf



## Taking Mental Health To School:

A policy-oriented paper on school-based mental health for Ontario





- Synthesis of literature
- Scan of the practice landscape

- Consultation with policy officials across five ministries before and after report development
- Culminating in a set of recommendations for policy related to school mental health in Ontario

## Taking Mental Health to School in Ontario

- Different models of mental health service delivery across boards
  - Variable leadership structures
  - Variable levels and types of professional support
  - Variable relationship with community
  - Variable range of services provided
- Educators are very concerned, but feel ill-prepared to provide support
- Identified need for:
  - Provincial and local leadership
  - Provincial and local coordination
  - Access to evidence-based approaches
  - Implementation support
  - Evaluation support



## School-Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse Consortium

- Systematic Review of Reviews
- National Survey of Schools and School Districts
- Scan of Current SMH Programming
- Knowledge Translation and Exchange





## Release of SBMHSA Consortium Key Findings

### **Meta-Synthesis of Reviews**

MH Promotion		Prevention	Intervention/ Ongoing Care
School/Class-wide Social Emotional Learning is associated with enhanced prosocial ability and academic achievement	Internalizing	Cognitive-Behavior Therapy / Behavior Therapy that is skill- based and builds protective factors can reduce symptoms	CBT/BT focused on core elements like social problem solving, cognitive restructuring, relaxation
	Externalizing	Cognitive-Behavior Therapy / Behavior Therapy that builds conflict resolution and and anger management skills can reduce symptoms	CBT/BT focused on core elements like identifying cues for aggression, resisting automatic aggressive impulses, alternative behaviors
	Substance Use	Mixed results – best strategies are interactive and build refusal and life skills	Insufficient evidence

## Mental Health Programming is NOT Neutral

✓ Many "feel good" programs and strategies are untested or benign

#### ... some are harmful

✓ Specific evidence-based mental health promotion programming at Tier 1 (examples):

Approach	Evidence	
Explicit and systematic SEL	Proven	
Contact-based stigma reduction	Promising	
Student mental health literacy	Possibly (requires further study)	

## Release of SBMHSA Consortium Key Findings

#### Scan of Nominated Best Practices

- Report of 150 nominated programs and strategies, from every province
- Across the Evergreen continuum
- Development and adaptation driven by need, resulting in islands of innovation
- Inconsistent alignment with evidence, inconsistent use of local evaluation

- Actionable messages
  - Build tools to support coherence and decision-making
  - Support evaluation and scale up



## Release of SBMHSA Consortium Key Findings

**National Survey of Schools and Districts** 

### **Broad Findings**

85% of board-level respondents, and 65% of school-level participants, indicated they were concerned or very concerned about student mental health and/or substance use

Over 80% of respondents indicated that there are unmet student mental health and/or substance use needs in their board or school

Most Common – Problems With: attention & learning, anxiety, substance use, social relationships & bullying, oppositional behavior & aggression, depressed mood

Identified need for organizational conditions at the school and district level (board policy, clear service pathways, infrastructure, role clarity, systematic PD)

Inconsistent coverage of the continuum of care in districts and schools. Primary focus on identification and referral, individual intervention and crisis intervention

Implementation Barriers include: insufficient resources in schools/communities, insufficient qualified staff in school boards, need for parent engagement/collaboration, need for promotion/prevention programming, need for systematic PD for educators

# Consistent Finding – There is a Knowing/Doing Gap in School Mental Health

#### World of Evidence

- What we KNOW
- Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care



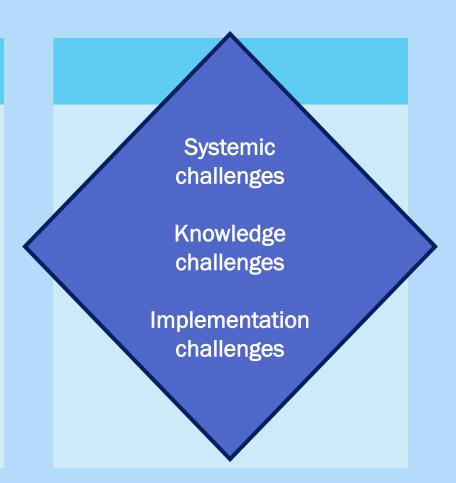
#### **World of Practice**

- What we DO (usually)
- Fragmented and uneven uptake of programs that are inconsistently aligned with evidence and without attention to elements of sustainability, like conditions and capacity building

## **Common Challenges**

#### World of Evidence

- What we KNOW
- Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care



### **World of Practice**

- What we DO (usually)
- Fragmented and uneven uptake of programs that are inconsistently aligned with evidence and without attention to elements of sustainability, like conditions and capacity building

## Achieving the Potential for Mental Health in Schools

- This promise can't be achieved one school at a time, a system approach is needed
- System leaders have a critical role in creating mentally healthy systems
- School leaders have a critical role in creating mentally healthy schools
- Educators have a critical role in creating mentally healthy classrooms



Who else provides leadership related to school mental health in your setting?



## School Mental Health ASSIST

### **Provincial Leadership in School Mental Health**

Systematic, collaborative, intentional, explicit, nuanced, creative, evidence-based (SCIENCE!)

### **Resource Development**

- Awareness, Literacy, Expertise

### Implementation Coaching

Province, Region, Board

### A Community of Practice (relationships)

Meetings, on-line forums



A provincial implementation support team working alongside the Ontario Ministry of Education to help Ontario's 72 school districts to effectively promote student mental health and well-being.



# School Mental Health ASSIST Theory of Action

#### **Proximal**

## THEN we will have...

- Coherence in foundational processes and structures
- Workforce knowledge, skill, confidence to support well-being
- Uptake of scalable EBPs across the tiers
- Appropriate services for specific populations
- Clear pathways to, from, through care

#### Distal

- Consistent access to high-quality
   MH promotion programming
- Enhanced overall student mental health and well-being
- Better early identification of vulnerable students
- Enhanced support for vulnerable students
- Reduced rates of mental health problems

THEN we can expect..

- Ensure organizational conditions for effective SMH
- Build workforce capacity
- Use EB embedded SMH programming
- Attend to needs of specific populations
- Engage with community partners in enhancing the system of care

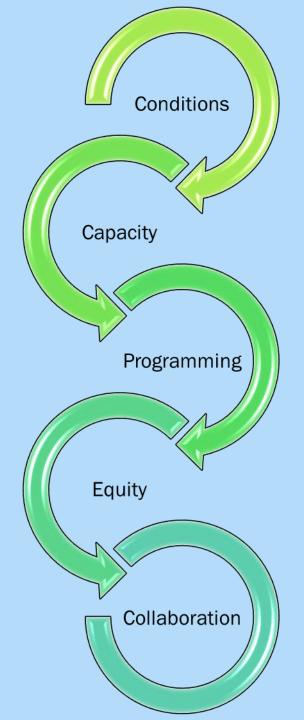
IF all boards...

### SMH ASSIST Action Areas

- Set the Conditions
- Build System Leader Capacity
- Select, Implement, and Monitor Evidence-Based Programming
- Apply an Equity Lens
- Collaborate with Partners

To achieve these proximal goals for the **PROVINCIAL LEVEL::** 

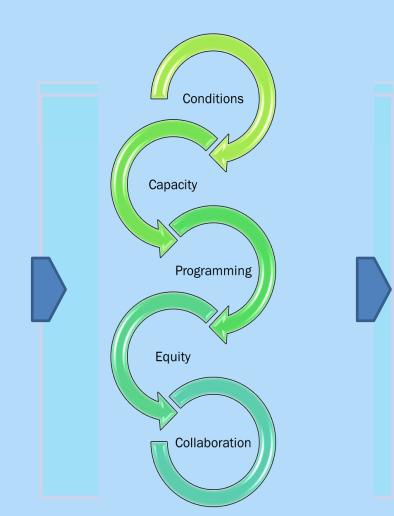
- Coherence in foundational processes and structures
- Workforce knowledge, skill, confidence to support well-being
- Uptake of scalable EBPs across the tiers
- Appropriate services for specific populations
- Clear pathways to, from, through care



## Proactively Addressing the Systemic, Knowledge, and Implementation Challenges

### **World of Evidence**

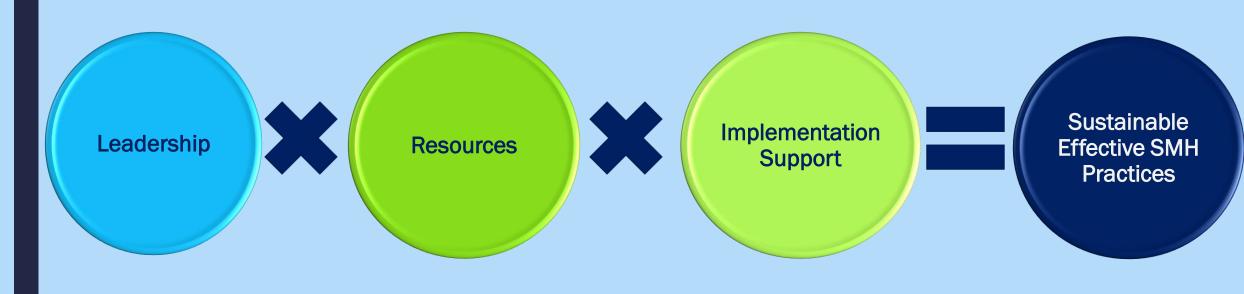
- What we KNOW
- Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care



#### **World of Practice**

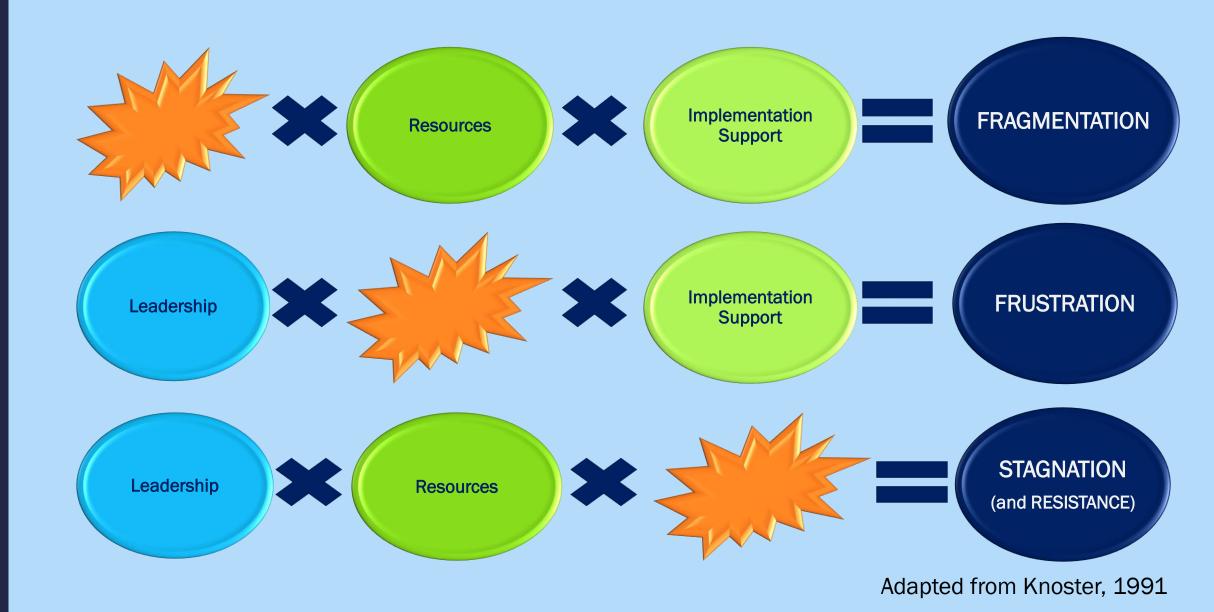
- What we DO (hopefully)
- Systematic and coordinated uptake of evidence-based approaches in school mental health, with attention to conditions and capacity-building elements that enhance sustainability over time

## **SMH ASSIST Action Approach Formula**



Relationships

## All Elements of the Action Approach Formula are Essential!



## Addressing Challenges with Implementation Science

#### **World of Evidence**

- What we KNOW
- Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care



- ✓ LEADERSHIP
- ✓ RESOURCES
- ✓ IMPLEMENTATION COACHING
- ✓ COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



#### **World of Practice**

- What we DO (hopefully)
- Systematic and coordinated uptake of evidence-based approaches in school mental health, with attention to conditions and capacity-building elements that enhance sustainability over time

## Scaffolded Leadership Model



### • Specific Populations • System Coordination

- Organizational Conditions
- Capacity Building
- Evidence-Based MH Promotion and Prevention
- Specific Populations

SMH ASSIST & **Ministry** 

### Board

- Organizational Conditions
- Capacity Building
- Evidence-Based MH Promotion and Prevention
- Specific Populations
- System Coordination

MHL & Board MH Leadership Team



- Organizational Conditions
- Capacity Building
- Evidence-BasedSpecific Populations
- System Coordination
- MH Promotion and Prevention

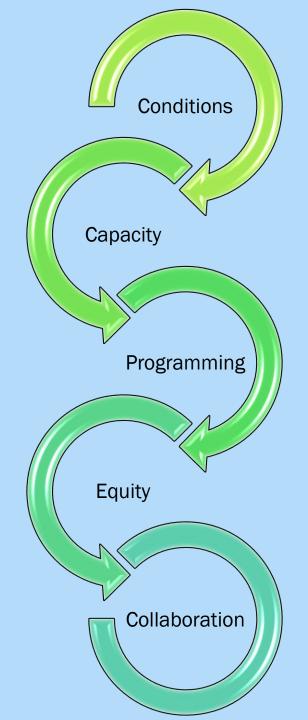
Principal & School Leadership Team

# System Leadership Action Areas in SMH

- Set the Conditions
- Build School Leader Capacity
- Select, Implement, and Monitor Evidence-Based Programming
- Apply an Equity Lens
- Collaborate with Partners

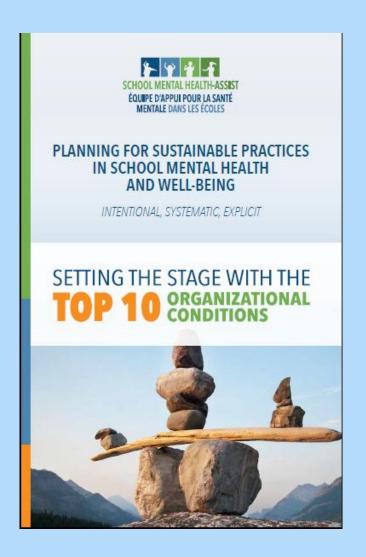
To achieve these proximal goals for the **SCHOOL DISTRICT LEVEL**:

- Coherence in foundational processes and structures
- Workforce knowledge, skill, confidence to support well-being
- Uptake of scalable EBPs across the tiers
- Appropriate services for specific populations
- Clear pathways to, from, through care



# Foundations for System and School Leadership

- 1. Commitment
- 2. Mental Health Leadership Team
- 3. Clear and Focused Vision
- 4. Communication and Shared Language
- 5. Assessment of Need and Capacity
- 6. Standard Processes
- 7. Systematic Professional Learning
- 8. Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan
- 9. Broad Collaboration
- 10. Ongoing Quality Monitoring

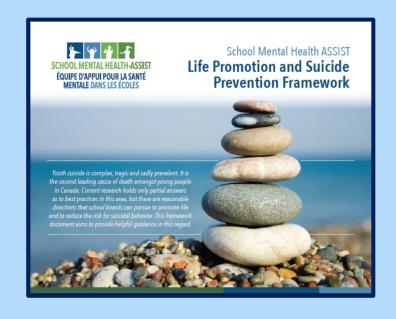


## System Leadership Resources

- For District MH Leadership Teams
- Capacity, Programming, Equity, Coordination
- Provincial, regional meetings
- Ongoing coaching
- Community of Practice







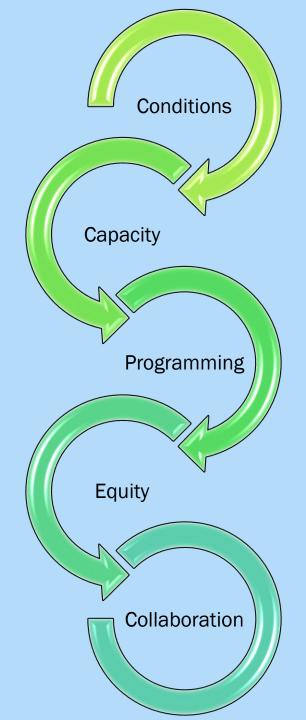


## School Leadership Action Areas in SMH

- Set the Conditions
- Build School Staff Capacity
- Select, Implement, and Monitor Evidence-Based Programming
- Apply an Equity Lens
- Collaborate with Partners

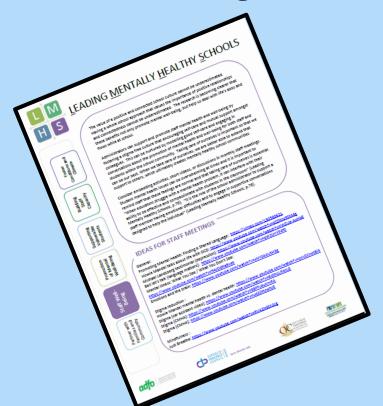
To achieve these proximal goals for the **SCHOOL LEVEL**:

- Coherence in foundational processes and structures
- Workforce knowledge, skill, confidence to support well-being
- Uptake of scalable EBPs across the tiers
- Appropriate services for specific populations
- Clear pathways to, from, through care



## **School Leadership Resources**

- For School MH Leadership Teams
- Capacity, Programming, Equity, Coordination
- Principal Associations
- MHL Coaching









\*Check out the full document on-line at smh-assist.ca

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Supporting mental well-being at school is a complex and important area of work for the school loader. These B STRATEGIES are designed to capture some key aspects of the leader's role, and to after related audiance.

#### 1. Think in Tiers

Adopt a tiered approach to supporting mental well-being in your school: universal promotion for ALL students, targeted skill development for SOME students at higher risk, treatment for your FEW most vulnerable students.

#### 2. Set the Stage

Create the conditions in your school that allow for sustainable and effective practices, like having a school team with responsibility for mental well-being and establishing in-school processes for helping vulnerable students.

#### 3. Connect the Dots

Make the links with related initiatives in your school that support student wellbeing, like Safe and Accepting Schools, Healthy Schools, and Equity and Inclusive Education. Align work with your Board/School Improvement Plan!

#### 4. Focus on the Positive

Mental health is a positive state! Keep the focus on well-being, rather than illness and disorder. Schools have a primary role in supporting mental health promotion.

#### 5. Bring People Along

Build staff capacity for supporting student well-being at school. Help them to create mentally healthy classrooms, and to understand their role as the eyes, ears, and hearts for students who may struggle with emotional problems.

#### 6. Follow Familiar Planning Processes

Draw on familiar planning cycles to set and achieve your school mental wellbeing goals. This work can become a regular part of your school improvement and school effectiveness processes.

#### 7. Enable Implementation

Provide the needed time and coaching to bring school mental health plans to life. As in other areas of work, a clear vision and action plan, with explicit responsibilities and timelines, can help with execution.

#### 8. Foster Collaboration

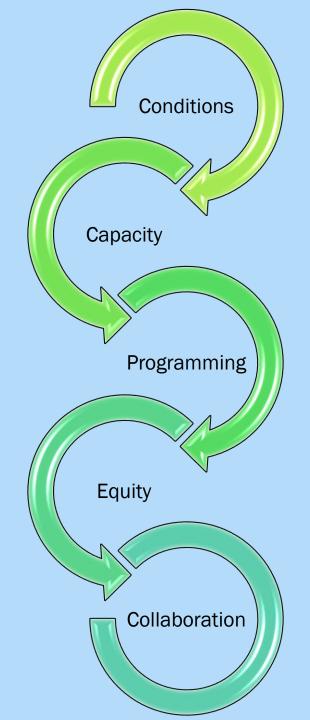
Work alongside board, community and family partners to promote seamless mental health service delivery. The school has an important role in the system of care, but must work closely with partners for treatment and transition services.

# Classroom Leadership Action Areas in SMH

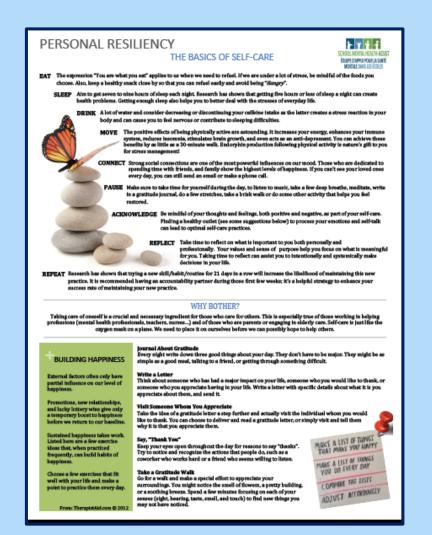
- Set the Conditions
- Build STUDENT Capacity
- Select, Implement, and Monitor Evidence-Based Programming
- Apply an Equity Lens
- Collaborate with Partners

To achieve these proximal goals for the **CLASSROOM LEVEL**:

- Coherence in foundational processes and structures
- Workforce knowledge, skill, confidence to support well-being
- Uptake of scalable EBPs across the tiers
- Appropriate services for specific populations
- Clear pathways to, from, through care

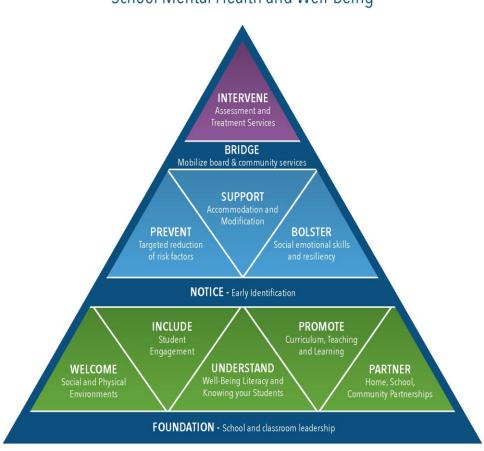


# Foundations for Classroom Leadership



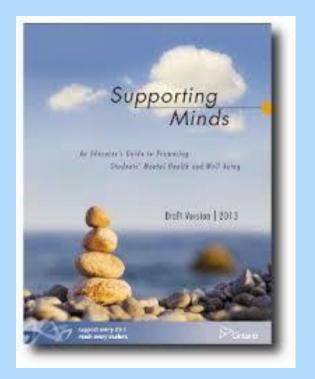


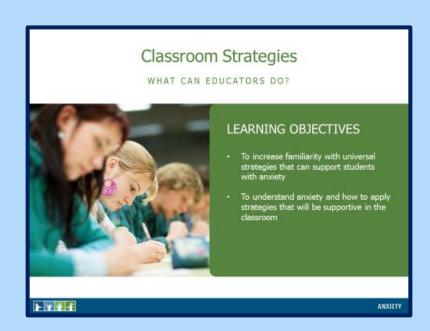
### Aligned and Integration Model (AIM) for School Mental Health and Well-Being



## Classroom Leadership Resources

- For Educators
- Capacity, Programming, Equity, Coordination
- Principal Associations
- MHL Coaching



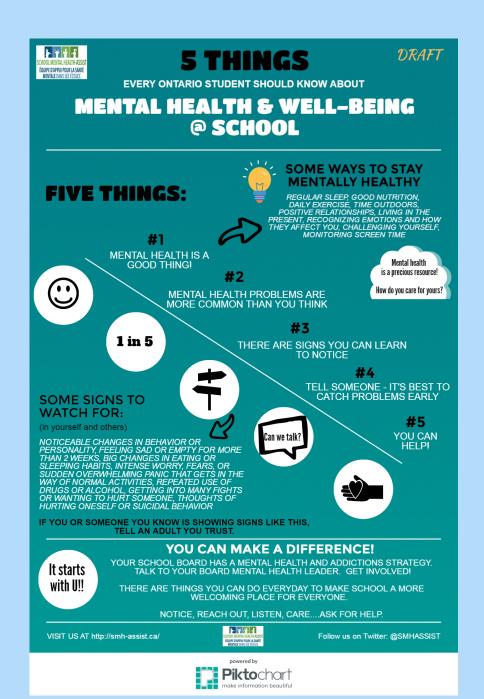




## Student Leadership



How can we best foster meaningful student engagement in school mental health?





# SHARING LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH

Innovations, promising work, challenges, needs



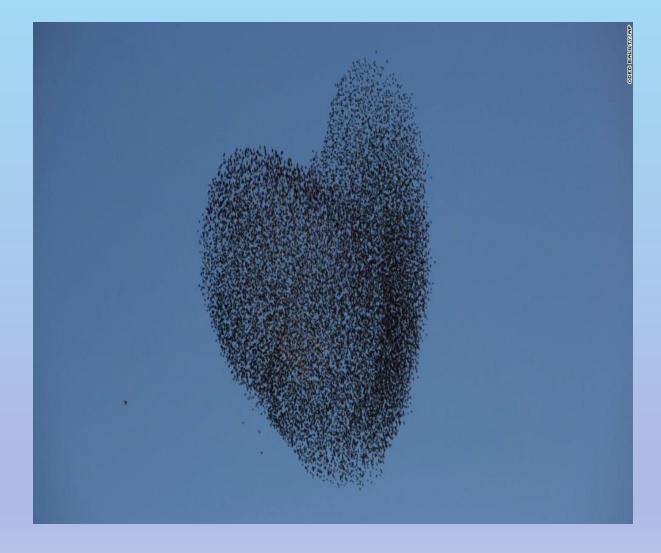
Together, we are better.

#### **Contact Us:**

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Follow us on Twitter: <a href="mailto:oscillation"><u>OSMHASSIST</u></a>



#### Bird Ballet

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_-4y10G57gE



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