Hello

Thank you for the opportunity to connect and consult with the WRSPC for the WRDSB. We have been very busy in developing and implementing resources to support student mental health and well-being.

***Human Trafficking:***

I would like to consult with you on Human Trafficking curriculum that was developed by local service providers. I will share our implementation plan in the meeting for building staff capacity and student knowledge on this topic, and consult with you on which grades would be suitable for this type of curriculum. Curriculum includes local stats and risk factors, luring/grooming/coercion and manipulation signs to be aware of, as well as healthy vs controlling relationships.

Is there interest in a parent/caregiver presentation on human trafficking with our local social service organizations and Waterloo Region Police?

***Cannabis and Vaping***

We also have information on vaping and on cannabis for students to increase their knowledge about these substances and to help them to engage in critical thinking re: decisions. In working with our local Public Health team, they have developed resource kits for teachers to use in schools. I will review the implementation plan and would appreciate hearing your thoughts about how to further help students. We also have resources to help treat student addictions in schools.

Here are the links to the electronic resource:

Cannabis Information Kit files

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1hUx-ALPg3fgfNcDTLOqC9_Aw-VnCAL29>

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/Cannabis-Information-Kit.zip>

 Vaping Information Kit files

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yK4YaKCGrVLJc_N0Me4e4sgWWE0bXVib>

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/Vaping-Kit.zip>

We are also planning to host a parent/caregiver information session on vaping last Feb and early March, in our 4 geographical areas. Presentation will be with Public Health and Superintendent Bill Lemon, other WRDSB staff. Will also be livestreamed.

***Use Your Instincts Campaign (Cannabis and Vaping)***

The Public Health departments from Central West and South West created a “Use Your Instincts” Vaping Prevention Social Marketing Campaign, which were extensively focus tested by youth in the Central West and South West regions. We are seeking your input on the value of running a similar campaign in our secondary schools. We are also consulting with Student Senate about this.

Here is a Link to the materials:  <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/eddggjlwrcdyr7c/AAA_UQGZEbn3u10hy4Q00p03a?dl=0>

Additional Resources for Parents on Cannabis, and on Vaping: <https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org/>

***School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) Resources***

School Mental Health Assist is now referred to as School Mental Health Ontario. Lots of new resources are available for schools staff at: <https://smho-smso.ca/> There is a section for “Parents/Families”.

A new help-seeking resource is available for students, created by [ThriveSMH](https://smho-smso.ca/students/take-action/get-involved/), School Mental Health Ontario’s provincial student reference group. The short, print document is intended to be made available to students at schools and reminds students that no problem is #TooBigOrTooSmall to reach out and ask for help with.

The resource takes its lead from a recent province-wide student voice initiative, the results of which formed the [#HearNowON report](https://smho-smso.ca/blog/online-resources/hearnowon-student-voices-on-mental-health-final-report/). A key finding from that report indicated that students want help to recognize signs of mental health problems, and knowledge on how and where to seek help for oneself or a friend. Accordingly, this new student resource includes the following:

* self-care tips
* reflective questions to help young people recognize that they may need some help through struggles
* where to go for help
* conversation starters

<https://smho-smso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Pocketbook-3D.pdf>

I would like to hear from parents about the potential value of this resource, and about how you think we should distribute it. We are also consulting with the Student Senate on this.

***Other SMHO Resources***

Skills4Living Pilot in Select Secondary Schools-WRDSB is a pilot schools-for March 2020

Bell Let’s Talk Resource (grade 7/8). Copies will be distributed to teachers in the new year.

***Additional Resources that we love***

<https://bethere.org/Home> This resource provides Mental Health Education 101, along with strategies to Be There for yourself and others.

<https://www.suicideinfo.ca/resources/?searchText=youth+at+risk&siec_database_item=> (Youth at Risk). This resource helps youth with the words to use when they need support re: suicide ideation, and helps youth know how to respond to a peer in need