



CHSSN

Youth Mental Health Initiative

final evaluation report

Prepared by Juniper Glass, Lumiere Consulting for
the Community Health and Social Services Network

2021-
2024

Acknowledgements

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The author and CHSSN gratefully acknowledge the community organizations participating in the YMHI for their time in contributing feedback and evaluation data used in this report.

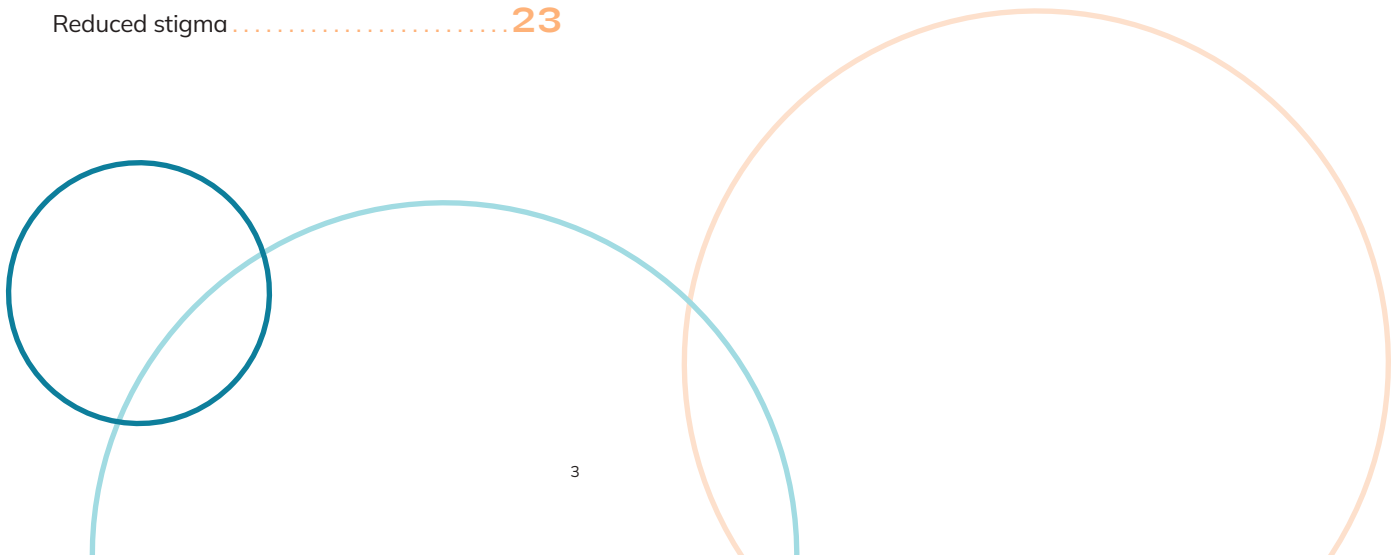
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Background

About CHSSN

The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) is a network of over 70 community resources, associations, foundations and other stakeholders dedicated to the development, through partnership, of health and social services for English-speaking communities in Québec. It was founded in 2000 by a group of community leaders who recognized the importance of mobilizing English-speaking communities to ensure access to health and social services in English. The CHSSN has built the capacity of organizations across the province to become experts on the needs and realities of English-speaking communities. It has given communities the tools to be active participants in the improvement of the accessibility of services in English. The CHSSN model has been recognized nationally and internationally as innovative by various stakeholders in the field of community development and health care for linguistic minorities. The CHSSN has built an evidence base of the English-speaking communities including subpopulations like the 15-29 youth population which are available on the CHSSN website: www.chssn.org

About the Youth Mental Health Initiative

The Youth Mental Health Initiative promotes the mental health of English-speaking youth by improving their access to resources and services and involving them in the design and implementation of activities that promote their agency and reduce stigma in their peers and community. In 2021-24, YMHI focused on mental health literacy and awareness building with youth while promoting the adaptation of mental health services and resources to be more inclusive, youth-friendly and culturally appropriate to reach underserved English-speaking youth.

YMHI was implemented by CHSSN in partnership with 27 community organizations across Québec who developed and implemented projects to engage youth, develop, translate and adapt mental health resources, and provide activities and events in their regions (see [map](#) for list of partners and their location).

The role of CHSSN was to provide the community organizations with individualized project development and capacity-building support. This support included: the facilitation of a virtual Community of Practice, which fostered a space for sharing resources and best practices, and for networking; the creation of a private Facebook knowledge hub group through which CHSSN regularly disseminated program learnings, research, and relevant tools; and conducted individual meetings and offered training sessions with the organizations. CHSSN administered allocated funds to the participating organizations and coordinated reporting on financial resources and evaluation of program deliverables and outcomes. In addition, CHSSN created and hosted an Advisory Committee made up of experts in youth mental health to provide feedback throughout the program.

YMHI was funded by the Secrétariat à la jeunesse and the Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon from 2021 to 2024.

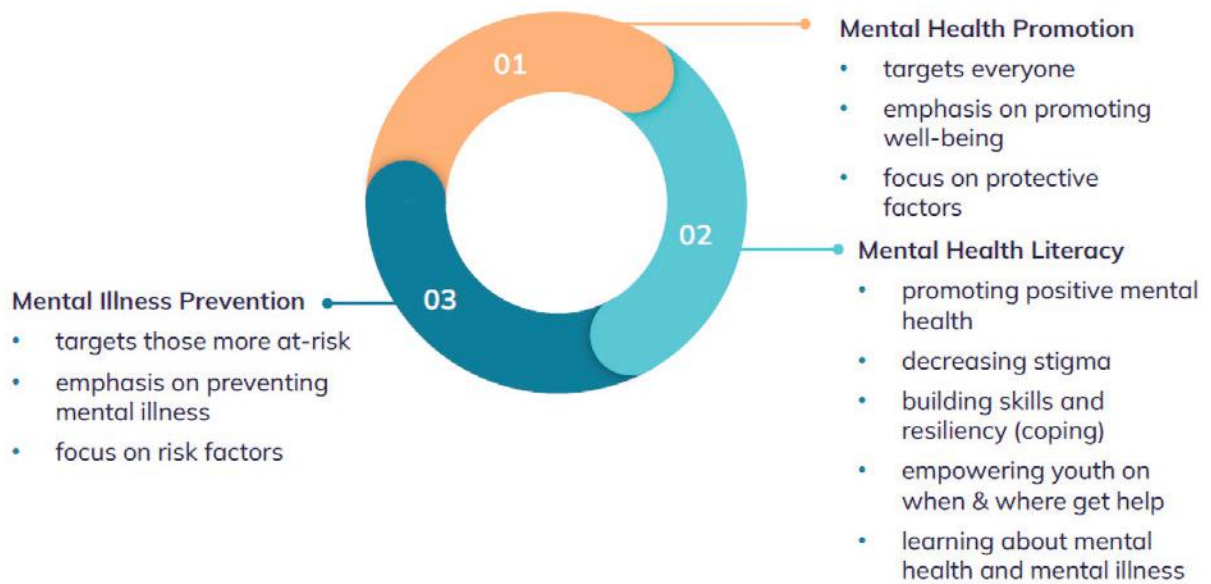
Program Objectives

- Raise awareness of the gaps in mental health services for young English-speaking Quebecers.
- Provide mental health resources to young English-speaking Quebecers
- Involve young English-speaking Quebecers in mental health activities and events
- Reduce stigma

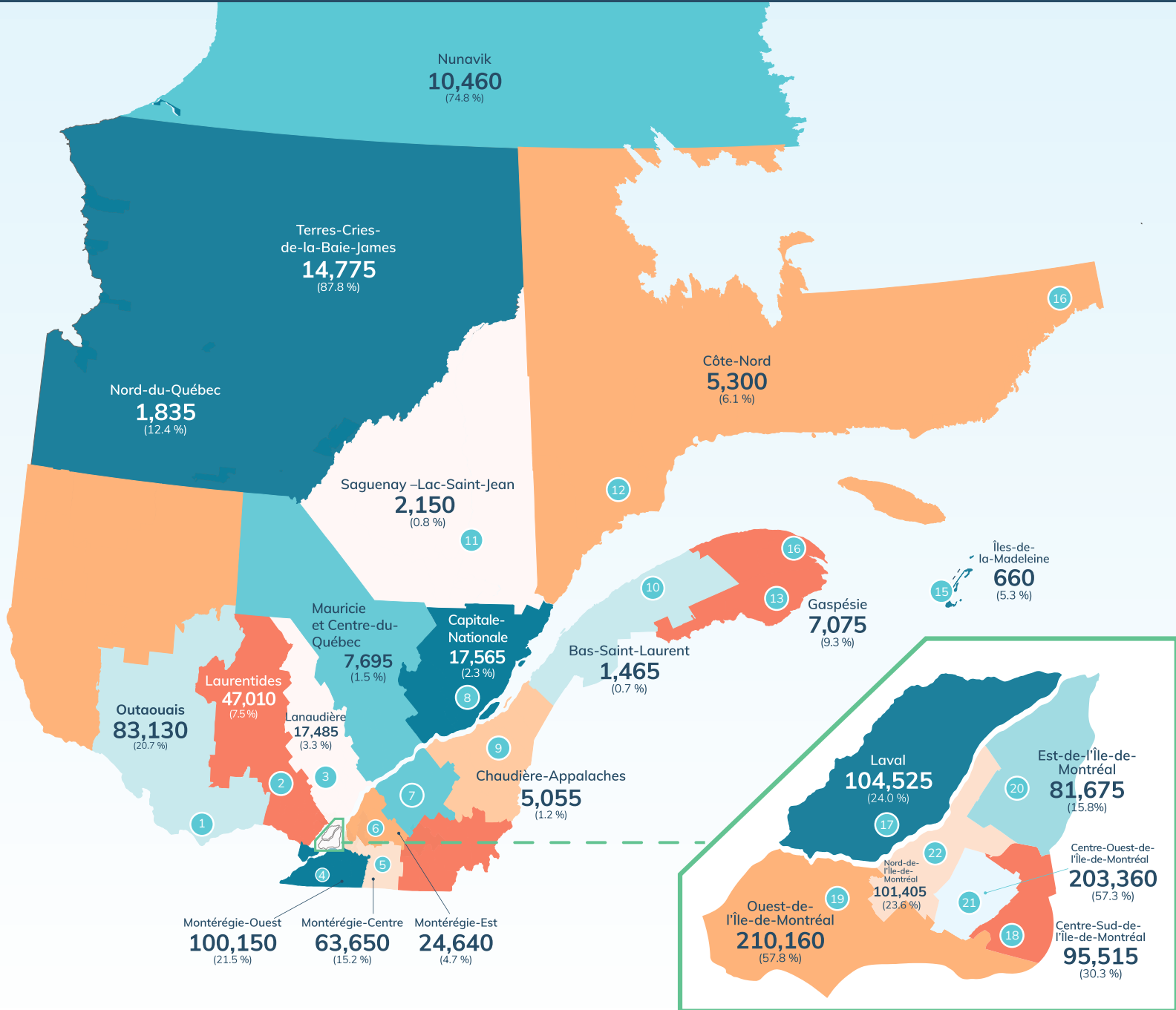
Approach

An important aspect of the YMHI program was its values and approach to youth engagement and mental health promotion and prevention. As well as the six principles that guided the implementation of the program:

- support positive youth development
- enhance protective factors
- community-based and flexible
- strive for equity equality and accessibility
- build intersectoral partnerships
- engage mental health professional and service providers



Youth Mental Health Initiative 2021-2024



Quebec's English-speaking Youth

Les jeunes d'expression anglaise du Québec

English-speaking youth
aged 15-29 in Québec

Quebécois(es) d'expression
anglaise âgé(e)s de 15 à 29 ans

256,835

2021 Census of Canada
Recensement du Canada, 2021

20.5%
of the total
English-speaking
community

du total de la communauté
d'expression anglaise.

The CHSSN NPI Network

Le réseau NPI du CHSSN

Head Office

- 1 **Outaouais**
Connexions Resource Centre
- 2 **Laurentides**
4Korners
- 3 **Lanaudière**
English Community Organization
of Lanaudière (ECOL)
- 4 **Montérégie-Ouest**
Montérégie West Community
Network (MWCN)
- 5 **Montérégie-Centre**
Assistance and Referral Centre (ARC)
- 6 **Montérégie-Est**
Monteregie East Partnership for
the English-Speaking Community
(MEPEC)
- 7 **Mauricie et Centre-du-Québec**
Centre for Access to Services
in English (CASE)
- 8 **Capitale-Nationale**
Jeffery Hale Community Partners
(JH Partners)
- 9 **Chaudière-Appalaches**
Megantic English-speaking
Community Development Corp.
(MCDC)
- 10 **Bas-Saint-Laurent**
Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence
- 11 **Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean**
English Community Organization
of Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean
(ECO-02)
- 12 **Côte-Nord**
North Shore Community
Association (NSCA)
- 13 **Gaspésie**
Committee for Anglophone
Social Action (CASA)
- 14 **Gaspésie**
Vision Gaspé-Percé Now (VGPN)
- 15 **Îles-de-la-Madeleine**
Council for Anglophone Magdalen
Islanders (CAMI)
- 16 **Côte-Nord**
Coasters Association
- 17 **Laval**
AGAPE – The Youth & Parents
AGAPE Association Inc.
AGAPE Leading English Education
and Resource Network (LEARN)
- 18 **Centre-Sud-
de-l'Île-de-Montréal**
BGC Dawson - Anglo Family
Council (AFC)
Collective Community
Services (CCS)
Projet 10 | Project 10 (P10)
- 19 **Ouest-de-l'Île-
de-Montréal**
African Canadian Development
& Prevention Network (ACDPN)
O3 / Les Maisons Transitionnelles
O3 On Our Own
Head & Hands / À Deux Mains
- 20 **Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal**
East Island Network for
English-Language Services
(REISA)
English Language
Arts Network (ELAN)
- 21 **Centre-Ouest-de-
l'Île-de-Montréal**
Y4Y Quebec Association
- 22 **Nord-de-l'Île-
de-Montréal**
Centre of Dreams
& Hopes (CDH)

Community Organization Partners Across Québec

Regions Reached by YMHI

Region 01. Bas-Saint-Laurent

Region 02. Saguenay-
Lac-Saint-Jean

Region 03. Capitale-Nationale

Region 06. Montréal

Region 07. Outaouais

Region 09. Côte-Nord

Region 11. Gaspésie-
Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Region 12. Chaudière-
Appalaches

Region 13. Laval

Region 14. Lanaudière

Region 15. Laurentides

Region 16. Montérégie

Youth Mental Health Initiative Logic Model

Ultimate
Outcome

Improved mental well-being of English-speaking Quebecers aged 15-29.

Long term
Outcomes

Improved accessibility of targeted mental health resources and services to English-speaking youth (15-29) in Quebec. Increased youth involvement in mental health activities and events where value is placed on their agency. Less stigma surrounding mental health challenges experienced by youth both internally and externally from their peers, families and communities.

Intermediate
Outcomes

Outcomes of Community Organization's

- o Have dependable partnerships with local, regional and provincial mental health service providers to facilitate access to linguistically and culturally adapted services to youth.
- o Partnership with youth who contribute to the co-development, evaluation and dissemination of resources and mental health support tools made available by the organization or its partners.
- o Longstanding commitment to youth representation in organizations is practiced by increasing the number and diversity of English-speaking youth (≥ 35) on Boards of Directors.

Outcomes for Youth

- o Youth gain both the skills to navigate their wellness and the knowledge to call upon the resources that exist to support them.
- o Youth become agents of mental health literacy and contribute to breaking the stigma around mental health.
- o Youth are active in supporting their own mental health outcomes and the well-being of their peers and communities.

Short term
Outcomes

- o Strengthen partner's understanding, awareness and caring towards the gaps and barriers experienced by young English-speakers seeking mental health services and support
- o Community workers attain the knowledge, tools and resources needed to offer effective, adapted, linguistically and culturally appropriate mental health support to youth
- o Youth and contributors of youth wellness are mobilized and guided in the creation of activities and events lead by or meaningfully involving them.

Outputs

CHSSN's activities

- ◁ Support the development of projects focused on youth mental health lead by organizations.
- ◁ Offer networking, training, capacity building & learning events on evidence-based practices that bridge knowledge gaps and support the mandate (including a community of practice working on youth mental health).
- ◁ Develop and or disseminate knowledge products, tools and program learnings to the funded orgs and government funders and contributors.
- ◁ Build relationships with provincial organizations.

Community organizations' activities

- ◁ Outreach to youth to learn about their needs and challenges in accessing mental health services in their communities.
- ◁ Create and disseminate information that raises partners' awareness of the gaps in mental health services for young English-speakers.
- ◁ Promote mental wellness for all youth by informing them of vetted services and supports available in English (sharing clear pathways to help).
- ◁ Invest in protective factors by broadening the network of community supports and their capacities to respond (schools, support groups/brave spaces, peer-support).
- ◁ Empower youth with mental health literacy tools and training in order to feel safe (break stigma) and better attuned to know when and how to signal for help.
- ◁ Use mental illness prevention strategies for at-risk groups centered on building their coping skills and fostering resiliency (informed by youth with lived experience).
- ◁ Work with youth to deliver events and activities to increase inclusion, reduce stigma and avoid tokenism participation (ensure that the outreach speaks to them and includes their valuable contributions).

Inputs

- › Program Manager
- › Funding to organizations
- › Funding for knowledge products
- › Funding for training & learning events
- › Evaluation Consultant

- › Project funding to 20 NPIs and 7 community organizations working with youth
- › Community organization in-kind contributions (e.g. staff, locale, admin, materials)

Contributors
of Program



Our Youth Mental Health Initiative (YMHI) aims to improve access to mental health resources and services for young English-speaking Quebecers (15-29) to better meet their needs, especially those exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the length of the program 2021-2024, we support our funded community organizations in carrying out their projects, in engaging local stakeholders involved with youth and in increasing resources and services that will impact accessibility.



The Foundation's (FLAC) mission is to prevent poverty by contributing to the educational success of young Quebecers so that they reach their full potential. The FLAC is particularly invested in young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

FLAC are providing a three-year \$1,500,000 grant to support our goals in helping young people to be more aware of the mental health resources and support available to them and to optimize their participation and access to these services.



The Secrétariat à la jeunesse (SAJ) has a Youth Action Plan 2021-2024 aimed to promote positive mental health, healthy and safe behaviour among young people as well as healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle.

SAJ are providing a three-year \$900,000 grant to finance our shared goals most particularly in bringing English-speaking youth closer to the public services.

In this program we are guided by our six principles: support positive youth development, enhance protective factors, community-based and flexible, strive for equity, equality and accessibility, build intersectoral partnerships, and engage mental health professional and service providers.

1

Support positive Youth Development

2

Enhance Protective Factors

3

Community Based & Flexible

4

Strive for Equity, Equality & Accessibility

5

Build Intersectoral Partnerships

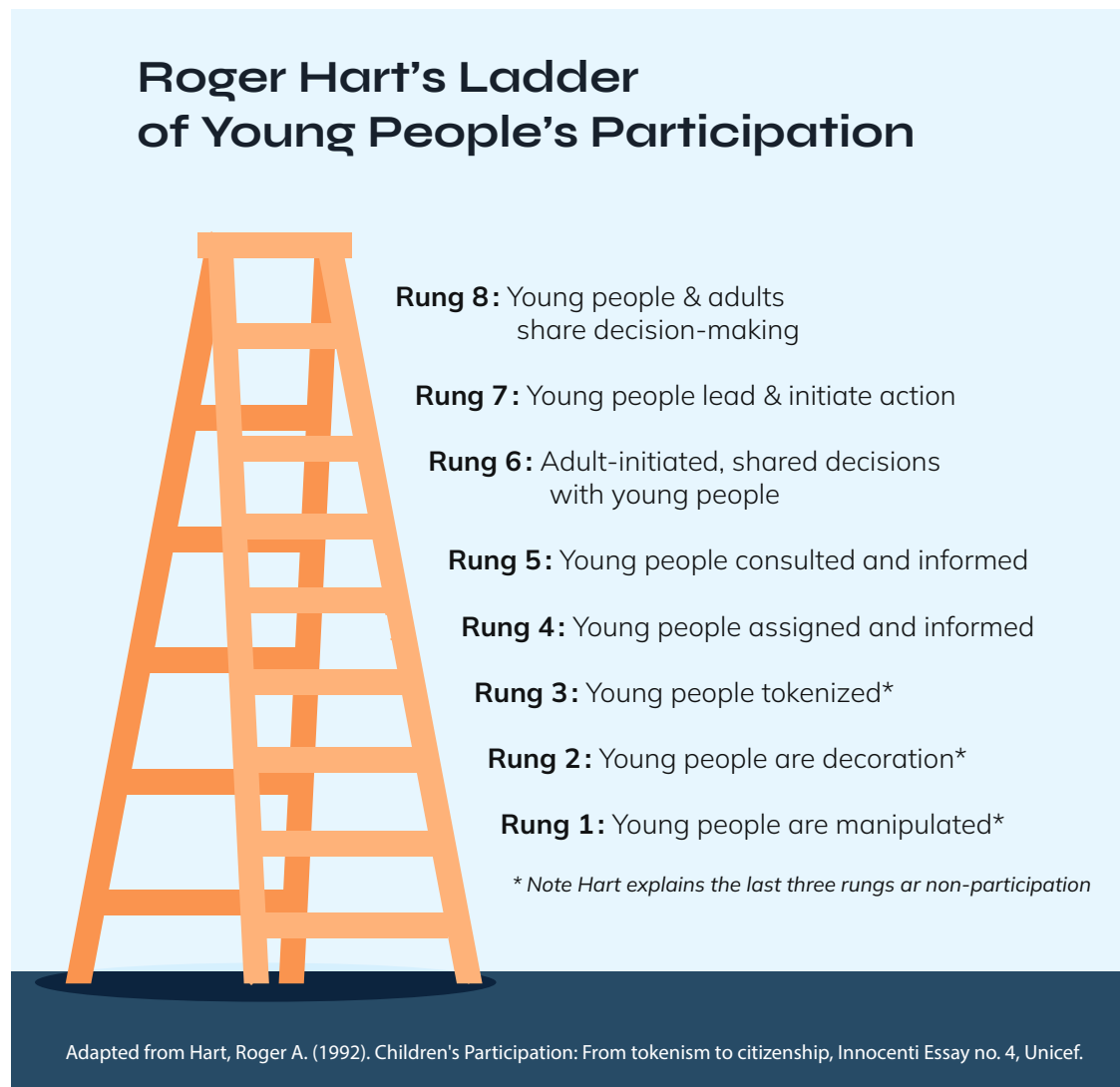
6

Engage Mental Health Professionals & Service Providers

Read from bottom to top

Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation

YMHI intended to promote the engagement of youth at the level of decision-making, project-design and implementation of programming within the participating community organizations. CHSSN used Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation¹ as a resource and guide for the YMHI. This resource outlines 8 rungs on a ladder, each rung describing how youth can be affected and/or involved in an initiative. The bottom 3 rungs are non-participatory while the top 5 rungs are participatory. If an initiative sits on one of the top 5 rungs, it is engaging youth as partners to greater and greater degrees. Throughout the YMHI, CHSSN encouraged community organizations to reflect on their rung on the ladder. This was an awareness tool to encourage the engagement of youth as the most important partners, leaders, and decision-makers of the YMHI. For community organizations' progress along this ladder, see the Outcomes section.



1 Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario and Youth Mental Health and Addiction Champions Initiative. 2016.

Network and Knowledge Exchange Activities

YMHI intended to foster networking and knowledge exchange among the YMHI-supported community organizations working for English-speaking youth communities across Québec. The following are the capacity building and networking events facilitated by CHSSN from September 2021 to March 2024 in which the community organizations took part.

Activity



Community of practice
4 two hour sessions between April 1 – March 31 each year



Trainings



Regular onboarding meetings, drop-in sessions, individualized support
All year



Mental Health of School-Aged Children and the COVID pandemic webinar with guest speaker with Dr. Lila Amirali, offered in collaboration with the Leadership Committee for English Education in Québec (LCEEQ) & the Center for Excellence in Mental Health (CEMH-LBPSB) & the Canadian Mental Health Association – Montreal Branch & DAIR

(October 8, 2021)



Approaches to reaching under-represented youth workshop with guest speaker Teeana Munro, offered through the Celebrating Resiliency Conference

(Feb 2, 2022).



A two-part *Trauma-informed community work and youth work* workshop with guest speaker Dr. Delphine Collin-Vézina offered in collaboration with the Canadian Consortium on Child & Youth Trauma

(Feb 6 & 13, 2022)



A two-part *Intentional Interactions with Youth through Social Media* workshop by Apathy is Boring's Youth-Friendly consultation services in collaboration with the KDE Hub

(Sept 13 & 14, 2023)



YMHI Events



YMHI Montreal Networking event

Montreal
(Sept 6, 2022)



YMHI retreat

St-Raymond in the Vallée Bras-Du-Nord
(Nov 8-9, 2022)



A two-day CHSSN provincial Mental Health & Wellness Forum²

Montreal
(Feb 13-14, 2024)



2 Pearson, Shannon 2024. A truly Brave Space – CHSSN's Provincial Mental Health & Wellness Forum Report. Quebec: CHSSN

Other CHSSN events that YMHI community organizations attended



Foundations of equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging an introductory workshop by Veza Global

(October 28, 2021)



CHSSN's Celebrating Resiliency Conference

(Feb 1-3, 2022)



Ageism at a glance webinar by the Observatory on Aging and Society

(Sept 26, 2022)



A two-part *Outreach strategy and supporting behaviour change* workshop by Daniel Gray

(March 7 & 9, 2022)



CHSSN's Montreal Community Forum on Mental Health #empower

Montreal
(March 3, 2023)



Mental Health Week storytelling workshop by INBO

(May 1, 2023)



BounceBack launching presentation by the ACSM-Quebec Division

(Sept 6, 2023)



2nd annual Young Carer's Symposium by Ami-Quebec supported by CHSSN

(Oct 27, 2023)



Supporting Isolated Clients workshop by Daniel Grey

(Nov 2, 2023)



English-language Health and Social Services Access in Quebec survey results presentation by CROP inc.

(Nov 7, 2023)



Best practices in Intergenerational Engagement workshop by West-end Intergenerational Network

(Nov 9, 2023)



Elevate your Momentum workshop by Roen Higgins

(Mar 13, 2024)

Advisory Committee

CHSSN created and coordinated an advisory committee for the program made up of six experts in youth mental health. Advisory members brought perspectives from different locations in the mental health ecosystem including research, academia, primary and secondary public education systems, post-secondary institutions, and provincial nonprofits. The advisory committee met twice per year. Their role was to provide advice on the activities, partnerships, youth engagement practices, surveys and knowledge products that were created during the course of the YMHI mandate.

Context

YMHI was implemented in a challenging context. When the initiative began in April 2021, Covid was still a major factor in schools, community organizations, the public health system and society at large. Covid brought mental health issues, disparities in access to support and the wellbeing of young people to the forefront more than ever before.

In addition to the pandemic, there have been legal regulatory frameworks changing over Québec concerning language and health. In June 2022 the government passed Bill 96 into law, an amendment to the Charter of the French Language to promote the use of the French language in the province and affirm that French is the common language of the Québec nation. While a clause in the law states that it does not transmute the English-speaking users' right to services in English, it remains unknown how directives will determine eligibility to receive them.

Come December 2023, the Quebec government adopted a sweeping healthcare reform legislation (bill 15) which created a provincial agency called Santé Québec intended to integrate all the CISSS and CIUSSS networks. The effects of this change are yet to be made clear concerning the access programs, the mechanism whereby the legislative guarantee of access to English-language health and social services for the English-speaking population is enforced. These political and legal matters contribute to the evolving challenges our English-speaking community partners face through their ongoing collaborative efforts to ensure access to services for youth.

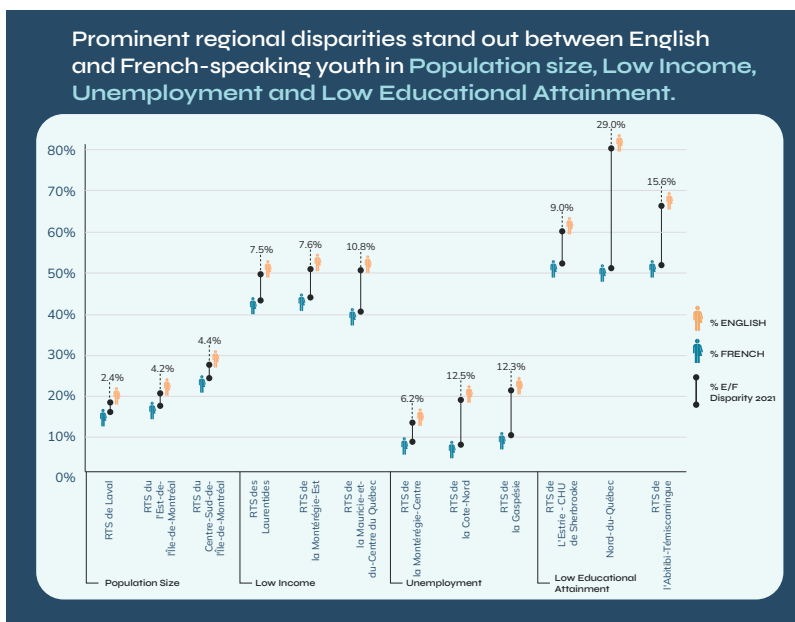
Highlights of the sociodemographic portrait of English-speaking Quebecers aged 15-29

Data from the 2021 and 2016 census reveal some key characteristics and challenges facing English-speaking youth that intersect with mental health, including its high level of diversity and many socio-economic vulnerabilities related to unemployment and living below the low income cut off (LICO).

There are 256,835 English-speaking youth (15-29) living in Québec and they form a substantial 20.5% of their language population. To compare, French-speaking youth aged 15-29 years comprise 16.3% of Québec's majority language group. A significant and growing 43.1% (35.1% in 2016) of Québec's English-speaking youth are members of a visible minority compared to 16.7% (12.6% in 2016) of French speakers the same age. Furthermore, 17.5% of the English-speaking youth are recent immigrants vs 5.3% of French speakers.

In 2021 provincially, 50.2% of English-speaking youth compared with 43.1% of French-speaking youth were living on a low-income. When a comparison is drawn between the proportion of English-speaking (18.1%) and French-speaking youth (8.7%) living below LICO, English speakers are twice more likely to be living in poverty. When comparison is drawn between the proportion of English-speaking youth (14.4%) and French-speaking youth (9%), the minority language group displays a higher level of unemployment and the gap between majority and minority language youth is substantially wider in several regions. Some regional disparities between English and French-speaking Quebecers were highlighted from the report in this bilingual infographic³:

The full 2021⁴ and 2016⁵ census data reports by Dr. Joanne Pocock are available on CHSSN's website.



3 Pearson, Shannon. 2024. [Highlights of the sociodemographic profile of English-Speaking Quebecers age 15-29](#). Quebec: CHSSN

4 Pocock, Joanne. 2024. [Socio-Demographic Profile of Québec's English-speaking Youth Aged 15-29, 2021 census data](#). Quebec: CHSSN

5 Pocock, Joanne. 2018. [Key Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Quebec's English-Speaking Youth \(15-29\), 2016 census data](#). Quebec: CHSSN

Methodology

The purpose of the final evaluation was to assess the extent to which the program met its objectives (awareness of gaps, provision of resources in English, involvement of young people in mental health activities, stigma reduction) to be accountable to funders and partners and to inform CHSSN and the YMHI-supported community organizations as they reflect on the design of future initiatives.

CHSSN engaged an external evaluator, Sunita Nigam, in 2021-22 to conduct the first year of evaluation as well as the extensive Youth Pulse Check⁶ survey to grasp the key issues in accessing mental health services among English-speaking youth. Juniper Glass of Lumiere Consulting was engaged in 2023-24 to conduct the evaluation of the second and third year as well as the final evaluation.

Evaluation of the program was conducted using mixed methods (see Evaluation Plan in Appendix). Data was collected by the community organizations, CHSSN program manager for YMHI, and the external evaluators (see the table).

Evaluation monitoring meetings were held between the evaluator and the YMHI program manager regularly throughout the period of January 2023 to March 2024. In addition, individual meetings with the community organizations and YMHI program manager and the group Community of Practice sessions allowed for ongoing monitoring and support when challenges arose. Data collection tools as well as training on evaluation and reporting and administration of youth surveys were provided to the community organizations to facilitate even and quality data collection across the partner organizations.

Data collection methods

Method and source	Number of respondents	Completed
Baseline interviews	23 community organizations	2022
Annual progress & financial reports	24 organizations in 2021-2022, 27 organizations in 2022-24	April 2022, 2023, 2024
Focus group reflection questions during Community of Practice meetings	27 community organizations	Ongoing, 2023-24
Outputs tracked by program manager (e.g. report dissemination, community organization partner participation, learning and networking activities)	n/a	Ongoing 2021-24
Youth Pulse Check survey	456 English-speaking youth across Québec	March 2022
Youth Outreach and Engagement Survey	26 community organizations	April 2023
YMHI Questionnaire for you(th) and young people	345 English-speaking young people across Québec who were involved in activities supported by YMHI	February 2024

6 Nigam, Sunita. 2022. [Youth Pulse Check: Survey results report](#). Quebec: Community Health and Social Services Network.

Results

3-Year Impact

The following bubbles outline the quantitative products and impact of the Youth Mental Health Initiative, 2021-2024

Mental Health Initiatives with Youth

Activities carried out
1981

Youth participants in activities
10,485

Youth participants in events
7370

Events held
260

Youth satisfaction rate for activities and events
88%

Youth Leadership

Youth involved in identifying gaps and barriers
4797

Youth under 35 on boards of directors
49

Mental Health Resources in English

Resources created and disseminated
1740

Documents adapted and/or translated
621

Partnerships

Partners contacted
1109

Mental health professionals involved
397

Partners better informed to respond to the needs of English-speaking youth
600

Outcomes

- Identification and awareness of a wide range of gaps and barriers for English-speaking youth to access mental health services in Québec
- Increased access to mental health resources and activities for young people that strengthened awareness and reduced stigma
- Diverse English-speaking youth engaged in mental health activities and projects
- Increased capacity of community organizations to engage youth in programs and governance
- Stronger partnerships between community organizations serving English speakers and other organizations and institutions in support of youth mental health
- Increased impact due to coordination and support from CHSSN
- Young people suggested change to improve mental health: additional programs, youth spaces, timely services and systemic change

Outcomes

Identification and awareness of a wide range of gaps and barriers for English-speaking youth to access mental health services in Québec

A key focus of YMHI was to identify key issues facing English-speaking youth regarding mental health, particularly the gaps and barriers to accessing services. This information was gathered throughout the program from the province-wide Youth Pulse Check survey, local surveys and workshops and focus groups with youth facilitated by the community organizations. Community organizations supported by YMHI engaged 4797 youth during 2021-24 to identify barriers and gaps.

First, YMHI found that many English-speaking youth feel there is a lack of adequate mental health services in English. Results of the Youth Pulse Check indicated that many youth could or would not access French health services because of language barriers:

- 46% of youth respondents said they were “not very comfortable/not comfortable at all” speaking French and feeling understood when talking about their mental health
- 31% of youth said they were “not very comfortable/not comfortable at all” understanding spoken or written French when it comes to their mental health

Gaps and barriers experienced by English-speaking youth in access mental health services in Québec.



Cross-cutting barriers

- lack of mental health services and resources in English.
- cultural and familial stigma surrounding mental health issues.
- concern about job prospects and future economic security.
- financial precarity, which prohibits youth who are struggling financially to access private mental health support.
- lack of trust in services or in mental health providers on the part of English-speaking youth. This includes lack of confidence in health and social services due to negative, even traumatic experiences of using these services in the past (including experiences of systemic racism and discrimination).
- sense of pressure to perform and succeed in school and other areas of life, without adequate support to do so.



Gaps related to knowledge and access to information

A lack of...

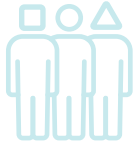
- credible information about mental health accessible to English-speaking youth.
- awareness about existing mental health services and resources.
- promotion of existing services and resources in English.



Gaps related to the health system

A lack of...

- certainty among young people that formal services would meet their needs.
- timely availability of services (very long waitlists for mental health and support services).
- affordable services in English (e.g. low-cost or free therapy).
- coordination between mental health services.
- accessibility of services for youth living in remote areas (large physical distances between youth and existing mental health services).
- staff in the community and healthcare systems.
- cultural awareness about the needs and realities of English-speaking youth on the part of French-speaking service-providers.
- a trauma-informed approach in the public mental health care system.
- English-language competency on the part of staff in the healthcare system and community sector.
- funds in the community sector and healthcare system to hire English-speaking resources.
- accessible addiction services.



Gaps related to services to meet young people's diverse needs

A lack of...

- spaces for youth to gather, express themselves and do activities they enjoy.
- support for how to manage anxiety.
- access to life-skill education (related to budgeting, financial planning, cooking, etc.).
- culturally appropriate or adapted services for especially marginalized youth (including racialized, LGBTQIA2S+, Indigenous, neurodiverse, and low-literacy youth as well as youth having exited foster care).
- support for reintegrating youth who exit foster care (and especially 2SLGBTQIA+ and Black youth) into society.
- support for young carers and for the caregivers of youth with neurodiversity.
- childcare to accompany mental health services, which creates a barrier for many young parents living on a low income in accessing mental health support.
- English-language cultural or recreational activities that promote a sense of belonging and identity.



Gaps related to the education system

A lack of...

- English-speaking guidance counselors or career advisors in schools.
- English-language tutoring or academic support services outside of mainstream educational institutions.
- access to English-language resources and information regarding higher education options, scholarships, and financial aid opportunities.
- English-language workshops or training programs focused on essential life skills, such as financial literacy or job readiness.



Gaps related to youth engagement

A lack of...

- projects emerging out of a participatory planning process involving youth leadership.
- safe, non-judgmental physical spaces in which English-speaking youth of diverse backgrounds can comfortably gather.
- representation of English-speaking perspectives and voices in local decision-making bodies or advocacy groups.
- representation of especially marginalized identities and their experiences (including racialized, LGBTQIA2S+, Indigenous, and low – literacy youth as well as youth having exited foster care).

The education system and support for academic progress and future education and work opportunities appear to be closely connected to young people's mental health.

Awareness-raising

To raise awareness of these gaps and barriers, CHSSN and the community organizations disseminated this information to stakeholders involved in the public health, education and community services systems across Québec. The Youth Pulse Check report, 2021-22 evaluation report and infographic briefs were distributed by mail, email, in person at events and through the CHSSN website as a public resource available in both languages. Results were also shared back to young adults through an Instagram real campaign executed by CHSSN and by the partnering community organizations. The YPC results were presented in several important spaces including directly to the Secrétariat à la jeunesse, Québec's provincial access committee⁷ in 2022, CHSSN's Building Together Conference 2023, Metropolis Social Determinants of Health Conference 2023, QUESCREN Education and Vitality Forum 2023, Dialogue McGill's Conference 2023, Health Canada OLMCs Colloquium 2023, the Mental Health Commission of Canada 2023, the Douglas Institute's Centre for Excellence in Youth Mental Health 2023, the national KDE Hub's Mental Health Capstone event 2024. It has been included and sourced in many knowledge products⁸ CHSSN has produced since its inclusion in our evidence-base and has also been adapted in many ways by our YMHI-supported

organizations as well as by partners such as the Canadian Mental Health Association⁹.

Partnership was a key mechanism for YMHI to spread awareness of gaps and barriers around youth mental health in English-speaking communities. From 2021-24, nearly 400 mental health professionals were involved in the community organizations' project (397) and 600 partner organizations were better informed to respond to the needs of English-speaking youth. Many of the community organizations established strong relationships with their local CSSS/CIUSSS in which they shared information on improving access to services for English-speaking youth. The community organizations also raised awareness about youth mental health through their involvement in partner events and collaborations, including sitting on regional roundtables and committees and by participating in networking activities planned by them or their regional partners.

"This project allowed us to better understand the existing gaps in services for youth, it supported us in creating relationships of trust and in increasing our knowledge of our community members."

Increased access to mental health resources and activities for young people that strengthened awareness and reduced stigma

Mental health tools or resources

During YMHI each community organization created, adapted or translated various resources and tools to support youth mental health. The community organizations also diffused these resources to youth directly and to service providers that work with young people. 1740 different resources were disseminated, and 621 documents related to youth mental health were created, adapted and/or translated by the community organizations.

7 Gouvernement du Québec. MSSS. [Comité provincial pour la prestation des services de santé et des services sociaux en langue anglaise \(quebec.ca\)](#)

8 CHSSN. [COVID-19 Factors affecting Mental Health and English-speakers \(chssn.org\)](#)

9 Canadian Mental Health Association - Québec Division, 2023. [Concerning state of mental health of English-speaking Quebecers \(quebec.acsm.ca\)](#)

Many organizations developed mental health resource guides, which were distributed through online platforms (websites, social media), at events and through schools and other organizations. Many organizations distributed mental health information on a regular basis through their social media channels such as Wellness Wednesdays. Organizations also developed resources and workshops on various subjects, including bullying, stress management, wellness, trauma awareness, suicide prevention, consent, body image, anxiety, ADHD, risk management, sensory processing, conflict resolution and more. Many organizations found that using posters or fliers with a QR code directing to additional resources online was particularly effective. Some organizations also developed physical resource spaces for youth, such as places for students to have a calm space to work and process emotions and youth-friendly 'safe' spaces or hubs.

Examples of tools or resources adapted and produced during YMHI:

- Brochures and mental health resource guides
- Translations of information from French-speaking service providers
- Adding mental health resources to community organization websites
- Flyers with QR codes directing youth, family and service providers to useful websites
- Social media posts around myth-busting, mental health literacy or promoting youth programs
- Use of Youth Pulse Check data combined with other local information to share with partners
- Adaptation of existing workshops to the needs of specific groups of youth facing marginalization
- Training resources for mental health service providers in English
- Direct support to high-risk youth and their families to access mental health resources

Youth mental health programming

Over the three years, YMHI resulted in the implementation of 260 events related to youth mental health that engaged 7370 young people across the 27 participating organizations and communities. In addition, 1981 activities were carried out, involving 10,485 young people.

A wide range of activities and events were held, including:

- an anti-stigma campaign showcasing the lived experience of young people with mental health problems through recorded videos
- a youth-led resource magazine and an accompanying podcast
- Engaging youth spokespeople to share their lived mental health experiences with high school students
- Collaborative creation of a mural promoting mental health
- Workshops on social emotional learning for young parents
- Roundtable discussion and training sessions to raise awareness among the community and community workers about the elements of well-being for young caregivers, and 2SLGBTQIA+ and racialized youth.
- Creation of a wellness innovation lab process and facilitation guide designed to bring together all school and community stakeholders and young adults themselves to bring about a culture of positive mental health in school.

Quotes on programs

“The program fostered resilience and provided opportunities for youth to connect with peers who shared similar experiences and challenges. Through group discussions, and engaging activities, the youth built supportive networks and developed a sense of belonging within the community.”

“We are most proud of how our community came together to rally around the kids and provide the care and support that was not available but was so desperately needed. If nothing else, the youth know that they are seen, that they matter, and that the community is here to support them going forward.”

“At the beginning of the project, the youth stated many times that they felt like there was nothing for them back here [remote region of Québec] – both in relation to mental health and not. Now, when we speak to the youth, they are much more optimistic about what is available in the region. They are excited and enthusiastic about activities that are coming up and any new projects with [the community organization].”

“This project has empowered our youth to co-create a space where they feel understood, valued and supported during daily struggles, important transitions and life altering events.”

“Numerous youth we work with are in the midst of navigating the complexities of online dating, exploring their sexual orientation and preferences, managing challenging relationships with family and friends, and

sometimes facing violent interpersonal dynamics. Additionally, they grapple with past traumas stemming from harmful medical interventions and current mental health challenges, all while seeking to understand their neurodivergent identity. Providing support through these turbulent moments and hearing them refer to [the organization] as their ‘safe place’ is an immense honor for our entire mental health team.”

“[The program] has become an essential part of the basket of services that the school intervention team can call upon. The teacher leads have seen some very meaningful cases of students who found a home in [our program] this year at a time when they really needed it.”

“[The local] school invited our organization to be present in school all 5 days. Being able to be present more often, more students and staff will be reached.”

“Youth engaged in the project’s activities left with improved self-esteem, confidence and have more knowledge around mental health prevention and self-care.”

“Youth were able to begin to reflect on their own mental health and have discussions with our staff and with their peers about their struggles and things that helped them. They were able to explore various activities related to self-care and were supported to find strategies that worked for them individually.”

Reduced stigma

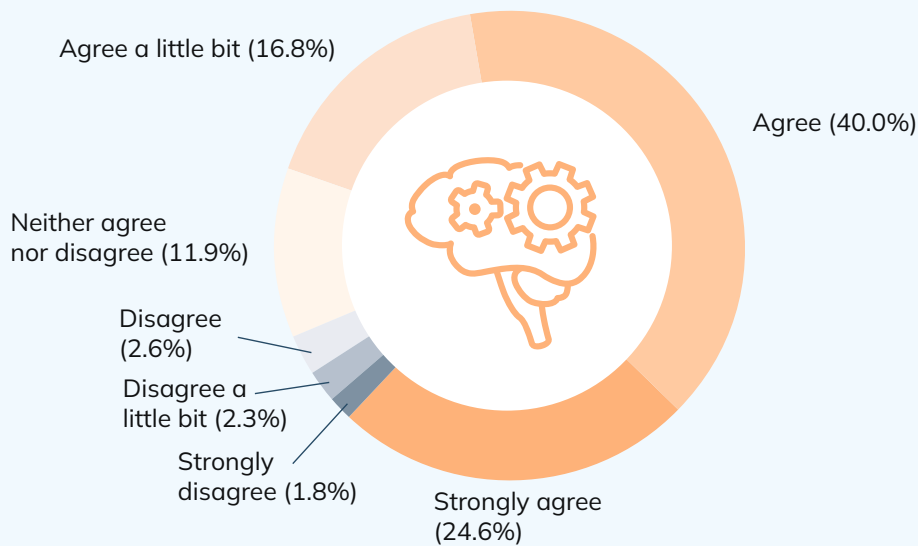
YMHI intended to address the prevalence of stigma as a barrier for youth accessing mental health resources and services. Stigma was addressed by community organizations primarily through increased mental health literacy promotion activities and access to mental health resources in English.

In 2023-24, youth involved in the local projects completed the Questionnaire for you(th) and young people survey to give insight into which dimensions of stigma that YMHI addressed. 345 young people connected to 26 of the community organizations participating in YMHI responded to the survey. The results show that YMHI contributed to young people’s level of awareness of and comfort with discussing issues about mental health. It is likely that normalizing talking about mental health in their communities has contributed to reducing stigma over time for the youth reached by YMHI.

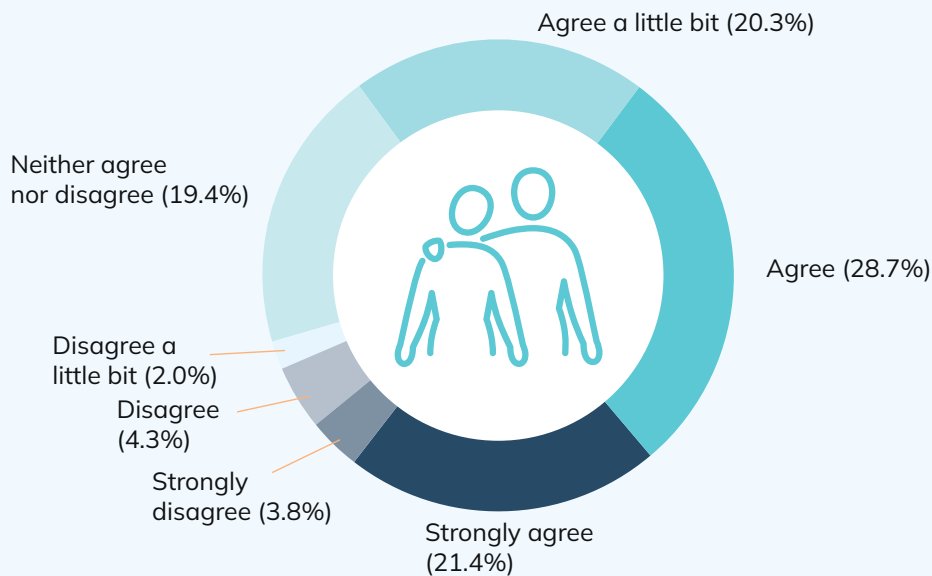
When asked if they are **more aware of mental health resources that they can access** for themselves, their friends or family members, 65% of youth respondents from local YMHI projects agreed (25% strongly agree; 40% agree). Many youth respondents said that since the project started, it had become **easier for them to talk about mental health** and related challenges (15% strongly agree; 29% agree; 21% agree a little bit). About half of respondents agreed that they were now **more comfortable seeking help for the mental wellbeing of themselves, their friends or their family members** (21% strongly agree; 29% agree).

Finally, YMHI shows that there is still a long way to go before stigma regarding mental health is no longer a factor for young people. **Over a third of youth respondents said they would feel judged by others for seeking out help** to support the mental wellbeing of themselves, their friends or family members (10% strongly agree; 15% agree; 14% agree a little bit).

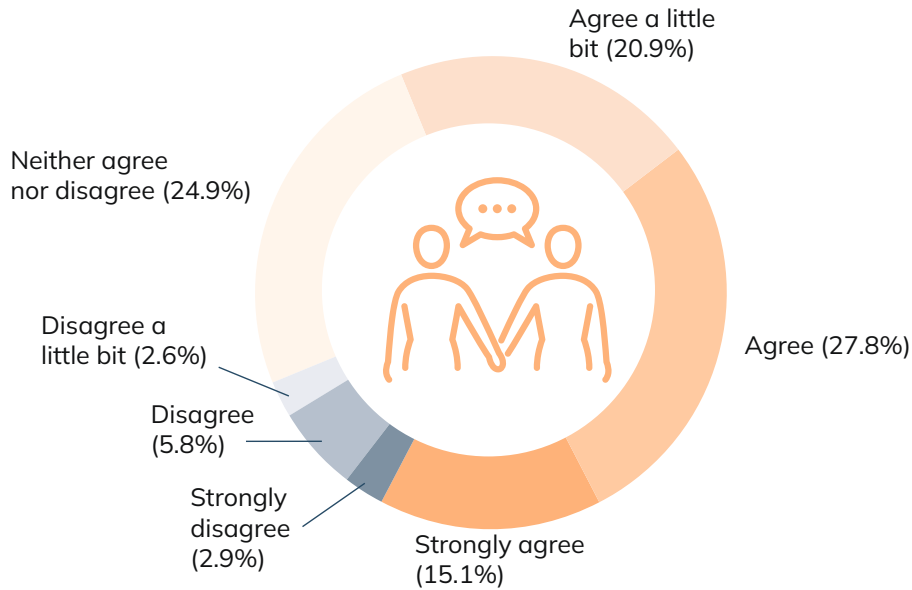
I am more aware of mental health resources I can access



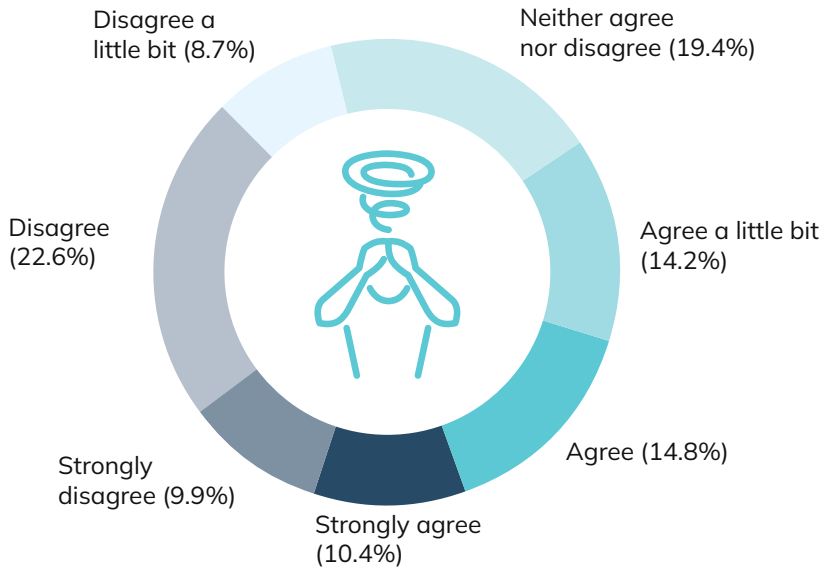
I have become more comfortable seeking out help



It has become easier for me to talk about mental health



I feel judged by others seeking out help



Quotes on stigma

“We are proud of the fact that the community has become more willing to acknowledge, discuss and take actions for their mental health over the three years of this project.”

“Through this project, our members and participants (youth and young adults) have gained the ability to acknowledge their pain and feel empowered to speak up and ask for help.”

“We believe that the creation of several brave discussion spaces in the course of this project has given our very small and isolated population of English-speaking youth an opportunity to speak up and be heard about their needs in the area of mental health and that this has been empowering and validating for many.”

“The project had significant impacts on youth as it has helped open and normalize the conversations surrounding mental health.”

“This [workshop on anxiety] was a huge success. Students asked questions, talked openly about some of the issues they are facing. They were asking for help.”

“We saw a big increase in [youth] talking about their mental health realities and sharing in a group environment. From the workshops, [youth] are gaining the words and concepts to express their emotions and experiences.”

“The frequent activities, resources, and open communication around mental health helped combat the deeply ingrained stigma around mental illness for local youth.”

Diverse English-speaking youth engaged in mental health activities and events

A major accomplishment of the YMHI due to community organizations' efforts to engage youth has been the level of diversity of the young people involved.

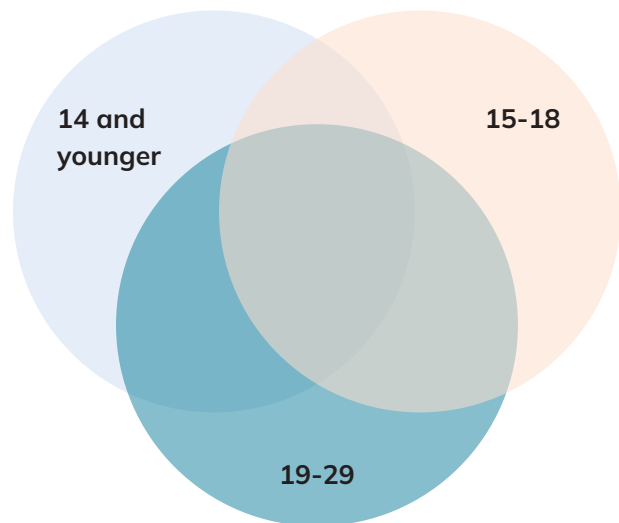
In March 2023, the Youth Outreach and Engagement Survey was conducted among the 27 community organizations in the YMHI of which 26 responses were received. The survey was intended in part as a self-reflection tool for organizations to review their outreach to equity-deserving subgroups of English-speaking youth.

Overall, the survey demonstrated that YMHI is reaching a diversity of youth, but that outreach and participation could be improved to better reflect the great diversity among English-speaking youth in Québec.

Each of the community sites reached different demographics of youth, often influenced by location (e.g. rural, urban) or the specific focus of the local initiative (e.g. in one initiative, all of the youth are 2SLGBTQIA+; in another initiative, all of the youth are special needs, neurodiverse or living with a handicap).

Nearly all the community organizations worked with high school aged youth (15-18), but most also engaged youth in their 20s. Many worked with a large age range of young people.

Age groups engaged per community organization



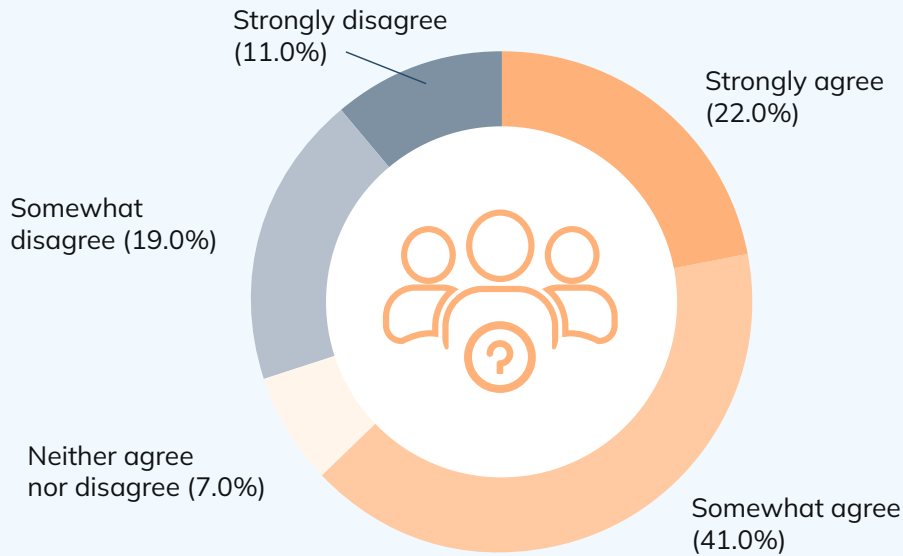
More initiatives reached young women than young men and some initiatives (47%) also reached trans and non-binary youth.

Racialized youth were being engaged in 77% of the community sites. Indigenous youth participated in 62% of the community sites. White youth participated in 81% of the community sites. Newcomer youth were reached in half of the community sites (50%).

63% of community groups reported that the diversity of the youth reached by their project was a good reflection of the diversity of the population in their area. At the same time, 48% believed they could reach a more diverse group of youth.

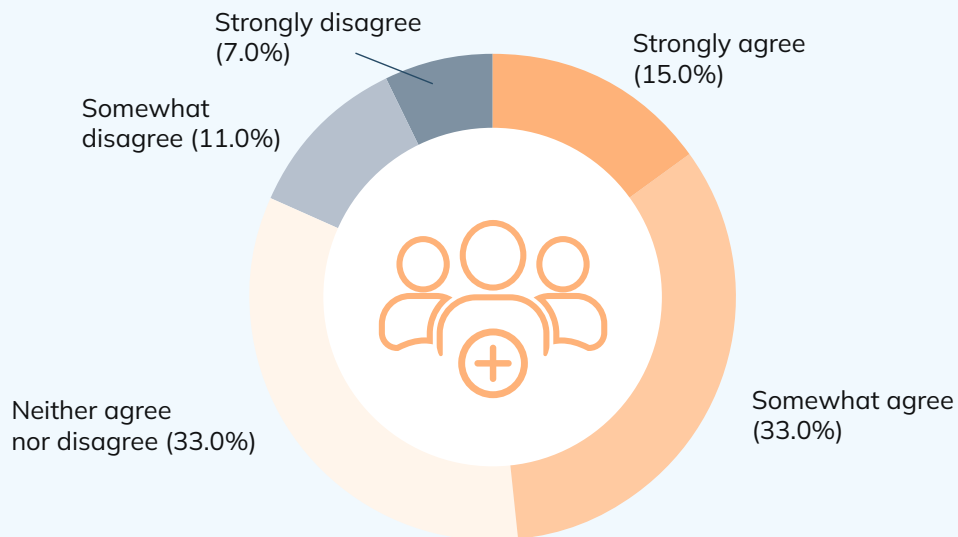
The diversity of the youth reached by our project is a good reflection of the diversity of the population in our area/ neighbourhood/ city/ region.

n=26



Our organization could reach a more diverse group of youth.

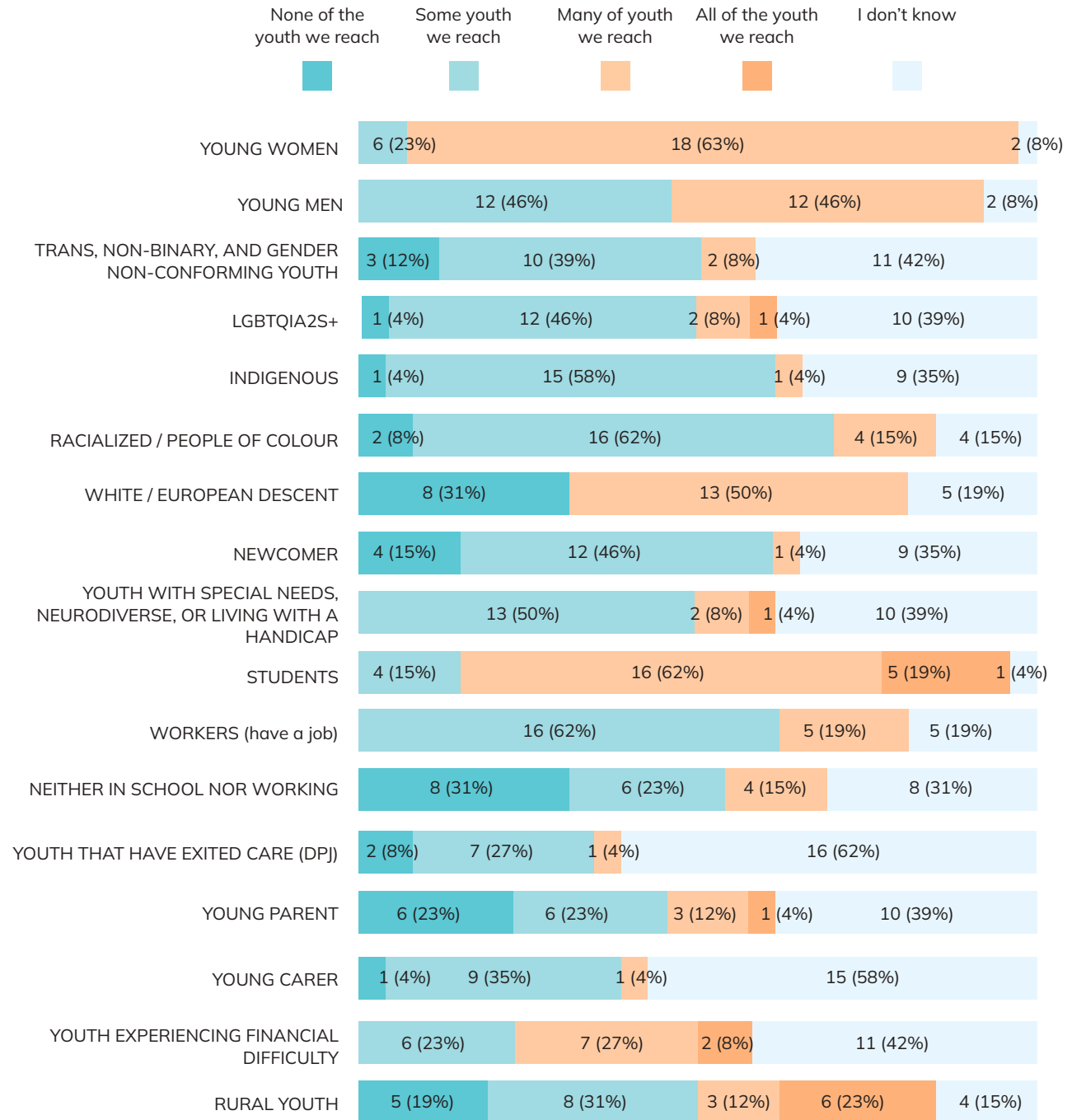
n=26



In the future, community organizations would most like to increase participation by youth who are: male, parents, newcomers, Indigenous, non-students and those who have been in the youth protection system. They identified several strategies for increasing the diversity of youth reached, including supporting youth from diverse backgrounds to take a leadership role, partnering with other organizations that serve different populations, improving social media presence, and increasing funding and staffing.

CHARACTERISTICS AND IDENTITIES OF YOUTH REACHED

Community organizations' reporting of the characteristics of the youth engaged in their projects
n=26



Quotes on reaching and supporting diverse young people

“Our program enhanced mental health support and education for vulnerable youth, many of whom have been through the youth protection system.”

“Although the schools already have a Pride Peer Support Group, we were able to bring even more kids (special needs, allies, BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+) together.”

“Over the last year, we identified a gap in activities for young adults, especially English speaking. We’ve also been able to mobilize youth outside of the school milieu. We started our art and wellness group for young adults in Fall

2023 and have continued to run it since. This is the first time [our organization] has worked with/ offered programming for young adults. It has been a success and continues to grow.”

“This project has enabled us to reach a youth clientele that we were not targeting at our organization in the past (21+).”

“This project helped not only in reinforcing our organization’s capacities, but also expanding those capacities in terms of our success in liaising with 2SLGBTQIA+ youth who have traditionally been excluded from queer spaces.”

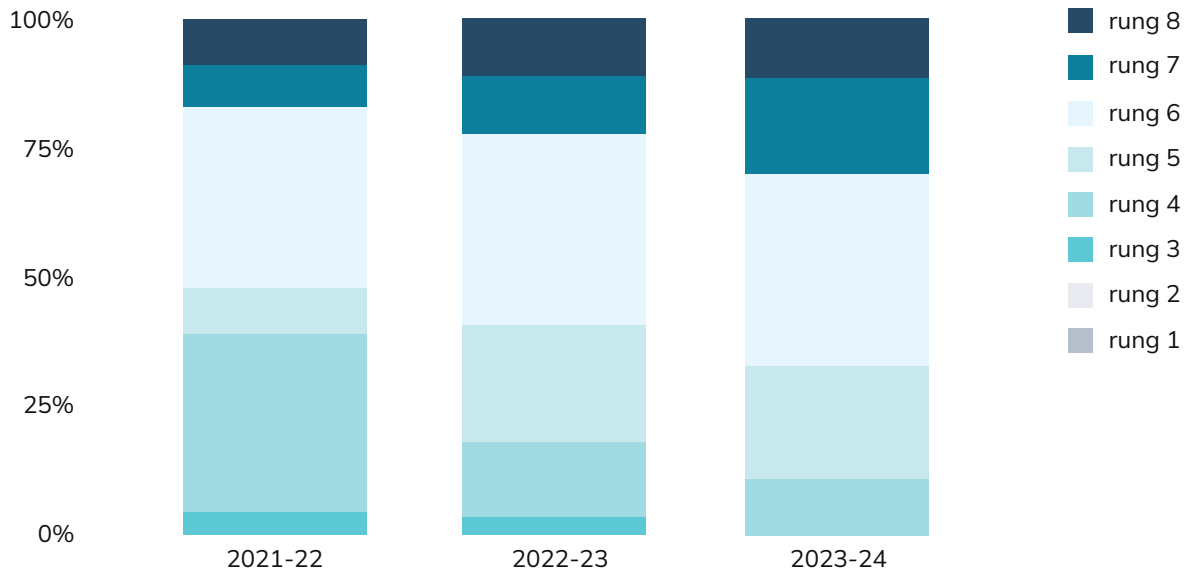
Increased capacity of community organizations to engage youth in programs and governance

The community organizations had a wide range of levels of experience in youth engagement at the start of the YMHI. All demonstrated some level of strengthened capacity in youth engagement by the end of the program. First, the number of Board of Directors members under 35 years old who participated in the governance of the community organizations increased from 33 in March 2022 to 49 in March 2024. Some organizations took steps to increase youth involvement in governance and decision making including reviewing their Board practices to determine if they were youth friendly and reaching out to specific youth to join the Board and committees.

Second, the community organizations’ self-assessments showed improvement regarding their ability to engage young people. Each year of the program, the participating organizations were asked to rate their project or organization by the rung of Hart’s Ladder that most reflected their practices. The results show a steady increase in the proportion of community organizations that were engaging youth at the higher rungs,

or more refined types of youth engagement. At the start of the YMHI, 9% were at rung 8 (shared decision-making), 9% at rung 7 (young people lead and initiate), 35% at rung 6 (adult initiated, share decisions with young people), 9% at rung 5 (young people consulted and informed) and over a third (35%) at rung 4 (young people assigned and informed). By the end of the YMHI, 11% were at rung 8, 19% at rung 7, 37% at rung 6, 22% at rung 5 and only 11% at rung 4. The proportion of community organizations at Rung 4 or below (“young people assigned and informed” or non-participation of youth) reduced from 39% in 2021-22 to 11% in 2023-24.

Assessment on Hart’s Ladder of Youth Engagement



Proportion of community organizations at each rung, by year

To understand community organizations’ strengths and challenges related to youth engagement practices, a survey was conducted in 2023. They reported on their level of practice in 7 elements of youth engagement that make up the “Quality standard for youth engagement” of the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health¹⁰.

Community organizations reported that the aspects of youth engagement where they were strongest were:

- Authentic relationships
- Accessibility
- Communication with youth
- Ongoing learning about youth engagement

The areas they reported being least strong were both related to engaging youth early on when assessing needs and creating new activities or programs:

- Research and evaluation
- Co-development

While youth have played a key role in determining programming direction and activities in many of the community organizations, all organizations expressed that they intended to continue improving their youth engagement practices. Many undertook steps during YMHI to increase youth involvement, including creating youth advisory committees, recruiting youth into paid positions and internships, creating youth ambassador roles and other leadership roles within the organization.

The organizations also identified supports that would help them build young engagement capacity, including continued Community of Practice and events to exchange with other organizations; training on Mental Health First Aid; engaging youth in decision making; social media content; and referrals to coaches who can assist organizations one on one to boost their engagement of young people.

¹⁰ Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, 2021. [Quality standard for youth engagement](http://www.cymh.ca/ye_standard). Ottawa, ON. www.cymh.ca/ye_standard

Quotes on youth engagement practice

"This project has impacted the 15-29 youth engagement that we receive. This has always been a difficult age demographic to reach, however, because of all of the creative things we were able to do because of this project, it has brought a lot of trust and enthusiasm from this age demographic."

"[This project has been instrumental in] establishing [our organization] as a supportive space for youth engagement and being able to provide unique opportunities for English speaking youth. In doing so, we've been able to break isolation and foster meaningful connections with youth in our communities."

"The biggest impact would be realizing that most of the youth want to learn, be heard, supported, and have their input taken seriously. We as an organization with 'older' employees need to change our way of thinking and doing to reflect today's society in order to continue supporting the English-speaking community and these youth are our future."

"(As part of this project) students were able to carry out their own projects related to mental health providing them with the opportunity to practice their leadership and critical thinking skills."

"Not only did this project have a positive impact on youth in the community by supporting their mental health through information, education and connecting them to services, but it also concretely provided them the opportunity to lead the course of development of the approach (notably the [social media] platforms)"

"The small [youth] advisory committee gained confidence being part of the decision-making process and one of them said they felt more part of the team, less hesitant and ashamed talking about their own mental health to their peers."

"The project has connected [our organization] with many talented and passionate youth across the province who continue to collaborate at varying capacities with us to deliver relevant youth programming in their communities."

Stronger partnerships between community organizations serving English speakers and other organizations and institutions in support of youth mental health

Community organizations built many new and strengthened partnerships through YMHI. Over 1,100 partners were contacted by community organizations during YMHI and 600 of these received knowledge, resources and/or skills to better respond to the mental health needs of English-speaking youth.

Reaching out to and developing collaborations with partners in the education, health, cultural and community services sectors has contributed to the impact of YMHI in many ways. First, the

relationships with partner organizations built the community organizations' ability to refer youth to mental health services. Partnerships also increased referrals from other organizations for the youth activities offered through the YMHI. Partners contributed to the development of resources such as the mental health resource guides, and in raising awareness the access and mental health challenges youth face.

The majority of community organizations have partnered with educational institutions,

primarily high schools and adult education centres. This involved partnering with schools for events, workshops, and activities; having project staff present in the schools to give mental health support to students; and/or connecting with school staff to identify students at risk or determine what programming would best suit the youth. Many of the participating organizations

also participated in multi-stakeholder groups including local youth sector collaboration tables and regional and thematic committees addressing youth and/or mental health issues.

Community organizations indicated that many of the partnerships developed during YMHI will continue in the future.

Quotes on partnerships

“This project has allowed our leadership to connect Francophone partners with our English-speaking community and in particular, educational partners. [Our organization] was able to better sensitize Francophone partners about our youth’s vulnerability.”

“An important feature of the program was the development of ‘hubs’ to support partners in delivering tailored mental health programs to support their participants. We worked with partners in our community network as well as the youth protection system to deliver culturally adapted support driven by the youth and tailored to their needs.”

“Partnerships within the different health, education, and social service milieus have been created. In doing so, we’ve been able to work internally in two local high schools to better reach youth in our region. This has also allowed us to better support and inform staff and students regarding mental health and well being. We’ve been able to run a variety of different activities in schools such as drumming circles, youth legal rights info session, art & wellness groups, media arts workshops in collaboration with [a local organization] and study kits have been made to give to students during exam time.”

“This project helped our organization expand our programs into additional unpartnered schools.”

“The YMHI has provided us with the resources to adapt to the ever-changing climate of mental health services, and for that we are extremely grateful.”

“[This YHMI has] strengthened our ties with the mental health team at the CISSS. Our collaborative approach (partnering with the school, the CISSS) has been presented to the Ministry of Education as a promising practice between public and community.”

“Partnerships have been developed and maintained with organizations that serve the needs of young adults with mental illness, with CISSS [in our region] and with the school board. The creation of the English Mental Wellbeing Roundtable and the staff position of a mental health liaison agent has allowed the partnerships and activities to have a wider impact in the community.”

Strengthening capacity of organizations due to coordination and support from CHSSN

The coordinated effort of CHSSN to raise the issue of youth mental health with funders and community organizations created the foundation for the success of YMHI. During the implementation of the program, CHSSN played a number of roles to ensure local and regional projects were connected to each other and supported with information, resources and administrative expertise.

CHSSN provided the following:

- Individualized project development and support for each of the participating community organizations
- Coordination and facilitation of peer exchange opportunities and training (including Community of Practice, training workshop on specific skills, in-person networking and knowledge exchange events and Facebook knowledge hub group)
- Provision of knowledge resources on youth mental health and youth engagement practices, statistics, news, policy change updates
- Promoting community organization engagement in public policy consultations
- Administrative management of funds from the two funders
- Surveys, data collection, evaluation and reporting

Knowledge products created by CHSSN:

CHSSN created 26 tools throughout the YMHI to support the community organizations and their mental health services partners. Key tools were created to facilitate the program management in direct support of the community organizations, alongside the surveys and knowledge products based on 2021 Canadian census statistics that contribute to the overall evidence-base of population knowledge for the 15-29 demographic of English-speaking Quebecers.

The tools developed include:

- Visibility toolkit, Recipient Guide, Logic Model, Evaluation¹¹ and Impact¹² Reports, onboarding materials, reporting templates, video recordings, offshoot guides and presentation slides from trainings & summary reports and graphic summaries of events.
- Three Surveys¹³ as well as their respective Results Reports, one Instagram campaign, one infographic¹⁴ of results, one associated guide for a survey campaign and a complementary guide for mixed evaluation methods.
- Brief, Socio-demographic profile report¹⁵ & infographic¹⁶ and Blog¹⁷
- Translation of relevant youth-specific resources produced by CHSSN and partners.

11 Nigam, Sunita. 2022. [Youth Mental Health Initiative evaluation report 2021-2022](#). Quebec: CHSSN

12 Glass, Juniper. 2023. [Youth Mental Health Initiative impact report 2022-2023](#). Quebec: CHSSN

13 Previously mentioned under the Data collection methods, on page 10

14 Nigam, Sunita. 2022. [Youth Pulse Check Survey: Key Findings](#). Quebec: CHSSN

15 Pocock, Joanne. 2024. [Socio-Demographic Profile of Québec's English-speaking Youth Aged 15-29](#). Quebec: CHSSN

16 Pearson, Shannon. 2024. [Highlights of the sociodemographic profile of English-Speaking Quebecers age 15-29](#). Quebec: CHSSN

17 CHSSN, 2024. [YMHI Blog: Reflections on mental health equity and youth engagement](#). Quebec (chssn.org)

The vast majority of the community organizations (96%) reported that the support they received from CHSSN was useful (52% very useful; 44% useful; 4% neutral). They appreciated the support from the YMHI program manager as well as the opportunity to learn from each other through online and in person sessions.

From September to November 2023, the Secrétariat à la jeunesse du Québec conducted a province-wide public youth consultation.

CHSSN ensured all community organizations in the network knew about the opportunity for them and local youth to contribute their knowledge about the needs of English-speaking young people. CHSSN wrote a brief that was presented to the Secrétariat à la jeunesse during the consultations providing “A Portrait of Vulnerable English-Speaking Youth Aged 15-29¹⁸”. The representation of CHSSN and the community organizations involved in YHMI appears to have made a mark on the consultation, as many of their key messages were reflected in the Secrétariat à la jeunesse’s Youth Consultation Report¹⁹. For example, health was the most prioritized area of focus (top 3) across the regions by youth workers and youth, with an emphasis on mental health (mentioned under Santé). The diversity of Québec culture was mentioned, specifically referring to Indigenous, immigrant and anglophone communities as well as difficulties in access to services by sub-groups of youth.



In the YMHI, CHSSN took a collaborative approach to expanding youth mental health programs while allowing each community organization to co-create relevant programs with young people. This seems to have increased the connectivity and exchange of knowledge and resources among community organizations across Québec and a desire for ongoing collaboration.

Quotes on CHSSN support

“The CoP meetings, different webinars and the program manager’s drop-in meetings during reporting time were the most useful as this allowed us to stay connected, exchange and celebrate the amazing things we are all accomplishing.”

“The amount of resources, information shared in the Community of Practice calls and Facebook YMHI group is remarkable! Very appreciated!”

“Through the specialized trainings that were offered by the CHSSN, the community of practice knowledge sharing and the financial resources provided, this project has greatly supported our organization’s capacity to reach and connect with our scattered and isolated population of young English speakers in order to better understand their perceptions, preoccupations and their needs in relation to their mental health and wellbeing.”

18 CHSSN, 2023. Brief: A portrait of vulnerable English-speaking Youth aged 15-29 in Quebec. Quebec (chssn.org)

19 Gouvernement du Québec, 2024. Rapport de la consultation publique pour la jeunesse 2023. Quebec (jeunes.gouv.qc.ca)

What young people want: Additional programs, youth spaces, timely services and systemic change

It is clear that more programming and services are needed to support young people's mental health. In 2023-24, 345 youth involved in community-based YMHI activities and events completed the Questionnaire for you(th) & young people where they were asked to describe their dream project to support young people's mental wellbeing. The responses show that young people are interested in additional activities, programs and supports. A striking feature of their responses is young people's awareness that systemic issues impact mental health, such as poverty, lack of adequate resources in public services especially the education and health systems (in English or otherwise). Some expressed anxiety over their futures and remarked on the stress that many young people feel just entering a school or thinking about what jobs they could find as young adults.

Many individuals (57) responded that they would like more activities, either naming specific activities or talking about creating more support for young people to pursue their interests and hobbies. Within this theme, some individuals specifically focused on the community building nature of various collective activities and how

important it is for youth to feel they are a part of a community. Many individuals (44) focused their response on the importance of being listened to, either individually or in the context of support groups. An additional 8 respondents mentioned specifically the importance of peer support groups and youth-designed programs in order to fully engage youth. Similarly, 29 individuals focused on the importance of having access to affordable (ideally free) professional therapy and mental health services, either at school with counselors, or outside of school with psychologists and psychiatrists. Some respondents (26) focused their response on developing safe physical spaces for youth, either in the creation of these spaces or the extending of hours or services of these spaces. Some respondents (20) described the need for additional mental health resources, either by specifying the type of resources needed or simply sharing that more resources in general are needed in English. Additionally, some youth respondents (10) focused on economic support for youth and their families, on academic support or changes to the school system (7), and on changes to the health and social services systems (6).

“Sky’s the limit” ideas to support youth mental health by young English-speaking Quebecers

Theme	Young people’s comments
<p data-bbox="241 432 537 611">Activities and creating community (e.g. sports, competitions, trips, nature, art, collective community projects)</p> <p data-bbox="321 1236 451 1365">Number of youth 57</p>	<p data-bbox="599 432 1349 499">“First and foremost, creating community, in my mind, is key to mental wellbeing.”</p> <p data-bbox="599 531 1403 890">“Having a large, year-long communal project to work on to help people connect to the community and take their mind off other things is, I think, a wonderful way to aid people in their mental health. I, for one, had most of my problems arise when I felt that my connection to my school was weak and felt slightly outcast. The project I participated in 22/23 really connected me to the people around me and made me more confident in helping myself and others in mental health related troubles. This may seem like a very indirect way of helping people, but I think this is a truly effective way.”</p> <p data-bbox="599 926 1409 1024">“Something involving a sport or any out of school activity. It would be to give people a break from whatever they are doing whether it is school or work”</p> <p data-bbox="599 1060 1386 1127">“More funding to organizations who make entertaining activities such as outdoors activities, sports, games, etc.”</p> <p data-bbox="599 1163 1373 1230">“I would do different out of school activities in small groups, e.g. swimming, weekend trip, or vision boards at lunch hour”</p> <p data-bbox="599 1266 1045 1289">“Hiking club to talk and be in nature”</p> <p data-bbox="599 1325 889 1348">“Woodworking classes”</p>

Theme	Young people's comments
<p>Someone to listen, either in person or online, with no judgment. Individual or in groups.</p> <p>Subtheme: Peer support programs and programs designed by youth.</p> <div data-bbox="217 934 553 1108"> <p>Number of youth 52</p> </div>	<p>“To listen and validate the feelings of someone. Not to ask the whys, buts, and whats, just to really listen.”</p> <p>“Anxiety support group”</p> <p>“A group for the mental health of neurodivergents in order to demystify.”</p> <p>“A mental health and wellness initiative within the school that is geared towards people of color”</p> <p>“My idea would be to have a place for people to go or a number to call or text in situations that said person felt uncomfortable opening up to or about with closer friends to which they don't have the feeling of being judged or looked down upon”</p> <p>“Having professional young teenagers like us instead of adults to help us, mostly because of experience and going through it RIGHT NOW instead of being annoying and always saying the same thing, then the teenagers can know what to say because they are like us!”</p> <p>“Supporting young parents' mental health. Education and time off.”</p>
<p>Therapy: free, accessible, counselors at school</p> <div data-bbox="217 1318 553 1488"> <p>Number of youth 29</p> </div>	<p>“Offering free access to therapy and no waiting list”</p> <p>“Art therapy for trauma recovery.”</p> <p>“I feel a lack of relationship counseling by the services for young adults and youth in the community along with a lack of introduction to sex education and therapy.”</p> <p>“I would make therapy available and free for all teens ages 13 – 18”</p>

Theme	Young people's comments
<p>Dedicated space for youth, or specific groups of youth (LGBTQ for example)</p> <p>Subtheme: More recreational and cultural infrastructure for youth</p> <div data-bbox="224 709 560 884"> <p>Number of youth 26</p> </div>	<p>“Giving kids a space where they are safe, and have privacy provides a safe haven for kids who need/want it.”</p> <p>“A free space where someone can release any negative stress, be it verbally or physically.”</p> <p>“We need an English LGBT+ safe space.”</p> <p>“Open a safe place, where anyone can go at any time to feel safe and comfortable to express themselves.”</p> <p>“To have a space to hangout and activities like movies, suppers, and games.”</p> <p>“Pay for more basketball courts”</p> <p>“Fitness and wellness facility”</p>
<p>Mental health materials, workshops, website information, and referrals to resources (Sexual education mentioned)</p> <div data-bbox="224 1192 560 1365"> <p>Number of youth 20</p> </div>	<p>“Tools and tricks for learning to talk about our feelings”</p> <p>“More in depth conversation on the resources on the [organization] website rather than a quick skim. This is a very useful and well put together tool and I believe the students can benefit further from it.”</p> <p>“To have an app where everyone can talk about their problems and respond to others with advice.”</p> <p>“Psychoeducation videos made by neurodiverse people to neurodiverse people”</p> <p>“Better sex ed”</p>
<p>Basic needs, economic and material support (food, poverty reduction, etc.)</p> <div data-bbox="224 1663 560 1837"> <p>Number of youth 10</p> </div>	<p>“To make sure all families have enough financial stability to take care of themselves”</p> <p>“Fix poverty”</p> <p>“Some sort of infrastructural placement program to help youth find jobs that don't suck, mostly because I think a lot of entry-level jobs suck, and I think building hope for the future or some appreciation of life has to do with mental health.”</p>

Theme	Young people's comments
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Support at school: academic support or changes to school structure

“4 day school week, I feel that 3 day weekend would greatly help students mental health and make them more driven to go to school, more sports/activity”

“A learning environment outside of a linear classroom, like outside or alternative style of classroom in schools. Something that would captivate more students to feel comfortable or more captivated to excel in school.”

“In the economy thinking about a high paying job makes me think of how expensive school will be. We work so hard just to get a job that won't even pay as much. It makes us young generation not want to continue school. I wish it was easier and less expensive.”

Number of youth
7

Health and social services systems

“Access to psychologists and psychiatrists without having to take a plane or wait for months on end.”

“Less waiting time needed to be able to receive the help people need”

“Ideally hospitals should take mental health issues more seriously and there should be more space in them and doctors etc. to help more people.”

“I would make waiting lists non-existent”

“Make mental health services free”

Number of youth
6

Conclusion and Recommendations

In 2021-24, the Youth Mental Health Initiative made progress towards all of its objectives. Awareness was raised regarding the gaps and barriers in mental health services for young English-speaking Quebecers. A large number of accessible English-language resources related to young people's mental health were shared with both youth and service providers. Thousands of young English-speaking Quebecers were engaged in mental health activities and events, and many were involved in designing and implementing that programming. There are also indications from participating community organizations and youth that the stigma surrounding mental health issues was addressed through the program, making it a more open and normalized conversation about mental wellness and the challenges and solutions possible. The vast majority of community organizations that implemented YMHI locally are committed to continuing the work to increase youth engagement and address the gaps in mental health services for English-speaking youth as opportunities to strengthen wellbeing for their communities.

Recommendations

Programming

- Continue to use Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation as a guiding tool for youth engagement reflection and assessment
- Continue offering Community of Practice sessions for participating organizations
- Coordinate time for community organizations to collectively problem solve (e.g. Peer Input Process) and skill share in small groups
- Secure resources to allow community organizations to hire external support for individualized capacity building (e.g. youth engagement consultants)
- Consider collaboration with province-wide youth organizations to host gatherings such as conferences that include young people who are engaged in local YMHI projects (to build their knowledge, confidence and skills as the next generation of leaders in mental health promotion)

Systems Change

- Organize local, regional and province-wide engagement session for public mental health system representatives (elected representatives, high level public servants) to learn about the findings and innovations on youth mental health in the English-speaking community organizations and networks
- Continue to engage collectively as community organizations and CHSSN in public policy consultations
- Ask funders to support CHSSN to share their networks and forge connections with decision makers and influencers in the youth development and mental health systems



Data

- Conduct the Youth Pulse Check survey regularly (e.g. every 3-5 years) to track changing needs of young people

Evaluation

- Develop an evaluation plan during the first quarter of a new initiative with the external evaluators engaged to implement
- Include methods for measuring partner organizations' increased awareness, skills, program and policy changes as a result of the initiative
- Plan the timing of youth and community organization surveys and ask what other evaluation they are taking part in, to avoid over-surveying them
- Consider including methods for assessing young people's awareness, mental health literacy, sense of connectedness or belonging, skills, confidence and level of stigma

Appendices

Projects by Region and Organization

HLSL (Région 01)

ECO-02 (Région 02)

JHCP (Région 03)

CCS (Région 06, Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal)

REISA (Région 06, Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal)

ACDPN (Région 06, Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal)

CDH (Région 06)

P10 (Région 06)

O3 (Région 06)

H&H (Région 06)

BGC Dawson (Région 06)

CONNEXIONS (Région 07)

NSCA (Région 09)

COASTERS (Région 09)

CASA (Région 11)

VGPN (Région 11)

CAMI (Région 11)

MCDC (Région 12)

AGAPE (Région 13)

ECOL (Région 14)

4KORNERS (Région 15)

MWCN (Région 16)

ARC (Région 16)

MEPEC (Région 16)

Interprovincial:

ELAN

LEARN

Y4Y



4Korners

This project supported the creation of partnerships in the health, education and social services sectors. Partnerships with the CISSS des Laurentides and the Sir Wilfred Laurier School Board played a key role in the youth mental health initiative at 4Korners. It is thanks to the close collaboration between 4Korners and the CISSS des Laurentides that the ADO Toxicology program was translated and 4Korners was able to train three staff members to pilot the program in a local English high school. 4Korners was able to work in-house at two local high schools to better reach out to local youth and support mental health staff. 4Korners organized a variety of activities in the schools such as drumming circles, information sessions on young people's legal rights, art and wellness groups, media arts workshops in collaboration with the Community Digital Arts Hub, and study kits for students at exam time. 4Korners created an art and wellness group for young adults in autumn 2023. This is the first time 4Korners has offered a program for young adults. Young people also had the opportunity to showcase their musical talents at two different regional events thanks to our partnership with other organizations. Resource kiosks with various health and social service partners and community organizations during school lunch hours helped to better inform young people about the services available to them in their community. A podcast for youth (financed by YMHI and other funds) is another action that supports YMHI's objectives. This project has established 4Korners as a space that supports youth engagement and provides unique opportunities for English-speaking youth.



African Canadian Development and Prevention Network (ACDPN)

Through this project ACDPN developed the Adulting Like Us program, which enhanced mental health support and education for vulnerable youth, many of whom have been through the Youth protection system. Through a series of targeted activities, the ALU project empowered youth to address the various mental health challenges that they may face as they enter adulthood. Key activities focused on introducing youth to mental health programming, facilitating workshops on various mental health topics, and engaging the youth in meaningful discussions with expert facilitators. An important feature of the program was the development of "hubs" to support partners in delivering tailored mental health programs to support their participants. ACDPN worked with partners in the community network as well as the youth protection system to deliver culturally-adapted support to youth. This support was driven by the youth and tailored to their needs. Finally, ACDPN designed and provided mental health kits to streamline program delivery and ensure consistency. The project worked to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and empower youth in the English-speaking Black community to prioritize their mental well-being. Through collaboration, education, and resource-sharing, the ALU program endeavored to build a network of support that promotes resilience and fosters positive mental health outcomes for at-risk youth in the community. The mental health program demonstrated ACDPN's ability to expand their reach, foster community well-being and promote innovative, culturally adapted approaches to mental health care. Working with partners further solidified the reputation and credibility of ACDPN as trusted advocates for health and social issues impacting the English-speaking Black community.



The Youth and Parents AGAPE Association (AGAPE)



AGAPE is a leader in Laval's English-speaking community. This project worked with the CISSS de Laval (Aire Ouverte/ santé publique) and francophone community and educational partners (TRÎL, ALPABEM, CDC Vimont Adult Education Centre and high schools) to advocate for and provide mental health resources for English-speaking youth in Laval. AGAPE was instrumental in translating the new trouvetaressource.ca website and promoting the resources available to young people through social media and partner organizations. Francophone partners were made aware of the needs of English-speaking youth through sharing of CHSSN's data and graphics. English-speaking youth were reached through joint initiatives such as "trouvetaressource.com/en" or awareness-raising and data-gathering events (surveys and focus groups). AGAPE has also worked to involve student ambassadors in the development and sharing of online mental health resources, and employs a young mental wellness spokesperson (specific emphasis on autism, anxiety and stress management). AGAPE continues to work to reach English-speaking youth in local high schools and adult education centers, through events and activities, youth web resources and partnerships.

Assistance and Referral Centre (ARC)



As an organization, ARC serves the needs of the entire English-speaking population of central Montérégie. As part of this project, ARC surveyed and listened to the population in order to create projects that met their needs. ARC facilitated the creation of the RHSSPT's English-speaking mental health partnership table, which has over 30 active members representing three CISSSs, the DPJ, community organizations, and local school service centers. The creation of this partnership table and a mental health liaison officer position has enabled activities to have a wider impact in the community. ARC created and distributed a mental health resource guide, shared mental health resources weekly on social media, and developed video vignettes to answer youth's questions about mental health. The organization organized numerous activities in high schools, at its activity center, and at a supportive housing center for people living with mental illness. Activities included mural painting, expressive journaling, discussion sessions to improve mental well-being (facilitated by professionals), rock painting, and a café-rencontre on mental health.

BGC Dawson

BGC Dawson is a community center located in Verdun that offers a wide range of educational, recreational, and social programs for young people aged 15 and older. Through this project, BGC strengthened its partnerships with the local high school and created new ones with organizations and mental health professionals. BGC created a mental health resource magazine and a youth-led podcast to help young people find services. BGC Dawson has organized numerous events and activities for youth, including individual and group discussions on mental health, art therapy workshops, an event for young women and trans youth with Project 10, and training on mental health topics (crisis management and de-escalation, risk assessment, boundary management and self-care). BGC Dawson has prioritized authentic youth engagement in all aspects of its activities and events, empowering young people and de-stigmatizing mental health. The aim of this project, and of all BGC Dawson's work, is to create pathways of support for isolated, vulnerable, and marginalized young people who face barriers to accessing mental health services.



Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (CAMI)

CAMI's main action over the past three years has been the creation of a Youth Advisory Committee made up exclusively of young people, who have informed CAMI of young people's needs. CAMI conducted a youth survey and used the information gathered to work with the Youth Advisory Committee to develop an action plan for activities. The organization adapted new documents on topics such as bullying, stress in the school context, and healthy lifestyle habits. CAMI translated other organizations' mental health awareness campaigns and shared them via social media. CAMI has also organized numerous social activities and youth events in close collaboration with Centre Accalmie, École de la Grosse-Île, CISSS Aire Ouverte and other partners. These activities include the launch of Pink T-Shirt Anti-Bullying Day, an International Women's Day event, and arts and wellness activities. Many mental health professionals were present at these activities and events promoting their services. During the course of this project, the development of a strong partnership with the CISSS Aire Ouverte team led to the hiring by the CISSS of a nurse and a social worker who are both bilingual and young people themselves.



Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA)



CASA has been able to expand the scope and impact of its services by working closely with key players such as the Director of Youth Protection, local schools (including New Carlisle High School, Escuminac Intermediate School and New Richmond High School), the Listuguj Mi'gmaq Development Center, Accroche-Coeur (a community social pediatrics center) and, at the regional level, Vision Gaspé Perce Now. These partnerships have enabled better coordination and sharing of resources, strengthening the organization's ability to respond to the diverse needs of young people. CASA works directly with high-risk youth and their families to help them access services such as accompaniment through DPJ interventions and the search for foster families. Youth participation continued to be encouraged by engaging them directly as members of the Mental Health Advisory Committee, ensuring that it remains youth-led. A youth wellness event was held, which helped CASA rethink the format of similar events in the future to facilitate greater participation of young people from neighboring schools. The development of real-life experience videos created with young people and launched on the BonFyre platform was another approach used to raise awareness. In these videos, young people talk openly about the problems and difficulties of accessing mental health help. CASA has also organized workshops for youth on healthy choices, self-esteem and risk reduction, as well as working with the adult education center to reach neurodiverse young adults. The CASA association's youth space was used throughout the year to organize workshops on well-being and to establish a direct link with young parents, in collaboration with partners such as the CISSS and the community social pediatrics center. The Discord (discussion channel) was developed into a youth-led virtual sharing platform. Not only has this project had a positive impact on young people in the community by supporting their mental health through information, education and referral to services, it has also given them a concrete opportunity to lead programming (notably the Youth Hub and Discord platforms).

Collective Community Services (CCS)



Through this project, CCS offered a variety of socio-emotional activities and programs for young people. CCS worked with the Lasalle Multicultural Resource Centre and the Lasalle Recreation Centre to continue programming, organize events, and distribute resources. CCS developed an accessible online mental health resource, as well as brochures that redirect visitors to their website using a QR code. CCS offered socio-educational workshops to ten Montreal high schools, five of which accepted. These workshops included "Friendship Club" (a social skills development program that promotes positive social interaction and an understanding of emotions, listening, friendships and play), "Project T.E.A.M." (a program aimed at promoting a healthy, active lifestyle among young people, and emphasizing the importance of fair play, teamwork and inclusion in sports and games) and the "Girls Group" (a program aimed at providing young girls with the tools and skills to become leaders in their communities; participants in this program identified the reduction of stigma around body image as a key issue).

Center of Dreams and Hopes (CDH)



CDH offers therapeutic and recreational programs for Montreal youth with neurological disorders or physical disabilities. Thanks to this project, CDH added a mental health professional to the team, and was thus able to offer support groups, self-care support and respite for parents, individual counseling and family counseling to young people and their families. CDH set up a photovoice program that enabled young people to use photography to question their well-being. CDH developed a psycho-educational tool (“Body Feelings & Body Actions” posters) to teach young people to become more attuned to their emotional and somatic experiences, and designed presentations on trauma, risk management and sensory processing. These resources were shared with trainees, CDH clients, and other organizations. In addition, through this project, CDH has focused on raising awareness of neurodivergent mental health through internships, programs, and training. Additionally, CDH focuses on collaborations with CLSC social workers and high schools to implement programming. CDH connected young people (external to the organization) with neurodiverse youth through the “Connecting Minds” program, reducing the stigma around neurodiversity and mental health. The organization hired youth interns to deliver its programs, raising awareness of mental health among young professionals-to-be.

Coasters Association



Throughout our three year project, Coasters was able to strengthen its partnerships with several organizations (including the Centre de services scolaires du Littoral, the CISSS, MRC du Golfe-du-St.-Laurent and others). Coasters offered mental health first aid courses to adults working with young people as well as a social and emotional learning workshop to young parents (18-29) outside school hours. Coasters created two brochures on mental health, one for parents of young children and the other for young people, which were distributed at events. Through this project and in partnership with other organizations, we have supported and hosted activities for the public. Each year we have increased the number of participants, breaking down barriers of social isolation and bringing the community together. Coasters leveraged its social media to engage with geographically isolated youth to support them on mental health topics and provide resources (infographics). Coasters elected a new Board of Directors this year and now has three youth members. Most importantly, Coasters has developed the BCN Youth Hub, which is and will remain a space where young people can feel safe and have a sense of belonging. Overall, the project has enabled young people on the Lower North Shore to get together to talk about mental health in an environment where they feel safe.

Connexions Resource Centre

Connexions has worked with many English-speaking youth through peer support groups in Outaouais high schools, student internships at the McGill University Outaouais campus and at Heritage College Cegep, health forums and kiosks at the Hull adult education centre and in high schools, internships with English-speaking youth and via collaboration with representatives from CISSS de l'Outaouais. Connexions worked closely with young people to help them navigate available services and find resources to support them. The young people, in turn, were able to share these resources with their peers. Connexions hired young mental health influencer interns to organize events and create mental health promotion content for social networking platforms. Connexions has worked closely with a number of community organizations that work with English-speaking youth: supporting them in their youth outreach activities (e.g., Be & Become, Maison des jeunes, etc.); participating in their kiosks (suicide prevention, career activities, etc.); and partnering with them on various projects or initiatives. Connexions teamed up with other organizations (including Y4Y Quebec) to create the Pontiac's first-ever annual Youth and Community Pride Festival (bringing together mental health partners with safe access for LGBTQIAS2+ youth), which led to the creation of a support group for LGBTQIA2S+ parents (Pride Parent Support Group). Connexions created an LGBTQIA2S+ pamphlet, which it distributed to its partners and young people on social media, at kiosks and at events organized at local high schools and other organizations.



English Community Organization Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean (ECO-02)

ECO-02 consulted with partners and other organizations to better understand the mental health needs of youth in their region, as well as to map community resources to better support youth in crisis. ECO-02 held three face-to-face consultations with youth groups to better understand the gaps in services in Saguenay-Lac-Saint Jean and Chibougamau. ECO-02 focused on engaging youth at Riverside Regional High School and collaborating with the local Katimavik group. With funding from YMHI, ECO-02 produced a preparatory program for high school students to help them develop life skills, understand how to access resources, and provide hands-on practice of these skills. ECO-02 also organized workshops on self-care and how to talk about mental health, and provided participants with materials to make their own self-care kits. Some of these kits were distributed to local partners such as Riverside Regional High school, AireOuverte and Santé Public. ECO-02 was also able to develop a resource tool indicating the mental health services available in the Saguenay region, including those available in English.

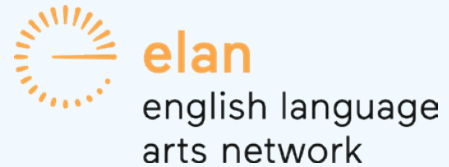


English Community Organization of Lanaudière (ECOL)



As part of this project, ECOL empowered youth in the community by providing essential mental health resources, encouraging open dialogue, reducing stigma, and equipping young people with the skills and support networks needed to effectively overcome mental health issues. ECOL created a mental health resource brochure and distributed it online and at events. ECOL participated in various events, distributing materials and connecting youth with mental health resources, while reducing the stigma surrounding mental health issues. ECOL also connected with young people through regular social media content about mental health. ECOL successfully recruited a young person to its Board of Directors.

English Language Arts Network (ELAN)



ELAN is a non-profit organization that supports English-speaking artists and cultural workers across Québec. ELAN's ArtEd mental health initiative offers professional development to teaching artists working with young people aged 15 to 29. Sessions address mental health issues related to teaching, including non-violent communication, active listening, inclusion, diversity, multicultural skills, classroom management, bullying and maintaining one's own mental health as a facilitator. During this project, ELAN trained 53 teaching artists in youth mental health, 13 of whom were young teaching artists at the time of their training. The impact of the teaching artists is impressive: in 2023-24 alone, the teaching artists reached 1,440 young people through workshops and events. The training was designed to equip teaching artists with the knowledge, skills, and resources to engage young people in artistic and cultural experiences that support their mental health, share key messages and information with young people about mental health, and connect young people with organizations that can help them access support. ELAN also shared mental health resources through professional development presentations accessible to artists, a youth mental health resource guide, and social media. In addition, ELAN fostered relationships with CHSSN partners including Vent Over Tea, Y4Y, Reisa, CAMI, MDCDC, Ami Québec and WIN, and deepened ongoing relationships with the Quebec Writers Federation, LEARN and the English Montreal School Board. These partnerships have increased the number of teaching artists trained and hired by the partners. ELAN is effectively creating a network of long-term ambassadors for mental health who reflect the diversity of Québec's English-speaking communities.

Head & Hands (H&H)

H&H provides accessible services to Montreal youth through free weekly medical clinics, legal aid, counseling, a program for young parents, support for street workers, and peer sex education in high schools. H&H has worked on youth mental health in partnership with many organizations, identifying gaps in services, disseminating information, increasing referral capacity, and organizing events and workshops. Through workshops, events, and external supervision, the counseling program has collaborated with a number of partners to continue providing accessible support to English-speaking youth over the past three years. Partnerships with organizations like AlterHeros have enabled us to expand the reach of our programming and fill gaps in mental health services for youth who require specific types of care, such as neuro-divergent individuals. Over the past three years, H&H counselors have all worked closely with external supervisors, as well as with a support group of other mental health professionals. These links ensure that advisors use best practices, regularly evaluate and adapt their services, and can work together to identify gaps in the services available to young English-speaking Quebecers.



Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence (HLSL)

Thanks to the training courses offered as part of this project, HLSL has developed organizational capacities to understand the key concepts of mental health and how to connect with young people. In addition, HLSL worked to better understand the structural and institutional environment of the region in order to identify the resources and services available. Community of practice sessions, as well as work with CISSS Bas Saint-Laurent and other partners, have enabled HLSL to develop its knowledge base of service delivery frameworks and capacities. Through the organization of activities and events, HLSL was able to connect with our English-speaking youth and build relationships of trust and empowerment. During the project, HLSL focused on Métis Beach School, the only English-language high school in Bas-Saint-Laurent. HLSL discovered that school staff, students and parents urgently needed access to mental health resources, and were under-utilizing available services. Members of the organization were able to establish a relationship with the school, consult with students and staff about their needs, and connect the school community with resources.



Jeffery Hale Community Partners (JHCP)



JHCP works in close partnership with numerous schools (CEGEPs and high schools) and other organizations on youth mental health in the Capitale-Nationale region. Thanks to this project, JHCP has been able to forge partnerships with other organizations outside the education sector. Over the three years of the project, JHCP was able to hire a program coordinator and create a dedicated mental health program (WE Mind). The project's main activities include support for LGBTQIA2S+ groups in high schools, as well as workshops on anxiety and performance, offered in high schools and CEGEPs. JHCP worked with its designated bilingual health facility partner (JHSB) to map English-speaking youth in its territory and understand the availability and gaps in mental health services. JHCP also disseminated information on mental health through its new social media platforms, a dedicated mental health section on their website, as well as leaflets and other materials.

Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN)



LEARN is a non-profit provincial educational organization that works in collaboration with Quebec's English-language school boards to meet the needs of young people and school communities. As part of this project, LEARN has developed the Wellness Innovation Lab. The Wellness Innovation Lab is a process through which students, teachers, school staff and community partners are encouraged to reflect on mental health and wellness challenges and needs, identify mental health initiatives underway in their schools, and test mental health initiatives. The workshops invite participants to explore mental health and well-being. Information sessions were held to promote the Wellness Innovation Lab to community mental health organizations, school board representatives and CLC network community development officers. LEARN has continued to develop and adapt the Wellness Innovation Lab in response to participant feedback over the past three years. LEARN has worked with seven of Québec's nine English-language school boards, as well as the mental health partners who work with these boards. Students involved in this project are better informed and able to talk about their mental health needs. They have identified and prototyped eight new mental health initiatives.

Megantic English-speaking Community Development Corporation (MCDC)



Over the past three years, the project's main objective has been to establish a solid relationship with CISSS-CA in order to offer more services to Thetford's English schools. As proof of this successful relationship, CISSS-CA invited MCDC to participate in the deployment of the Off-track program for English-speaking students (immigrants and new arrivals) at the Thetford adult education center. In addition, MCDC is participating in a mental health committee with other partners in Chaudière-Appalaches to help them understand the access issues facing English-speaking youth in the region. MCDC has partnered with the local high school (in Thetford Mines) to bring in speakers who can give presentations on mental health in English (for example: the Centre d'anxiété et de dépression de Montréal to address the issue of stress, and Maison Jean Lapointe to examine the issue of substance abuse). MCDC developed a guide to local resources and their accessibility in English for mental health services. MCDC supported the creation of a Student Wellness Committee to foster communication within the school community. Young people were actively involved in the Youth Wellness Committee, and a youth member of the Board of Directors had a significant impact in helping the organization understand the issues from the perspective of youth.

Monteregie East Partnership for the English-Speaking Community (MEPEC)



MEPEC focused on its collaboration with the Riverside School Board to connect with youth aged 15-21. MEPEC shared mental health resources in collaboration with various partners, including ParenTeen Focus, École en Santé, Heritage High School, Mind your Mind and Y4Y. MEPEC organized various activities and participated in events such as art therapy sessions, massage and aromatherapy sessions, Tea in the Garden, student fairs, and events related to Earth Day and Mental Health Week. During these activities, MEPEC promoted mental health services, raised awareness and helped students become more resilient. With Heritage High School in Montérégie Est, MEPEC implemented the "Teens Talk, Listen!" program. This program is an adolescent wellness discussion table for youth aged 15 to 17, facilitated by a family life educator with experience working with troubled youth. The organization has adapted and developed mental health posters for students. MEPEC's youth ambassador disseminated information on mental health via social media. MEPEC also created a specific call to recruit youth to the Board of Directors, and there is now a youth member on the Board.

Montréal West Community Network (MWCN)



MWCN worked with five schools (two high schools and three adult education centers) in the Montréal Westregion to organize activities. MWCN has developed four “professional modules”, which offer students, particularly neurodiverse and special needs students, a quiet space with reliable Internet access to work on school and personal projects. The organization is equipped with mental health resources, posters and tools for young people to explore. MWCN continued to support the Greenhouse Café, a wellness-promoting space where students can relax and connect with nature, tap into resources (mental health service maps) and which also provides hot drinks and food to address food security challenges. MWCN has organized several community wellness workshops at the Greenhouse Café. It has also set up an in-school pet therapy program for neurodiverse youth to explore emotional regulation practices, discuss stress management and learn distress tolerance. A focus group of 12 young people is involved in the planning, execution and evaluation of the programs. Two members of the MWCN Board of Directors are young people.

North Shore Community Association (NSCA)



The NSCA, involved in several mobilization tables addressing young people’s mental health needs, maintains strong relationships with regional organizations on the North Shore to connect youth with services. They created a database identifying community organizations and health partners offering mental health resources, including the level of English-language provision per provider. The NSCA has translated key documents and shared them with partner organizations. They developed the “My Life in High School” mental health guide for students and several awareness video vignettes in collaboration with Le Marais, a local psychosocial clinic. Additionally, they’ve organized mental health workshops and events with educational partners. In collaboration with students and Community Development Agents, they co-manage “safe spaces” in two high schools. Through surveys and youth committees, the NSCA engages young people to better understand their needs, empowering them to play an active role in their well-being and community.

Les maisons transitionnelles O3 | On Our Own (O3)



On Our Own is a Montreal-based non-profit organization that provides support services and transitional housing for vulnerable young parents and their children. O3 offered residents a series of mental health workshops based on the Canadian Mental Health Association’s Adap.t modules. Residents gained knowledge, learned and practiced mental health coping techniques. The workshops were a huge success. O3 developed and provided additional materials for each workshop and expanded the offering as interest grew. O3 also invited special guests to interact with residents and offered more casual social support through collective kitchens, a community garden, as well as experiential and exercise classes. These activities provided an opportunity to discuss mental health topics and learn from the workshops. O3 has succeeded in involving many residents in decision-making about programming and community life through its community roundtables. O3 has developed partnerships with community organizations and services to share knowledge and connect residents with external mental health services.

Project 10 (P10)

Project 10 created safer spaces for English-speaking 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to address the unique realities facing the community and improve their mental well-being holistically by breaking patterns of social isolation and strengthening community. Our project with YMHI has focused specifically on supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ youth who find themselves at the intersection of multiple identities that have been historically and continue to be marginalized; for example, queer youth who have been or are currently in the care system. As a secondary organization, Project 10 has endeavored to develop meaningful partnerships with other community organizations, each with their own expertise in mental health support. P10 has studied the workings of youth protection services and the gaps it can help fill. The organization visited 18 group homes and shared information about its services with young people and care facilitators. It also organized a mental health panel of peers and child welfare survivors to share experiences, exchange resources and identify needs. Over the course of our project, we have hosted a variety of specialized support groups, conducted outreach in schools and organized a wide range of activities, from workshops on important life skills to a week-long summer camp, drop-in centers offering individual support, activities, gender training and community building through art and expression, thanks to multiple collaborations with different collectives. P10 has far exceeded its expectations in terms of access to young people and dissemination of material, thanks to the hiring of additional staff and the increased engagement of young people returning to face-to-face activities while maintaining a strong online presence.



East Island Network for English Language Services (REISA)

REISA increased and strengthened its partnerships with educational institutions such as EMSB and Vanier College. REISA updated and shared mental health resources with school partners, and shared mental health messages on social media for wider viewing. These partnerships were strengthened through participation in planning committees and collaboration on youth mental health initiatives, such as the mental health fair, and mental health first aid training. REISA organized a virtual summit, LA TÊTE HAUTE, of the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Centre de services scolaires de Montréal, which led to student-led anti-stigma mental health initiatives. REISA has worked with a total of 7 schools in the EMSB over the past three years, reaching approximately 350-400 students per year through school fairs and the LA TÊTE HAUTE summit. In addition, REISA has trained 50-60 young people in mental health first aid. REISA has formed and maintained partnerships with CIUSS and Aire-Ouverte, as well as with various community organizations.



Vision Gaspé-Percé Now (VGPN)



Through two networking events, VGPN brought together partners around the well-being of young people in their region of Gaspésie to discuss services and supports available in English for young people. The project enabled VGPN to develop tools that map mental health services in the region. These tools include an introductory map, a pocket map, a TikTok video and a new “Youth Hub” section on the VGPN website. VGPN translated materials, connected youth with services, organized youth workshops and events, and trained staff to facilitate Strengthsfinder workshops. The project enabled Vision to offer youth a variety of fun and accessible activities, a need expressed by the youth of our region. The project has enabled Vision to increase its partnerships in the field of mental health services, resulting in new collaborations for the benefit of young people. Vision has strengthened its partnerships with local schools and has become a trusted partner. As a result, Vision is better able to reach out to young people with relevant information and activities to improve their mental health and well-being.

Y4Y Quebec Association (Y4Y)



Y4Y Quebec is engaged in supporting English-speaking youth (aged 16-30) across Québec and is well connected to youth partners in the landscape of mental health services available to English-speaking youth. The “With You in Mind” (WYIM) project aimed to provide young people with tools and skills to help them manage their mental health by inviting mental health professionals from across the province to host free workshops on active listening, substance use, self-care and cultural considerations in mental health. The project also focused on peer support as a tool for maintaining youth mental health and fostering a sense of belonging among English-speaking youth. The Comité consultatif jeunesse (CCJ) organized a series of café-causeries in Montreal, Gatineau and the Magdalen Islands, during which young people shared stories and resources related to their mental health journey. CCJ also received training in active listening, crisis intervention and peer support best practices to facilitate a peer support discussion group for 40 participants. The WYIM project also created a province-wide online wellness center that combine efforts to connect youth with mental health professionals with the facilitation of peer support spaces. The WYIM Discord server provided a one-to-one referral service, connecting youth to relevant mental health supports and resources, as well as free activities and events in partnership with local youth, mental health professionals and community organizations. In addition, Y4Y has helped other organizations develop and use a youth counseling model.

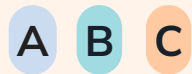
Evaluation Plan

Outcomes (related to objectives)

Indicators

Increased awareness of the gaps in mental health services for young English-speaking Quebecers.

Method & source



- number of organizations identifying gaps
- number of gaps identified
- types of gaps identified
- number of youth involved in consultations on gaps
- number of youth survey responses (year 1)
- documentation and dissemination of gaps through CHSSN publications
- number of partners contacted by community organizations
- engagement of partners to learn about and address the gaps
- increased awareness of gaps by CHSSN and partnering community organizations

Increased access to mental health resources for young English-speaking Quebecers

Method & source



- number of tools created and disseminated in English related to youth MH
- number materials adapted or translated in English related to youth MH
- number of organizations and regions offering new MH related activities during the project
- number and type of partners better equipped to respond to English speaking youth's needs
- number of mental health professionals involved in project
- % of youth who say the project helped them be more aware of MH resources

Increased engagement of young English-speaking Quebecers in mental health activities and events

Method & source



- number youth involved
- number events and activities implemented
- type of activities and events
- level of youth satisfaction with events and activities
- level of youth engagement (Hart's Ladder)
- level of diversity of youth engaged by community organizations
- number people aged 35 and under sitting on community organizations' boards of directors

Reduced stigma

Method & source



- number activities and events addressing youth MH issues
- % youth who report that they would or do feel judged by others for seeking out help to support their mental wellbeing.
- activities and events engage youth in expressing themselves and learning about MH
- youth report that the project helped them to be more comfortable talking about MH challenges and seeking support for the mental wellbeing of themselves, friends or family

Method for data collection + source

	Start	Completed
A Community organization annual reporting	March 2022, 2023 and 2024	April 2022, 2023 and 2024
B Community organization final report (additional questions added to report form: template of project, co-development level)	November 2023	February 2024
C Youth Pulse Check survey ¹ Respondents: English-speaking youth in Québec at large	December 2021	March 2022
D Youth Outreach and Engagement Survey ² Respondents: Supported organizations of the YMHI	March 2023	April 2023
E YMHI Questionnaire for you(th) & young people ³ Respondents: youth who had or were participating in YMHI supported initiatives by the organizations (mixed methods with youth, then community orgs enter data into survey)	September 2023	Feb 2024

1 Youth Pulse Check survey: <https://airtable.com/apppLpNmMHoPvOiMG/shrsc4TkGblIU7hBN>
 2 Youth Outreach & Engagement Survey: <https://airtable.com/apppLpNmMHoPvOiMG/shraALiAPpltNsOtz>
 3 YMHI Questionnaire for you(th) and young people: <https://airtable.com/apppLpNmMHoPvOiMG/shrsc4TkGblIU7hBN>

Youth Outreach and Engagement Survey

Youth outreach

Which youth does your project reach?

1. What is the age group of the youth that your project is reaching? Please check all that apply.

- 15-18
- 19-23
- 23-26
- 27-29

2. Are there any comments you'd like to share about the age of the youth your project reaches?

3. CHARACTERISTICS AND IDENTITIES OF YOUTH REACHED

Below are several different characteristics or identities. For each, please indicate if they make up none, some, many or all of the youth reached by your project. For example: YOUNG WOMEN: About how many of the youth you reach have this characteristic or identity?

	None of the youth we reach	Some youth we reach	Many of youth we reach	All of the youth we reach	I don't know
YOUNG WOMEN					
YOUNG MEN					
TRANS, NON-BINARY, AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING YOUTH					
LGBTQIA2S+					
INDIGENOUS					
RACIALIZED / PEOPLE OF COLOUR					
WHITE / EUROPEAN DESCENT					
NEWCOMER (arrived in Canada within the last 5 years)					
YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, NEURODIVERSE, OR LIVING WITH A HANDICAP					
STUDENTS					
WORKERS (have a job)					
NEITHER IN SCHOOL NOR WORKING					
YOUTH THAT HAVE EXITED CARE (DPJ)					
YOUNG PARENT					
YOUNG CARER (provides regular support to a family member who has a chronic illness, disability, mental health or substance use issue and/or struggles related to old age)					
YOUTH EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY (youth themselves or their families)					
RURAL YOUTH (or living in isolated communities)					

4. Are there any comments you'd like to share about the characteristics or identities of the youth who your project reaches? Please include any other groups of youth not mentioned above.
5. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:
 - a. The diversity of the youth reached by our project is a good reflection of the diversity of the population in our area/ neighbourhood/ city/ region.
 Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree
 - b. Our organization could reach a more diverse group of youth.
 Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree
 - c. Our organization is satisfied by the diversity of youth engaged in the project.
 Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree
6. What practices have you used that work well to reach a diversity of youth? (
7. Are there any groups of youth that you would like the project to better engage or reach? Which groups of youth are "hard to reach" in your community?
8. What ideas do you have for how your organization or project could better reach more diverse groups of youth? How could the project or organization do to better reach youth that are "hard to reach"?
9. Are there any additional comments you'd like to share about your project's engagement of a diversity of youth?

Youth engagement practices

10. The following are good practices from the “Quality standard for youth engagement” by the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health <https://www.cymha.ca/Modules/ResourceHub/?id=64172b4d-af0d-432a-8d66-880ba2292486>

For each practice below, please rate how strongly the practice is being applied in your YMHI project.

Scale of 1 to 5 stars:

1 star = we do not do this practice at all;

5 stars = we always do this practice; we do it very well.

ACCESSIBILITY: Your organization understands, monitors and addresses the different types of barriers that prevent meaningful youth engagement.



AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS: Youth and adult allies in the organization build and maintain mutually beneficial trust-based relationships that are evident in their interactions. Youth and adult allies acknowledge differences in power and position and strive to challenge the processes and habits that uphold these differences.



CO-DEVELOPMENT: Youth jointly develop all activities and processes that impact or interest them. Youth share in decision-making around potential changes and improvements.



COMMUNICATION: Multiple accessible methods are used to communicate with young people.



ONGOING LEARNING: Our organization seeks opportunities to continually increase our knowledge and skills relating to youth engagement practices and other relevant areas.



RESEARCH AND EVALUATION: Youth are co-developers of community youth needs assessment (identifying gaps and barriers, raising awareness). Youth are involved in planning and evaluating (youth satisfaction) the project activities, events and resources produced.



SAFER SPACES: Youth and partners co-create and regularly check in to establish and maintain an environment in which everyone feels comfortable, embraced and able to speak freely.



11. How is your organization engaging youth in this project? What practices have worked well to engage young people?
12. How does your organization involve and support young people in decision-making, including on the board of directors? What practices have worked well to engage young people on the board or in decision making?
13. On Hart’s Ladder of Young People’s Participation, where do you feel your organization’s YMHI project currently stands? (single choice)

- Rung 8: Young people & adults share decision-making
- Rung 7: Young people lead & initiate action
- Rung 6: Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people
- Rung 5: Young people consulted and informed
- Rung 4: Young people assigned and informed
- Rung 3: Young people tokenized*
- Rung 2: Young people are decoration*
- Rung 1: Young people are manipulated*

Training, support and capacity building

14. What supports would be beneficial to receive from the YMHI to assist your organization to deepen its youth outreach and engagement? (What type of training, tools, coaching, etc?)

YMHI Questionnaire for you(th) & young people (Stigma Survey)

What community/organization is hosting this youth mental health project?

(write the city or name of organization)

How old are you? (circle one)

- 14 or younger
- 15-18
- 19-29

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:
(select one of the options below for each statement)

1. I am satisfied with the events and activities that were part of this project.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

2. Since this project started, I am more aware of mental health resources I can access for me, my friends or my family members. (mental health resources = places to go, health services, programs in the community, social media accounts, websites).

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

3. Since this project started, I have become more comfortable seeking out help for the mental wellbeing of myself, my friends or my family members.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

4. I would or do feel judged by others for seeking out help to support the mental wellbeing of myself, my friends or my family members.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

5. Since this project started, it has become easier for me to talk about the mental wellbeing or mental health challenges of myself, my friends or my family members.

Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

6. If the sky was the limit (don't worry about money or anything!): What would be your dream project to support young people's mental wellbeing? (Share an idea for making your community more supportive for young people's mental health.)



A New Youth Mental Health Initiative Proudly Supported By:

CHSSN Québec

Secrétariat à la jeunesse Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon

1650 Chemin d'Ulys, Deux-Montagnes, QC, J7R 1M9
 Québec, 7h00 p.m. à 9:00 p.m.
 April 2nd 2024 to May 28th 2024
 Registration: info@korners.org
 450-974-3940 ext. 601 | 1-800-974-3940

Seniors
 Children and Families
 Mental Health Disorders
 Youth
 Other Lines

Deep deprivation
 How sleep impacts mental health conditions
 ADHD: It is also thought that issues with sleep may increase the risk of overall quality of life.

Follow us

Support with mental health, transitioning to higher education and living independently.

English community of Lanaudière

YOUTH_MENTAL_HEALTH_LANAUDIÈRE

Connecting Minds: Awareness & Advocacy Program

What the program is
 What to expect
 Benefits of participating
 Next Steps

Taking Care of your Mental Health

Asking for help can be hard, but you don't have to face things alone. Reach out!

- Call 911 or go to a hospital emergency room.
- Call the suicide prevention line at 1-866-APPELLE (277-3553).
- Call Info-Social at 811. Press Option 2 to speak with a Social Worker 24/7.
- Call the Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region 24/7 at 613-238-3311.
- Call the LGBTQ+ Youth Line at 1-800-268-9688 or text 647-694-4275.

With You In Mind

A Mental Health & Wellness Hub on & by Youth

Available across Québec November 1st, 2023

ANXIETY SELF-MANAGEMENT GROUP

UNLOCK THE SECRET TO MANAGING ANXIETY AND EMBARK ON A PATH TO A HAPPIER, HEALTHIER YOU BY ENROLLING IN THIS 10-WEEK JOURNEY.

EVERY TUESDAY FROM 7:00 TO 9:00 P.M. BETWEEN APRIL 16TH - JUNE 25TH, 2024

Wellness Innovation Lab

Laurier Macdonald HS CLC

Joining together to explore and create activities that support mental health and wellness in the school and community.

62% students, 3 school staff, 2 community partners

4 main ideas: Outdoor Garden, Peer Support, Safe Space, Buddy System

Current projects: Green House, Buddy System, Dojo Club

Master your SEL superpowers

These skills are vital for personal and academic success

Self-Awareness, Relationship Skills, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making

sel-superpowers.com

Interested in Dealing with Stress?

ARTISTS INSPIRE GRANTS

Stress Management & Mental Health

To cultivate your best life through stress management!

1-800-448-4868

GROWING THROUGH GRIEF

February 27th 2023 at 6PM

Mental Health Workshop with Jude

STRESS MANAGEMENT

HORS-PISTE WORKSHOPS

Learn how to identify stress and anxiety. Understand how stress impacts psychology and physiology, and discover healthy ways to cope with it.

March 19 & 26, 2024 @ L'escalte

Mental Health Guide

MEGANIC mc dc ENGLISH-SPEAKING

is help, and it's confidential.

1-800-448-4868

Understanding Trauma:

A guide for young parents

YOUTH HUB SCAN HERE

There's a lot of information out there. It can be hard to know where to look when you need support. Don't worry, we did the work for you.

Mental health and wellness resources, find...

Reminder Taking Place today

BASSE-CÔTE-NORD YOUTH HUB GRAND-OPENING

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024
 TIME: 3:45PM - 6PM
 Location: 313 Boulevard Bonin-Expresse, St. Paul's River, Québec

YOUTH TRANSITIONING CARE PANEL

A discussion about mental health, realities and lived experiences of 2SLGBTQ+ care alumni

PLEASE REGISTER - FORM IN BIO

Sunday, March 19th at 1:00PM

Adulting

Join us in this self-led program through modules covering:

- Boundaries
- Developing Resiliency

CEDEC Québec CHSSN