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HSS 4101: Development & Evaluation of Health Programs

Above The Influence

Improving Mental Health & Substance Use Awareness Among Ottawa Adolescents

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.

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*.

MISSION

CityStudio Ottawa's mission is to inspire, connect and mobilize students, faculty, the city, and community members to collaborate on action to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and healthier city.

KEY PARTNERS



uOttawa



OUTCOMES, IMPACTS & NEXT STEPS

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

