Systematic, explicit, intentional: Scaling up effective practices in school mental health
Session Outline

1. Context
2. Aspirational Vision
3. Enablers and Barriers to uptake
4. Focus on Organizational Conditions and Capacity
5. Closing Thoughts
ONTARIO, CANADA

- 72 school districts
  - 31 English Public
  - 29 English Catholic
  - 4 French Public
  - 8 French Catholic
- 5000 schools
- Approximately 2 million students
- Approximately 117,000 teachers
- Approximately 7400 principals/VPs
Range of Support for SMH in Ontario School Districts

- Some districts had full departments for psychology or social work
- Others had no in-house school mental health staff
- Others have paraprofessionals providing service

Variable participation in the wider system of care

- Some boards were actively engaged in community partnership in support of child and youth mental health
- Others very insular

SMH initiatives not integrated within wider Education priorities
Ontario’s Opportunity

Open Minds, Healthy Minds
Ontario’s Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy

Cross-Ministerial, 10 Year Commitment
Years 1-3, Focus on Children and Youth
SMH ASSIST Services

Provincial Leadership in School Mental Health
- Systematic, collaborative, intentional, explicit, nuanced, creative, evidence-based (SCIENCE!)

Implementation Coaching
- Province, Region, Board

Resource Development
- Awareness, Literacy, Expertise

A Community of Practice
- Meetings, on-line forums
Our Aspiration

• Services across the tiers of intervention, coordinated with community partners to create a system of care
Welcome

Teach (Explicitly)

Partner

Physcial

Emotional

Social

Cognitive

Knowing our Students

Supportive Learning

High Quality Instruction

Home, School and Community partnerships

Tier 1
Targeted Prevention

- Enhance Protective Factors
- Reduce Risk Factors
- Early Identification

Tier 2
Intervention for Vulnerable Students

Mental Well-being at School

Tier 3

Assessment & Triage
Brief Services
Consultation & Support
Early Identification

Environmental Supportive Learning
Knowing Our Students
Partner Ships
IT’S SO BEAUTIFUL!

- Why does it never really look that way in real life?!
Mind the Gap in SMH

World of Evidence

- What we KNOW
- Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care

World of Practice

- What we DO (usually)
- Fragmented and uneven uptake of programs that are inconsistently aligned with evidence and without attention to elements of sustainability, like conditions and capacity building
Enablers and Barriers to Uptake

What are some enablers for uptake of high-quality evidence-based mental health promotion and prevention programming in schools?

What are some barriers to uptake?
Common Challenges

World of Evidence

• What we KNOW
• Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care

World of Practice

• What we DO (usually)
• Fragmented and uneven uptake of programs that are inconsistently aligned with evidence and without attention to elements of sustainability, like conditions and capacity building

Systemic challenges
Knowledge challenges
Implementation challenges
Closing the Gap, To Scale

World of Evidence
• What we KNOW
• Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care

World of Practice
• What we DO (hopefully)
• Systematic and coordinated uptake of evidence-based approaches in school mental health, with attention to conditions and capacity-building elements that enhance sustainability over time

72 school districts, 5000 schools, 117,000 teachers, 2 million students
Optimizing “The Space Between”

**World of Evidence**
- What we KNOW
- Conditions, Capacity, and Evidence-Based Programming across the Tiers of Intervention, within a comprehensive and coordinated system of care

**Leadership and Implementation Support**
- CONDITIONS, CAPACITY, COORDINATED PROGRAMMING

**World of Practice**
- What we DO (hopefully)
- Systematic and coordinated uptake of evidence-based approaches in school mental health, with attention to conditions and capacity-building elements that enhance sustainability over time
## Organizational Conditions

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Mental Health Leadership Team</td>
<td>7. Systematic Professional Learning</td>
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<td>5. Assessment of Need &amp; Capacity</td>
<td>10. Ongoing Quality Monitoring</td>
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Creating the Top 10 List

Influences

- Implementation Science (e.g., Fixsen et al.)
- Getting to Outcomes (e.g., Wandersman et al.)
- School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (e.g., Sugai et al.)
- Expanded School Mental Health (e.g., Weist et al.)
- REACH Framework (e.g., Kratochwill et al.)
- Knowledge Translation and Exchange (e.g., Barwick et al.)

Consultation with SMH Leaders from US and Canada

Co-Creation with Council for Ontario Directors of Education, Chief Psychologists Association, Chief SW Association, Ministry Leadership Branch
## Capacity Building

<table>
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<tr>
<th>MH Awareness</th>
<th>MH Literacy</th>
<th>MH Expertise</th>
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<td>Strategies for providing basic mental health information, tailored for different school board audiences</td>
<td>Strategies for ensuring deeper working knowledge for those who work directly with students</td>
<td>Strategies for ensuring that SMH professionals possess the skills and knowledge to effectively provide evidence-based SMH promotion, prevention, and intervention</td>
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<th>ALL</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>FEW</th>
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The right information, to the right people, in the right way, at the right time
Resources for District Leadership

- Guidance documents
- Decision Support Tools
- Implementation Briefs
- Webinars
- Leadership Modules
- Reporting Templates
Resources for School Leadership

- Guidance documents
- Decision Support Tools
- Conferences and Workshops
Resources for Educator Mental Health Literacy

- Differentiated
- Co-Created
- Iterative
- Favour relational learning
- On-line reinforcement
- Embedded and practical
Implementation Coaching

Helping School Districts with Conditions and Capacity in Real Life
Implementation Coaching

GOALS

• Support the development and effective implementation of MH strategy systemically and across all schools across Ontario

• Bridging complex work in complex systems: creating the link between Vision and Action

• Modeling coaching framework that Districts can emulate on the ground

• Support all districts to implement the 3 priority areas (Organizational Conditions; Capacity building; Coordinated programming)
Implementation Coaching Approach

WHAT...

• Focused on achieving Implementation of the overall strategy provincially

• Task oriented and Relationship oriented

• Long term (overall strategy) with short term projects/goals to achieve

HOW... (guidelines)

1. Mindfulness coaching principals:
2. The Coaching Feedback Model
3. Servant Leadership Coaching
Closing Thoughts

• Introduce programming on fertile ground!
• Keep the big picture, and the aspirational vision in mind
• Create conditions so high quality programming will ‘stick’
• Consider the needs and preferences of your knowledge audiences so you can build capacity effectively

*Foundational readiness work is largely intuitive, and you are probably doing a lot of this already. We are being explicit, systematic, and intentional about implementation to promote effective scale up and sustainability of high quality evidence-based programming.*

*It is like implementation readiness fidelity!*
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