

Empowering the Employment Sector to Better Serve Youth with Mental Health Issues

Presented by:



Marysia Parry,
Youth Employment Services

Hosted by: BC Centre for Employment Excellence

The webinar will begin shortly.

Welcome & Agenda

Agenda

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Welcome & Introductions | 5 mins |
| Presentation by Marysia Parry | 45 mins |
| Q&A | 10 mins |

We encourage you to ask questions! We will address them during and after the presentation. To submit a question:

- Use the “Questions” tab at the right of your screen (at any time during the presentation.)

EMPOWERING THE EMPLOYMENT SECTOR TO SERVE YOUTH WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES



About Me.

- Special Projects Coordinator at Youth Employment Services YES
- Lead developer of YES's newest employment resource – *Empowering the Employment Sector to Serve Youth with Mental Health Issues*
- 5+ Years of Classroom, Curriculum, and Program Development Experience



Session Overview

- About YES.
- The Basics of Mental Health.
- The Lighthouse Project.
- Best Practices for Working with Youth with Mental Health Issues.
- How We Can Support Youth with Mental Health Issues in the Employment Sector.



YES believes that employment is empowerment and the cornerstone of safe and healthy communities. YES leads the Canadian youth sector with innovative programs that empower disadvantaged and vulnerable youth to become self-sufficient contributing members of society.



Youth Employment Services YES

Our goal is to empower youth to achieve one of the following outcomes:

- **Find and maintain a job**
 - **Return to school**
 - **Pursue further training**
- **Launch their own business**



SO... *MENTAL*
HEALTH...

Mental Health

Mental health is the process through which people strive to find balance in all aspects of life.

Mental health **affects** one's: **mood, thoughts, perceptions, and behaviours.**

Good Mental Health

- Good mental health is represented when a person is able to think about and deal with everyday tasks and challenges, such as:
 - Making choices and decisions;
 - Adapting and coping with challenging situations;
 - Talking about one's wants and needs, and;
 - Maintaining meaningful relationships with family, friends, and coworkers.

We all feel sad, worried, scared, anxious, nervous, or suspicious at times BUT when these kinds of feelings start to get in the way of a person's ability to go about their daily life (over a long period of time), then they may have issues with their mental health.

Did you know...

1 in 5 Canadians will struggle with their mental health at some point in their life.

Did you know...

Mental health issues among Canadian youth are on the rise and it is predicted that this demographic will see a 50% increase in mental health issues by the year 2020.

Did you know...

Only 30% of people who are experiencing issues with their mental health will seek assistance for it.

The Why.

- No insight into own mental health.
- Don't know who to tell or how to access supports.
 - Try to handle symptoms on their own.
- Feel ashamed or embarrassed about needing to seek help.

The Mental Health Stigma

Stigma is often the reason why people are not comfortable talking about mental health and why people often hesitate to seek help when needed.

Negative attitudes + negative responses = STIGMA

Did you know...

The unemployment rate for people living with mental health issues is over 70% (and rising).

Did you know...

Employment is an extremely important part of any person's mental health journey towards recovery.

HOW CAN WE (THE
EMPLOYMENT SECTOR)
HELP?

The Lighthouse Project

In 2015, YES was granted government funding to create and implement an employment program that would specifically address the many unique challenges youth living with mental health issues face when seeking employment and attempting to achieve job success.

YES worked in partnership with the Social Determinants of Health (SDH) Service at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to develop **The Lighthouse Project**.

The Lighthouse Project

- In it's pilot year:
 - Provided over 55 youth with pre-employment training.
 - Supported over 40 youth in finding a full-time job placement (30 hours/week for 12 weeks).
 - Offered weekly free mental wellness programming (ex. yoga) to all clients.
 - Had one of the highest rates of success of all programs at YES with 78% of clients employed, returning to school, or enrolled in further training at exit.

The Lighthouse Project

- In it's second year:
 - Provided over 60 youth with pre-employment training.
 - Supported over 48 youth in finding a full-time job placement (30 hours/week for 12 weeks).
 - Continued to offer weekly free mental wellness programming (ex. yoga) to all clients.

During the times I was not working, working with YES and The Lighthouse Project helped me recognize that I was trying to find work and explain to other people how I was putting in that effort. Looking for work is very very hard on your mental health and you often feel that people don't believe that you are doing enough; The Lighthouse Project always made me feel supported and encouraged me to keep looking for jobs.

Josephine, Lighthouse Youth

Best Practices

- Always have a Person Centered approach when working with youth living with mental illness.

Do this by:

- Being flexible.
- Being understanding.
- Being open.
- Creating a warm and inclusive space.
- Always conveying hope and optimism no matter the number of challenges or roadblocks a youth encounters.

Best Practices

- Ensure that program goals focus on what clients CAN do.

Best Practices

- Employment Counsellors must provide continued support for youth **THROUGHOUT** the pre-employment and job placement period.

Best Practices

- When working with youth living with mental health issues, use the *Individual Placement & Support* (IPS) model to achieve high levels of success.

IPS Principals

- IPS works to get people living with mental health issues into competitive employment as soon as they express an interest in finding employment.
- IPS aims to find jobs consistent with people's preferences
- IPS requires collaboration between employment counsellors and clinical teams.
- IPS encourages that employment counsellors develop relationships with employers to ensure that youth's needs are accommodated.
- IPS provides time unlimited, individualized support for the person and their employer.
- IPS includes benefits counselling for youth to aide in supporting their self-esteem, self-confidence, relationship management, and to stop their limiting beliefs/challenges.

I liked the one-on-one mentoring sessions best because it provided me with dedicated personalized help regarding my circumstances, background and experiences. The one-on-one mentoring sessions helped me counterbalance my outlook on different situations and helped me learn more about my strengths and skillsets as well as gain confidence in my abilities.

Amy, Lighthouse Youth

Learning

- Youth living with mental health issues face many unique barriers when trying to access employment, some of these include:
 - Elevated levels of stress and new work challenges can make it difficult for youth to find balance and manage their mental health;
 - Coping with the side effects of medications as well as the ebbs and flows of recovery, and;
 - Balancing treatment needs with employment.

Learning

- Disclosure and accommodation are an extremely challenging topic to cover, but are also one of the most needed (and wanted) pre-employment trainings for/by youth.

Learning

- Client motivation and accountability was a constant challenge for Employment Counsellors when working with youth living with mental health issues.

Learning

- Flexibility in programming, including the individualization of pre-employment training and job searching, was one of the most notable reasons for The Lighthouse Projects high levels of success.

Moving Forward With Resources...

Empowering the Employment Sector to Serve Youth with Mental Health Issues



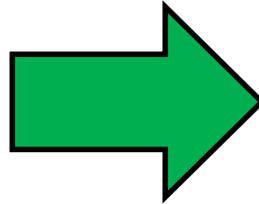
The Counselling
Foundation of Canada



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale

Learning

- Youth living with mental health issues face many unique barriers when trying to access employment.



Implemented Change

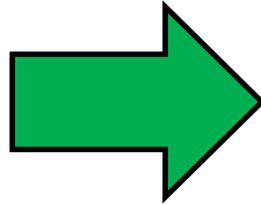
- Develop a pre-employment workshop that addresses some of the unique barriers to employment and that supports them in dealing with these challenges as they search for work and start a new job.

Mental Health 101: Finding Work/Life Balance

Mental Health 102: Managing Mental Health in the Workplace

Learning

- Disclosure and accommodation are an extremely challenging topic to cover, but are also one of the most needed (and wanted) pre-employment trainings for/by youth.



Implemented Change

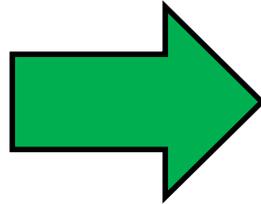
- Work in partnership with CAMH to create a workshop that covers the topic of disclosure - supporting youth in making the choice to disclose and teaching them how to advocate for mental health in their community.

Choosing to Disclose

Breaking the Stigma

Learning

- Client motivation and accountability was a constant challenge for Employment Counsellors when working with youth living with mental health issues.



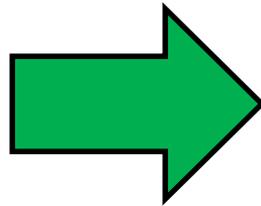
Implemented Change

- Create a pre-employment workshop that works with youth to create a Job Search Action plan, including their goals and “to dos” with set completion dates.

The Job Search

Learning

- Flexibility in programming, including the individualization of pre-employment training and job searching, was one of the most notable reasons for The Lighthouse Projects high levels of success.



Implemented Change

- Modify current curriculum for important pre-employment topics to accommodate the needs and unique challenges of youth living with mental health issues.

Cover Letters, Resumes, and Interviews

Moving Forward With Other Resources...

Bell Let's Talk (Toolkit): letstalk.bell.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA):
www.cmha.ca

Center for Addiction and Mental Health
(CAMH): www.camh.ca

Here to Help (BC): www.heretohelp.bc.ca

Jack.org: www.jack.org

Mental Health Works:
www.mentalhealthworks.ca

Mental Health Commission of Canada:
www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

Mind Your Mind: www.mindyourmind.ca

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
(US): www.nami.org

Not Myself Today:
<http://www.notmyselftoday.ca/>

Ontario Shores Foundation for Mental Health
Sciences: <http://www.focusedonrecovery.ca/>

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health:
www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com



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Questions and Discussion

To submit your question:

- Please use the “Questions” tab on the GoToWebinar panel (at right of screen.)

Upcoming Webinar

Integrating Motivational Interviewing within Employment Services for Income Assistance Recipients

- More information and the registration link will be available at www.cfeebc.org

Thank you for attending today!

Continue the conversation at www.cfeebc.org.