

Mental Health Literacy: Approaches on our Campuses

Healthy Minds, Healthy Campuses Summit 2019

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Mental Health Literacy (MHL) at a glance

Health literacy:

- The Canadian Public Health Association's definition of health literacy is “the ability to access, understand, evaluate, and communicate information as a way to promote, maintain and improve health in a variety of settings across the life course”
- Health literacy is the most important social determinant for health outcomes (Rootman & Gordon-El-Bihibety, 2008)

Mental Health Literacy (Kutcher 2014)

- understanding how to obtain and maintain positive mental health
- understanding mental disorders and their treatments
- decreasing stigma related to mental disorders
- enhancing help-seeking efficacy (knowing when and where to seek help and developing competencies to improve ones' mental health care and self-management capabilities)



In order to be effective, MHL should be...

- context specific (developed and applied in everyday situations)
- developmentally appropriate
- effectively integrated into existing social and organizational structures, such as schools

Current interest & investment in MHL at UBC Vancouver:

- Faculty of Education (TeenMentalHealth.org and Transitions resource for post secondary students);
- Student Development and Services;
- First Year Experience;
- Office of UBC Health;
- UBC Wellbeing;
- Human Resources



Why MHL at UBC Vancouver?

- MHL has been identified as being foundational to mental health promotion and to the identification and treatment of mental illness
- MHL education for academic and administrative staff can lead to better student mental health outcomes.
- MHL education improves the overall wellbeing of those who participate.
- Within the workplace, MHL should be embedded in policies, procedures and supports to maximize context specific effectiveness.



Snapshot: Student Leader Audience

Mental Health Literacy workshop for student leaders

~300 Student Leaders trained including RAs, Senior RAs, RCs, RLMs, Programme Resource Centre Advisors, Collegia Advisors, Senior Collegia Advisors

Learning Outcomes:

- Consider the importance of language within a mental health literacy framework.
- Recognize how stress can be a positive signal to adapt.
- Identify coping strategies to respond to the stress response.
- Practice communication skills to support other students experiencing the stress response.
- Identify strategies to foster and maintain good mental health for yourself and peers.



Snapshot: New to UBC Students

First Year Orientation wellness workshop

~1700 first year students took part in “**Taking Charge of My Health**” workshop

Learning Objectives:

1. Reflect upon their attitudes, beliefs and expectations for university life.
2. Identify strategies to foster and maintain good mental and physical health for themselves within the new context of university.
3. Identify resources on campus to support their health.
4. Be aware of Canada’s Low Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines.
5. Be aware of Canada’s Lower Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines.



Snapshot: Staff and Faculty Audience

Training Programs

- Mental Health First Aid (12 hours) - The Working Mind: Managers/supervisors (8 hours)
- The Working Mind: staff & faculty (4 hours) - Understanding MH Challenges (1.5 hours)

Mental Health First Aid

- 4 UBC staff members trained to deliver in-house (HR and SD&S)
- Offered 4-5x per year, 1 specifically for faculty
- 460+ trained to date (since 2012)

The Working Mind - (Managers/supervisors & employees)

- 1 UBC staff member trained to deliver in-house
- Offered 2x per year and on-demand for departments and units
- 71 managers and 45 employees trained (since 2018)

Evaluation

- Rolled out evaluation survey in 2018 for both training
- Questions are mapped to components of MHL



Snapshot: Staff and Faculty Audience

Leadership Development

- Managing@UBC program
- Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP)
 - Working to align MHL measures and wellbeing with existing professional development programs.
 - Will involved embedding MHL components into existing & well recognized/respected leadership development programs.
 - Will requires multiple HR units to work together



Snapshot: Whole campus audience

Thrive principles

1. Promote knowledge at UBC on what mental health is and how to foster and maintain it.
2. Be informed by evidence in the field of mental health.
3. Cultivate an approach that reflects and celebrates the diversity of experiences related to mental health at UBC.



Thrive week is Oct. 29 - Nov. 2
thrive.ubc.ca



“Thrive 5”

- Sleep
- Physical Activity
- Social Connection
- Nutrition
- Helping Others

**Did you hit the
snooze button
this morning?**

Spending some **time without screens**
before bed can help you sleep better and
feel more rested.

JOIN US AND THRIVE
Oct. 29 - Nov. 2, 2018



Discussion Questions

1. Introduce yourselves at your table!
2. Thinking about what you're currently doing on your campus with regards to mental health education and promotion, what resonates with you from the mental health literacy approach?
3. What are other considerations for you campus?





Thank you!

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