Above The Influence
Improving Mental Health & Substance Use Awareness Among Ottawa Adolescents

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CONTEXT
Recent data has shown poor mental health across Ottawa adolescents, as well as a lack of knowledge regarding how to seek support for these issues. Additionally, risky substance use behaviours have been found to begin around age 13. Alcohol and cannabis remain the most commonly used substances within this age group. ConnexOntario is an existing 24 hour online service for resource navigation and education about alcohol & drugs, mental illness, and gambling that we plan to work with in our program.

MISSION
Better overall mental health in the target audience
Reduced substance use in the target audience
Early intervention to reduce long term impacts of mental illness, substance use disorders, and overdoses
Reduced stigma associated with mental health & substance use problems
Increased likelihood/willingness of target audience to seek timely support or help

KEY STRATEGIES
Health Communication
Self-Help/Mutual Support
Creating Supportive Environments

KEY ACTIVITIES
Toolkit provided as a resource for teacher supervisors
Student Mentor Conference for student volunteers
Peer Mentorship Program to educate peers & share resources using ConnexOntario

OUR PROGRAM
Goal
To improve health literacy around substance use and mental health in Ottawa high school students.

Audiences
Primary: grade 9-12 students in OCDSB high schools
Secondary: teachers, principals and superintendents

Outcome Objectives
1. 30% increase in number of OCDSB high school students who feel they have the knowledge & ability to access substance use resources by June 2024.
2. 30% increase in number of OCDSB high school students who feel comfortable seeking support related to mental health & substance use by June 2024.
3. 20% decrease in number of OCDSB high school students who feel that their mental health is affected by substance use by June 2024.

KEY PARTNERS

OUTCOMES, IMPACTS & NEXT STEPS

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