



# Student Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy:

*Being Well, Doing Well*

**2019-2022**



# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**TCDSB is committed to nurturing the relationship between our Catholic faith and Mental Health. Living our Catholic faith supports emotional well-being and teaches us about the compassion and dignity of all persons.**

**TCDSB maintains a strong reputation among school boards across Ontario as demonstrating exemplary practices in student mental health leadership and student success. We have made a great deal of progress and we continue to recognize the link between student mental health and student achievement. This relationship is the foundation for productive, well rounded, contributors of our community.**

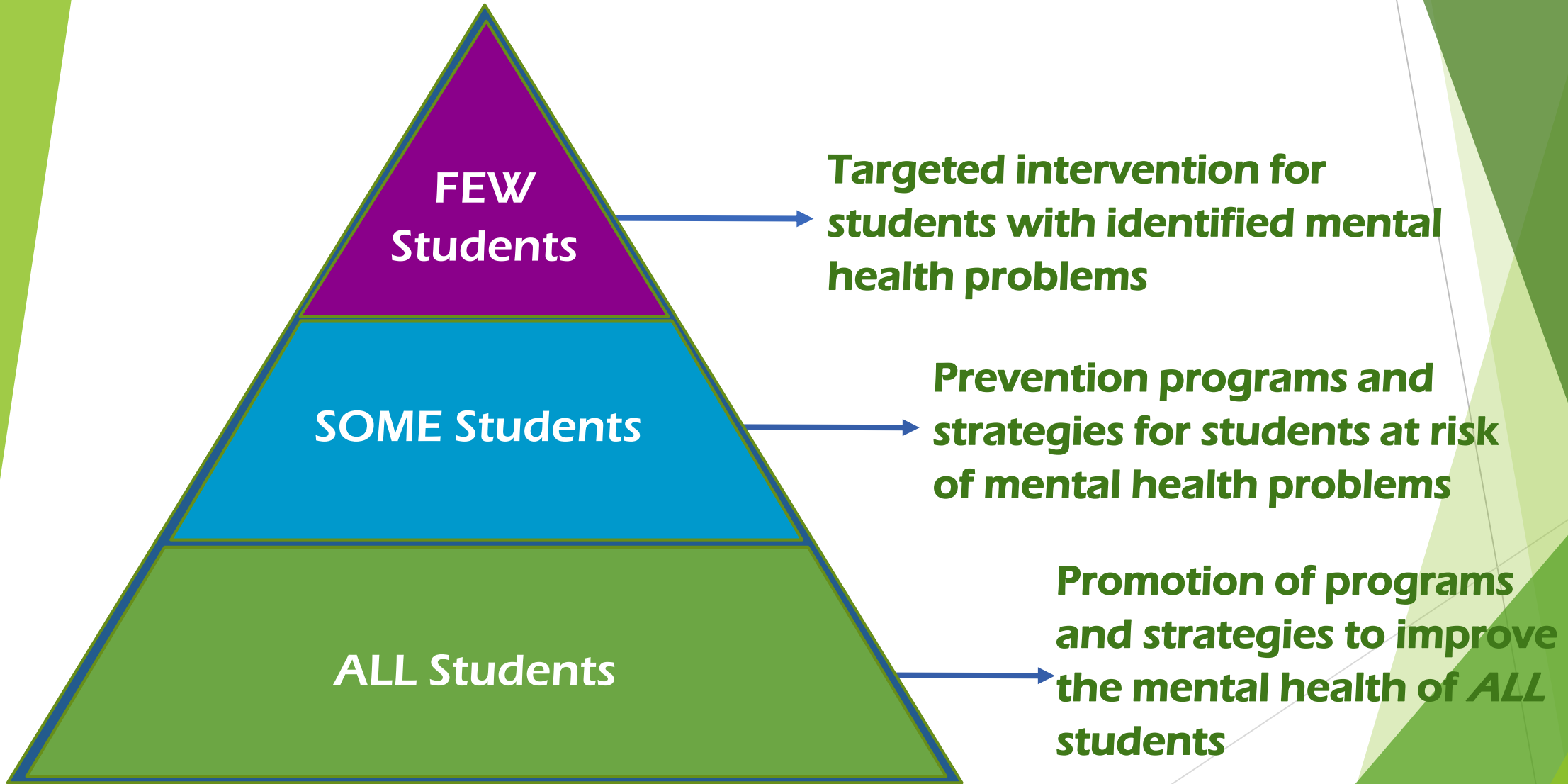
**We continue to utilize a three-tiered approach to student mental health.**

**In the first tier, through the use of universal strategies that promote the well-being of ALL students, we foster mentally healthy schools.**

**In the second tier, prevention strategies and programming are utilized to support at-risk students.**

**In the third tier, interventions are geared to support the needs of students exhibiting significant functional impairment due to their struggles with mental illness. Our work in all three tiers is enhanced by the fostering of a positive climate in our schools, families, and communities, promoting mental health and wellness for all.**

# Three-Tiered Approach to Student Mental Health Services



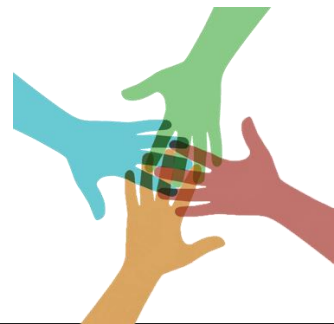


### **WITHIN US**

**As children of God, our students are flourishing with positive mental health, a strong sense of well-being and resilience.**

***"I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me."***

***Philippians 4:13***



### **BETWEEN US**

**Every interaction we have is an opportunity to encounter with God, with the hope of fostering healthy interpersonal relationships that support resilient youth and healthy schools.**

***"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."***

***John 15:12***



### **AROUND US**

**Communities that are rooted in our Catholic faith support positive mental health and well-being at school, for everyone within the family, community and parish.**

***"A friend loves at all times, and people are born to share adversity."***

***Proverbs 17:17***



## **WITHIN US**

The TCDSB will support and develop the fundamentals for everyday mental health and well-being, through the use and promotion of the following:

- ▶ **Development of knowledge of God's vision and mission for each of us, including the promotion of self-discovery and reflection, through prayer, study of the Religion and Family Life curriculum, and through the participation in the life of the Church;**
- ▶ **Development of Spiritual Wellness through the practice of various forms of prayer (e.g. Eucharist, Rosary, Christian Meditation, and other liturgical celebrations);**
- ▶ **Faith and Wellness, developed by School Mental Health Ontario and Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA);**
- ▶ **Health and Physical Education Living Skills emphasizing interpersonal skills, communication skills and personal skills;**



## **Within Us Cont...**

- ▶ **Social Emotional Learning (self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making and self-management) in the classroom;**
- ▶ **Professional development for school staff to ensure best practices are employed in supporting student mental health;**
- ▶ **Student data related to mental health and well-being (i.e., My School, My Voice; Safe and Caring Schools surveys);**
- ▶ **Direct mental health service provision through prevention and education programs, individual intervention, group counselling and family support;**
- ▶ **Continued development and review of organizational conditions to help maintain positive student mental health (i.e. Mental Health Policy and associated guidelines);**



## **BETWEEN US**

**As healthy relationships are one of the most critical protective factors that support positive mental health, the TCDSB will support and strengthen these relationships by:**

- ▶ **Spreading the message of the Gospel - Beatitudes, Social Justice, Catholic Social Teachings;**
- ▶ **Building awareness about the role that positive relationships play in the protection and promotion of positive mental health through professional development opportunities;**
- ▶ **Engaging caring and supportive staff members to promote positive relationships with students;**
- ▶ **Supporting mental health awareness, promotion, and literacy among staff, students, and parents/caregivers (e.g., professional development modules developed by School Mental Health Ontario, such as The Mentally Healthy Classroom);**



## **BETWEEN US Cont...**

- ▶ **Supporting school staff in the implementation of standardized suicide prevention and intervention practices and protocols such as SafeTalk (suicide awareness workshops for all staff) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) for mental health service providers, guidance counselors and school administrators;**
- ▶ **Promoting positive interpersonal habits in the digital age;**
- ▶ **Supporting the mental health needs of students of all social identities, with particular focus on raising awareness of the mental health considerations of those with marginalized identities;**
- ▶ **Promoting the importance of a diverse, culturally-relevant and responsive environment where inclusion of all students is woven into all school activities and within the curriculum.**





## **AROUND US**

**Environment plays an important role in our mental health and well-being. Healthy environments support each and all of their members. TCDSB is committed to creating healthy environments by:**

- ▶ Celebrating our faith, unity, and uniqueness with the larger community through Eucharist, liturgies of the word and other empowering events;**
- ▶ Sharing regular messages and tools about positive mental health to schools/parents (e.g., board Mental Health Newsletters, school level newsletters, board website, annual Special Education Parent Fair, etc.);**
- ▶ Developing School Well-Being Teams to promote mental health initiatives in school communities;**
- ▶ Expanding the Stop the Stigma campaign to an increased number of elementary schools (the campaign is already in all secondary schools) while offering ongoing support for existing Stop the Stigma initiatives;**



## **AROUND US Cont...**

- ▶ **Ensuring that school staff are aware of the TCDSB Student Mental Health and Well-Being Policy and associated guidelines;**
- ▶ **Supporting families with knowledge about mental health and well-being (e.g., parent fairs, parent symposiums, etc.);**
- ▶ **Continuing to develop collaborative partnerships with community organizations in support of student mental health and well-being.**



# **ACTIONABLE ITEMS FOR 2019-2020**

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- 1. Rollout of Student Mental Health Strategy 2019-2022.**
- 2. Highlight the connection between Mental Health and Well-Being and our Catholic Faith Values.**
- 3. School Well-Being Teams.**
- 4. Continued implementation of Mental Health Professional Workers in secondary schools.**
- 5. Implementation of *Stress Lessons* research evaluation project.**
- 6. Addition of the Supporting Minds Module “ADHD” to the roster of modules available to schools for staff presentations.**
- 7. Annual review of the TCDSB Student MH Policy and associated guidelines with all principals.**
- 8. Continued delivery of suicide awareness (SafeTALK) and suicide intervention (ASIST) professional development for targeted groups.**
- 9. Continue to work with School Mental Health Ontario to rollout additional training for our mental health service providers (e.g. BRISC training, CBT).**

10. By focusing on areas of targeted need, pursue the development of more **Mental Health Memorandums of Understanding** with mental health agencies.
11. Continue the expansion of the **Stop the Stigma** student mental health awareness program from 54 to 74 elementary schools; ongoing support provided to all existing school teams.
12. Continue to **engage students** in mental health initiatives.
13. Continue to offer professional development using School Mental Health Ontario's *Supporting Minds Modules* at various system-wide PD days and upon request by various staff groups.
14. In alignment with our board's **Equity Action Plan**, support the development and delivery of an in-service for all principals to increase capacity in regards to students who identify as **transgendered**.
15. Continue to **engage the parent community** with respect to student mental health (e.g., consultation with parent representatives on the Mental Health Advisory Council; TCDSB Mental Health Newsletter, etc.).



## **STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY 2019-2022**

### **ACTIONABLE ITEMS FOR 2019-2020**

#### **1. Rollout of Student Mental Health Strategy 2019-2022:**

- Develop a communication campaign for system-wide reach (i.e., updated video, updated information on website, newsletter highlighting the strategy, presentation of strategy to principals and other stakeholder groups).
- Video showcase of the work of a *Mental Health Professional worker*.

#### **2. Highlight the connection between **Mental Health and Well-Being** and our Catholic Faith Values:**

- Support the expansion of the Faith and Wellness program in partnership with School Mental Health Ontario and OECTA.
- Continued collaboration with our Religious Education Department.
- Inclusion of Catholic faith elements in the Mental Health Newsletter.

#### **3. School Well-Being Teams:**

- Implementation of teams by January 2020.
- Delivery of PD to representatives from all teams.
- Support teams in implementing mental health goals (incorporated into the School Learning Improvement Plan where possible).
- Support the teams in championing local initiatives based on identified needs (e.g., through student surveys).

4. Continued implementation of **Mental Health Professional Workers** in secondary schools, with a focus on:
  - Student mental health literacy (tier one) classroom programs such as *Stress Lessons*.
  - Targeted individual counseling using a brief model such as the Brief Intervention for School Clinicians (BRISC).
  - Professional development opportunities for school staff.
  
5. Implementation of **Stress Lessons research evaluation** project:
  - Provide support to 6 teachers to implement the program.
  - Work collaboratively with the board research department and Ryerson University for the purpose of measuring program effectiveness.
  
6. Addition of the **Supporting Minds Module “ADHD”** to the roster of modules available to schools for staff presentations:
  - Social Work and Psychology staff will be in-serviced fall/winter 2019, with availability to schools 2019-20.
  
7. Annual review of the TCDSB **Student MH Policy and associated guidelines** with all principals:
  - Principals will be encouraged to enlist support from Social Work/Psychology staff to facilitate reviews with all school staff.
  
8. Continued delivery of **suicide awareness** (SafeTALK) and **suicide intervention** (ASIST) professional development for targeted groups:
  - This is a retraining year for all Social Work and Psychology staff.
  
9. Continue to work with School Mental Health Ontario to rollout **additional training for our mental health service providers** (e.g. BRISC training, CBT):
  - Implementation support for clinicians receiving the training.

10. By focusing on areas of targeted need, pursue the development of more **Mental Health Memorandums of Understanding** with mental health agencies.
11. Continue the expansion of the **Stop the Stigma** student mental health awareness program from 54 to 65 elementary schools; ongoing support provided to all existing school teams:
  - o “On-boarding” of new teams in the Fall, Student Symposiums in early Winter (elementary and secondary), and training days in early Spring.
12. Continue to **engage students** in mental health initiatives (e.g. consultation with the Student Mental Health Advisory Council - SMHAC, training for Stop the Stigma teams, training for student groups on mental health awareness and pathways to care).
13. Continue to offer professional development using School Mental Health Ontario’s **Supporting Minds Modules** at various system-wide PD days and upon request by various staff groups (e.g., Autism team, Guidance Counselors, Student Success, etc.).
14. In alignment with our board’s **Equity Action Plan**, support the development and delivery of an in-service for all principals to increase capacity in regards to students who identify as **transgendered**.
15. Continue to **engage the parent community** with respect to student mental health (e.g., consultation with parent representatives on the Mental Health Advisory Council; TCDSB Mental Health Newsletter, etc.).





# Student Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy:

*Being Well, Doing Well*

2019 – 2022



## MISSION

The Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) Student Mental Health Strategy is designed to raise awareness, build capacity and provide a coordinated and evidence-based/informed approach to mental health. With our Catholic faith embedded in this approach, we engage students, families, mental health partners and all staff in supporting student mental health and well-being within the TCDSB.

## VISION

At TCDSB children and youth grow to reach their full potential. Our school board is anchored in Catholic values in which the mental health of children and youth is recognized as a key determinant of well-being and achievement. Every school in the TCDSB will be a mentally healthy school that demonstrates pervasive caring and promotes well-being and achievement for students, staff and our community.

Superintendent of Special Services  
Linda Maselli-Jackman

Chief of Mental Health Strategy and Staff Well-being  
Marie-Josée Gendron Ph.D., C.Psych

Mental Health Leader  
Melissa Hanlon MSW, RSW

## Executive Summary

TCDSB is committed to nurturing the relationship between our Catholic faith and Mental Health. Living our Catholic faith supports emotional well-being and teaches us about the compassion and dignity of all persons.

TCDSB maintains a strong reputation among school boards across Ontario as demonstrating exemplary practices in student mental health leadership and student success. We have made a great deal of progress and we continue to recognize the link between student mental health and student achievement. This relationship is the foundation for productive, well rounded, contributors of our community.

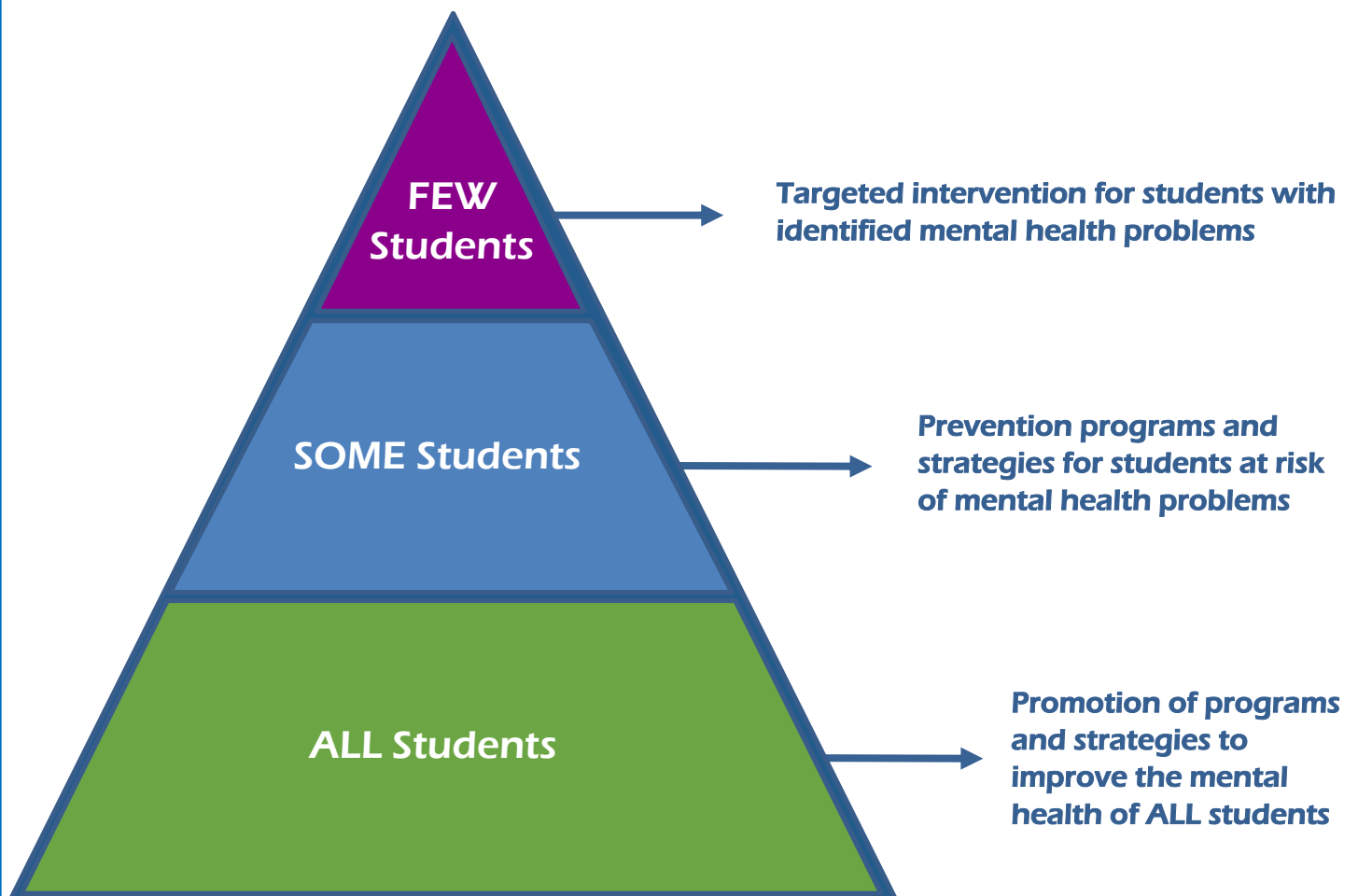
We continue to utilize a three-tiered approach to student mental health.

In the *first tier*, through the use of universal strategies that promote the well-being of ALL students, we foster mentally healthy schools.

In the *second tier*, prevention strategies and programming are utilized to support at-risk students.

In the *third tier*, interventions are geared to support the needs of students exhibiting significant functional impairment due to their struggles with mental illness. Our work in all three tiers is enhanced by the fostering of a positive climate in our schools, families, and communities, promoting mental health and wellness for all.

# Three-Tiered Approach to Student Mental Health Services



## Guiding Principles

- ❑ Our Catholic values instill a belief in the worth and dignity of every person; that people thrive in a safe, healthy and compassionate environment; and that each of us shares responsibility for creating collaborative communities of learning (TCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan).
- ❑ We are committed to the equity, and inclusive education, of all students. Our Catholic faith rejects injustice and respects the dignity of the person.
- ❑ We are committed to following the mission set out in our Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP) which directs us to focus on our Catholic Social Teaching, as well as provincial goals such as “promoting well-being” of all students and enhancing mental and physical health.
- ❑ We continue to recognize the inextricable link between student mental health and student achievement. This relationship is the foundation for productive, well rounded, contributors to our community.
- ❑ All children have a right to attend school and reach their fullest potential.
- ❑ We commit to the continued development of our system’s capacity to understand and serve each student with a view towards improved mental health and well-being.
- ❑ We will utilize the existing mental health expertise of our Special Services multi-disciplinary team and school-based staff in addressing mental health promotion and prevention to the fullest of our capacity.
- ❑ We will focus on the implementation of evidenced based, best practices programs and services for our schools and students.
- ❑ Our community stakeholders in mental health and well-being, parishes, and families are our partners in achieving mentally healthy schools across our school board.



### WITHIN US

As children of God, our students are flourishing with positive mental health, a strong sense of well-being and resilience.

*"I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

*"Philippians 4:13*



### BETWEEN US

Every interaction we have is an opportunity to encounter with God, with the hope of fostering healthy interpersonal relationships that support resilient youth and healthy schools.

*"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

*"John 15:12*



### AROUND US

Communities that are rooted in our Catholic faith support positive mental health and well-being at school, for everyone within the family, community and parish.

*"A friend loves at all times, and people are born to share adversity."*

*Proverbs 17:17*

## WITHIN US

*"I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me."  
Philippians 4:13*



We look to Jesus' example and guidance, in all areas of development—physically, mentally, spiritually and socially. Our hope for our students is that they have every opportunity to thrive in all areas of development, flourishing with positive mental health and resilience.

The TCDSB will support and develop the fundamentals for everyday mental health and well-being, through the use and promotion of the following:

- ❑ Development of knowledge of God's vision and mission for each of us, including the promotion of self-discovery and reflection, through prayer, study of the Religion and Family Life curriculum, and through the participation in the life of the Church;
- ❑ Development of Spiritual Wellness through the practice of various forms of prayer; e.g. Eucharist, Rosary, Christian Meditation, and other liturgical celebrations;
- ❑ Faith and Wellness, developed by School Mental Health Ontario and Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA);
- ❑ Health and Physical Education Living Skills emphasizing interpersonal skills, communication skills and personal skills;
- ❑ Social Emotional Learning (self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making and self-management) in the classroom;
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- ❑ Student data related to mental health and well-being (i.e., My School, My Voice; Safe and Caring Schools surveys);
- ❑ Direct mental health service provision through prevention and education programs, individual intervention, group counselling and family support;
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## BETWEEN US



*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” John 15:12*

In our Catholic school communities, we strive to treat each other not only with tolerance and respect, but with the understanding that each of us is created in the image and likeness of God, and therefore is good and absolutely worthy of unconditional love. Every interaction we have is an opportunity to encounter with God, with the hope of fostering healthy interpersonal relationships that support resilient youth and healthy schools.

As healthy relationships are one of the most critical protective factors that support positive mental health, the TCDSB will support and strengthen these relationships by:

- ❑ Spreading the message of the Gospel - Beatitudes, Social Justice, Catholic Social Teachings;
- ❑ Building awareness about the role that positive relationships play in the protection and promotion of positive mental health through professional development opportunities;
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- ❑ Promoting the importance of a culturally-relevant and responsive environment where inclusion of all students is woven into all school activities and within the curriculum.



## AROUND US



*“A friend loves at all times, and people are born to share adversity.” Proverbs 17:17*

Rooted in the Gospel, we witness to the love of Christ in our school communities through our care and support of each other. Communities that are rooted in our Catholic faith support positive mental health and well-being at school, within the family, community and parish.

Environment plays an important role in our mental health and well-being. Healthy environments support each and all of their members. TCDSB is committed to creating healthy environments by:

- ❑ Celebrating our faith, unity, and uniqueness with the larger community through Eucharist, liturgies of the word and other empowering events;
- ❑ Sharing regular messages and tools about positive mental health to schools/parents (e.g., board Mental Health Newsletters, school level newsletters, board website, annual Special Education Parent Fair, etc.);
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- ❑ Expanding the Stop the Stigma campaign to an increased number of elementary schools (the campaign is already in all secondary schools) while offering ongoing support for existing Stop the Stigma initiatives;
- ❑ Ensuring that school staff are aware of the TCDSB Student Mental Health and Well-being Policy and associated guidelines;
- ❑ Supporting families with knowledge about mental health and well-being (e.g., parent fairs, parent symposiums, etc.);
- ❑ Continuing to collaborate with community organizations in support of student mental health and well-being.