Mental Health Network

A Year At a Glance & Discussion on Building Connections
We would like to acknowledge this sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory.
Building Mental Health Capacity

The Mental Health Network provides partnerships and collaborations between key stakeholders consisting of students, staff and faculty. Our purpose is to promote and support mental health on campus that is community driven, intentional and coordinated to meet the needs of the UTSC community.

We also hope to establish and maintain partnerships within and outside of the campus to address mental health and addiction awareness, remove the stigma surrounding mental illness and develop mental health intelligence within the campus community.
Introductions
Overview of 3 workgroups: Awareness, Training, Advocacy/Peer Support
Overview of Year - sharing of mental health initiatives
Discussion on Building Connections to Support Mental Health (addressing loneliness and isolation)
Networking
Mental Health Understood Fair – Oct 2, 2018, over 40 displays by UTSC departments, student groups and community

Community Partners
- Mood Disorders Association of Ontario
- Good2Talk
- National Eating Disorder Information Centre
- Know the Score - Responsible Gambling Council
- Scarborough Women's Centre
- Hong Fook Mental Health Association
- Toronto PFLAG
- East Metro Youth Services
- Malvern Family Resource Centre
- Naseeha
Barrier to Accessing Support: Stigma and Mental Health, Nov 15, 2018

Panelists: AccessAbility Services, Health & Wellness Centre, Good2Talk, SCSU, Jack.org, Faculty
In the process to developing a mental health resource list in an adapted stepped model format for students to identify resources and supports that are best suited for them on campus.

- **Protecting Your Mental Health** - Healthy lifestyle tips and weblinks to support your wellbeing
- **Getting Connected on Campus (Groups)** - Explore various groups that range from therapeutic, academic and social groups to support your mental health.
- **Self – Help** - Explore online resources, phone lines to build your coping strategies and toolbox
- **One-on-one Services** - Achieve the goals and objectives that you want, through a personalized and guided service.
- **Important and Crisis** - Experiencing a crisis and need for immediate assistance you can access the following resources.
Training Workgroup

**More Feet On The Ground**
utoronto.morefeetontheground.ca
Free online training on how to recognize, respond, and refer students experiencing mental health issues on campus. You can help students who need support. Certificate upon completion.

**UTSC Mental Health Network**

All students attending Student Affairs and Services Student Training and Residence Advisors in Spring and Fall 2018

**Staff/Faculty Trained** – 17 in May 2018

**Students Trained** - October Reading Week 2018 – TBC by The Mental Unity Group

**Mental Health First Aid Canada**
Training Workgroup

safeTALK

- Staff trained to deliver safeTALK - 6
  - 2HWC, 2 SHRL, 1 DSL, 1 SAS

- Trained to Date:
  - Students – 117 +
  - Staff and Faculty – 8

ASIST

- Student Training UTSC by The Mental Unity Group offered:
  February Reading Week 2019

- Staff/Faculty Training: 17
Peer Support Mentorship Training

- collaboration with HWC, Student Life and Hope + Me for student organization leaders to create a peer supportive environment in their teams and members
- 32 students attended

Establishing Wellness Recovery Action Plan group

- Low attendance and revisiting in Spring as a 3-4 hour workshop
Mental Health Network

Members:

Sharing of mental health programming
on campus
Established same day counselling appointments for students accessing service
- Run weekly registered and drop in groups all year
- In process of establishing a formal peer support group in partnership with Hope + Me (Mood Disorders Association of Ontario) to complement counselling services
- Mental Wellness Team within the Wellness Peer Programs addressed coping strategies, sleep, and self-care at events and collaborations on campus, such as Blue Monday event, walkabouts on campus talking with students about resources and supports
Established Residence Counsellor with Walk-in Wednesdays and weekly Resilience Group

Added a Resources page on website of services relevant for residence students

Residence Life Training includes safeTALK, crisis intervention training for all Residence Advisors

Residence Advisors are on-call 24/7

Community building programming including life skills workshops

Peer led In The Right Spirit project with Toronto Public Health and Health & Wellness Centre focused on mental health, safer use of alcohol, cannabis and other substances
• Conducted midterm and final exam destressor events and decompression spaces, kits giveaways, puppy therapy, massage therapy collaboration with HWC and Athletics & Recreation
• My Mental Health Matters Campaign promoting discussion on mental health intersectionality and stigma, outreach of community mental health services, meeting with campus groups and stakeholders, local governments to address crisis in PSE
• Mandatory Leave of Absence Policy – supporting students and providing clarity, meeting with Vice Provost with recommendations and sharing student perspective
• Supporting students groups such as Racialized Student Collective and international students, to name a few
• Cognizant of including and addressing mental health at all events
• Collaborated with Health & Wellness Centre and Athletics & Recreation on bringing a speaker to facilitate a discussion with experiential activities on Creating Connection and Unpacking Belonging

• Great attendance and interaction from participants and see the need from students to connect
- Created display on mental health, criminality, and the law used at events
- Staff have ongoing training on mental health issues
- Attendance at events such as the Mental Health Understood Fair in October and speaker events with NEDIC on campus
The Mental Unity Group

- Brought mental health training for students on campus, such as ASIST and Mental Health First Aid
- Organized a decompression room for guests at UTSC TEDx in February
- Collaborated with Mental Wellness Team from HWC, Good2Talk student group and Library on Blue Monday event
- Host biweekly share circles on different mental health topics such as relationships, culture, grief, substance use
- Hosted Day of Destressing prior to exams with distressing activities and pet therapy
- Hosted Tea with TMUG social support event
AccessAbility Services

- Embedded counsellor collaboration with Health & Wellness Centre
  - Running 6 week group call Get On Anxiety, Lessen Stress for registered students
- Hosted sessions for AA students:
  - Speaking to Power with Clarity and Effectiveness
  - Midterm Mingle and Destressor
  - University Life Cycle and Decisions
  - Wellness Activity
  - Combating Exam Anxiety
  - Year End Destressor
  - Monthly Social to build connection
Hosted Toronto Regional Mental Health Summit – tricampus collaboration addressing Mental Health and Intersectionality of how individuals experience mental health and how gender, class, sexuality, race play a key factor – well attended

Hosted Jack Talks – presentation on what mental health looks like and how to be there for yourself and others

Hosted Zumba event with presentation on the importance of physical activity on mental wellbeing, relieve stress and connect with others

Mid term exam destressor kits
• Light-therapy lamps now on site and available for use – see Library desk on how to book
• Mindfulness Space established with yoga mats, videos, books, and meditation located under stairs on first floor – interested in doing collaborations with campus on using the space
• Recently collaborated with student groups by providing lamp for Blue Monday event
Long Night Against Procrastination, Feb 28, 4pm – midnight

- Very well attended, had therapy dogs, food, de-stressor activities
- Also had writing instructors, learning skills counsellors, research support
- Study space allocated for individual and group
New club that plans to address issues related to psychological health by raising awareness through events and collaborations held during the year. PHS also aims to create educational, leadership, and philanthropic opportunities for students with a direct focus on mental health.

Hosted Words to Inspire, an imitative that was created to show awareness of mental health through the distribution of roses with inspirational quotes attached to them.

Hosted Speed-dating for Friends - brainstormed in hopes of providing students with the opportunity to meet new people, develop a support system to help them manage university life, and de-stress before exam season.

Final exam snack/refreshment de-stressor.
Mental Health Initiative : Every Mind Matters

- New tri-campus group being established this year
- Students collective aiming to be the voice of student and create communication about mental health services across all three campuses, helping to make students aware of supports and working with officials in improving services. This initiative came together from a petition and we already have a diverse group of students having great discussions around student mental health
Building Connections: Addressing Loneliness and Isolation
Loneliness is a complex and usually unpleasant emotional response to isolation. Loneliness typically includes anxious feelings about a lack of connection or communication with other beings, both in the present and extending into the future. As such, loneliness can be felt even when surrounded by other people.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loneliness
Loneliness and Isolation on Campus
Date: Thursday, February 28, 2019
Time: 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM
Location: Alumni Hall, Victoria College Building - 91 Charles Street West, Toronto ON M5S 1K7

The Office of the Dean of Students at Victoria University in the University of Toronto will be hosting a conference entitled Loneliness and Isolation on Campus on Thursday, February 28th from 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM.

A detailed conference program will be announced shortly, however, we are pleased to share that Marissa Korda, Founder and Director of The Loneliness Project, and Andrea Levinson, Psychiatrist-in-Chief, Health and Wellness, University of Toronto, will co-present and discuss the effects of loneliness on physical and mental health, the importance of sharing our stories, and the power of compassion. To learn more about The Loneliness Project, please click on this link: https://thelonelinessproject.org/

The conference is slightly unconventional in that it is broad in scope and is not limited to a particular group of attendees. Students, administrators, faculty, health care workers, student affairs leaders, psychologists, residence dons, and many more will come together to discuss and learn about some of the issues surrounding loneliness and isolation within the University setting.
The Loneliness Project

https://thelonelinessproject.org/
Campaign to End Loneliness
This is an initiative that is being spear-headed in the United Kingdom

Please Note: video on link below can be triggering

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pm12mTIUJss&feature=youtu.be
Canadian Students say
in the last 12 months:

89% felt overwhelmed by all they had to do
68% have felt very lonely
64% experienced overwhelming anxiety
60% felt hopeless
44% experienced overwhelming anger
44% felt so depressed it was difficult to function
12% had seriously considered suicide

Students with positive protective factors and coping strategies may still experience these emotions but have the methods or ways to deal and/or overcome their challenges.

ACHA-NCHA 2016 Canadian Reference Group
68% have felt very lonely

ACHA-NCHA 2016 Canadian Reference Group

Is this topic of loneliness something the Mental Health Network can address next year?
Discussion Points

• What are members' thoughts on this topic of loneliness and building connections?

• If the Mental Health Network were to do a campaign on loneliness/building connections, what could it look like?

• This discussion will continue for 2019-20....