

Dear teachers:

Welcome to Healthy Minds, Healthy Youth: A Speak Up Lesson Activity

This is a resource for increasing students' mental health literacy by enabling young people to gain knowledge about mental health problems and actions they can take to connect to support early and quickly. The lesson activity is designed to have students teach each other by researching the mindcheck.ca website and then presenting the information to the rest of the class.

This resource was developed by Linda Wowk, RPN, Nurse Educator and Nicole Chovil, PhD, Child, Youth and Young Adult Mental Health and Substance Use Services, Fraser Health Authority as part of the Speak Up program. Funding for the development of this learning resource was generously provided by Coast Capital Savings.

Mental health issues such as stress, depression, anxiety, and psychosis are the primary health problems experienced by young people in their teens and early 20s. It is estimated that one in five young people will develop a mental disorder that requires professional intervention. Many other young people struggle with mild to moderate mental health problems. Mental health problems impair a young person's ability to function at home, at school or work and with their peers.

Early awareness and intervention are key to preventing the escalation of emerging mental health problems. mindcheck.ca is a British Columbia-based teen and young adult website (ages 13-25) that helps young people to sort out what's going on for them and connects them with tools and resources.

The Healthy Minds, Healthy Youth learning resource provides an easy to use lesson activity that incorporates the use of the website mindcheck.ca as a learning resource to help meet some of the health related prescribed learning outcomes for Health and Career Education for Planning 10 classes. This lesson activity does not require teachers to have prior knowledge about mental health. We do encourage teachers to review the mindcheck.ca website prior to implementing the lesson activity, but it is the students who will research information and "teach" each other.

This resource is based on an educational model developed by Fraser Health that utilizes a professional and young person with lived experience who present information on mental health problems and engage with students to help them better understand early signs and resources they can use to effectively manage problems. We recognized a need to provide teachers with a resource they could utilize in their school where live presentations are not feasible. The lesson activity is based on the idea that students learn best from each other and fostering dialogue on mental health is one of the best antidotes to eliminating stigma.

We welcome feedback from teachers. If you have any comments or suggestions, please complete the feedback form or send us an email at speakup@mindcheck.ca.