Mental Health Literacy by Design: a Website With and For Teachers to Support Mental Health at Work and School

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Why this, why now?

- In Canada, 500,000 workers (~40,000 teachers) are absent from work each day because of mental health problems at a cost of $30 B/year
- Regulated professions, like teachers, have more responsibility, and place more demands on people (Cadieux & Marchand, 2014)
- 40-50% of teachers leave profession in the first 5 years
- 93% of Canadian teachers are stressed by lack of work-life balance (CTF 2014)
- The leading single condition for LTD for ON teachers is mental illness (40%)
- Healthy teachers miss less work and are more 'present'
- Direct links have been established between between emotional exhaustion and student outcomes (Arens & Morin, 2016)
- To date, most School Mental Health initiatives are about *students*

Children and Youth Mental Health

- Individuals from 12 to 25 years of age have the highest prevalence of mental illness (McGorry, Bates & Birchwood, 2013).
- 1 in 5 young individuals experience a state of distress at a level that could potentially lead to a diagnosable mental health illness or disorder (Offord, Boyle, et. al., 1987).
- Many do not obtain diagnosis and thus fly “under the radar” (Flett & Hewitt, 2014)
- Most children go to school. Teachers’ work puts them on ‘the front lines of mental health’

TIMELINES AND ACTIVITIES

2013

- SETTING THE STAGE: SURVEY OF TEACHER EDUCATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN CANADA
- ONLINE PRESERVICE COURSE IN MENTAL HEALTH

2014

- NATIONAL TEACHER RESOURCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROPOSAL FUNDED
  - To develop, enhance and support mental health literacy for teachers
- NATIONAL SURVEY ON TEACHER MENTAL HEALTH IN CANADA

2015

- WORK BEGINS ON THE TEACHER RESOURCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH
  - TEAM DEVELOPMENT, DESIGN STUDIO, RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
  - TOOLS: GRADE ANALYSES, PODCASTS, VBLOGS, TEACHER-TO-TEACHER RESOURCES

2016

- DESIGN AND CONTENT PRODUCTION FOR WEBSITE
- DEVELOPING NETWORK FOR PILOT TESTING
- PILOT TESTING WEBSITE FALL 2016

Mental Health...For Students AND Teachers

- **Awareness:** *Attuned and accepting of your own needs and others – body, mind, emotion and spirit.*

  "I'd like to see mental health become more like dental health...most people brush every day and see a dentist once or twice a year – why can't we take a few minutes for ourselves every day and get a mental health check at least once a year?" (Peter, Secondary Teacher)

- **Balance:** *Finding ways to engage in all the important areas of your life*

  "I work full time, teach part time at the university, have a partner and two teenage children. Everybody asks how I make time for long distance running, triathalons, hockey and soccer teams? Everyone in my family knows that I need that time to recharge...or I'm no good to anybody. Especially in teaching when you're not only caregivers to your own children, but also caregivers to other people's children." (Robyn, Elementary Teacher)

- **Connection:** *To oneself, to others, and to your mission*

  "You have to find the people you can tell your story to." (Patti, Elementary Teacher)

What we are doing

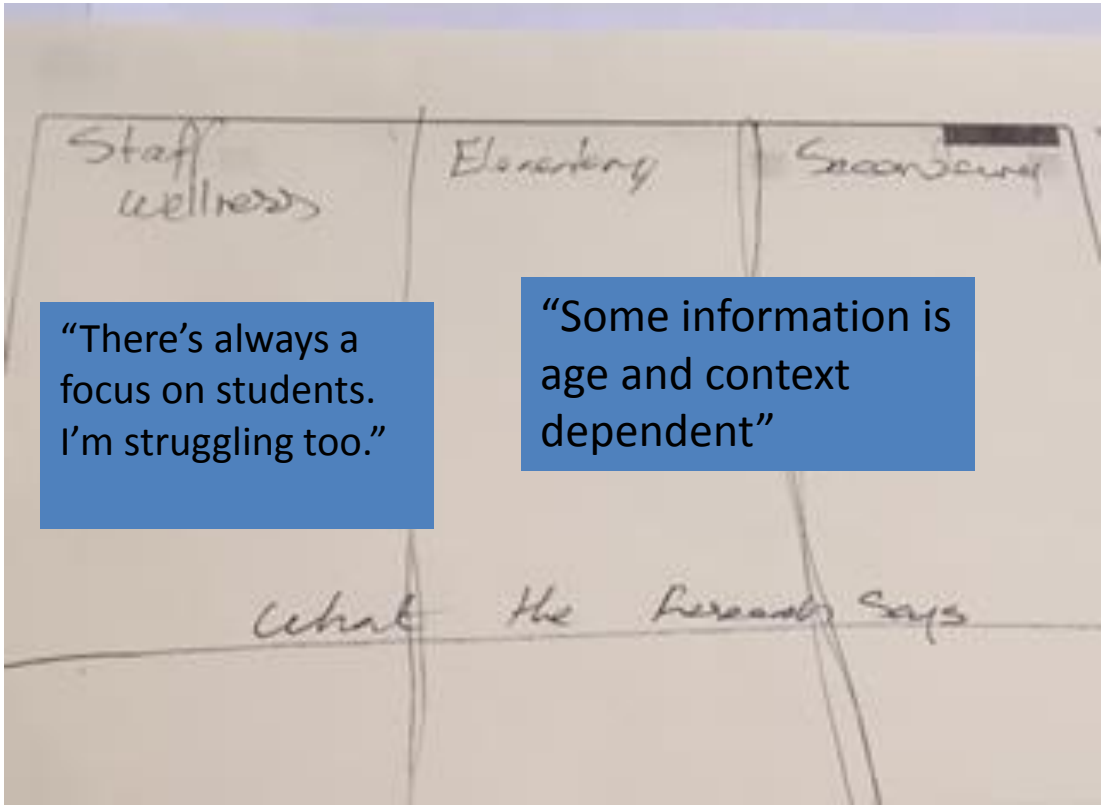
- Design Studio:
  - a ‘workplace for designers engaged in conceiving, designing, and developing new projects’
  - Co-development and co-production with those who live it
- A Working Group of 28 teachers, school administrators, mental health leads, community mental health providers, and researchers
- Partnering with porticonetwork.ca

The Content Educators Want

A voice and a community

Talking points (tough conversations, how to say you notice, how to talk to kids, teens, parents, para-professionals)

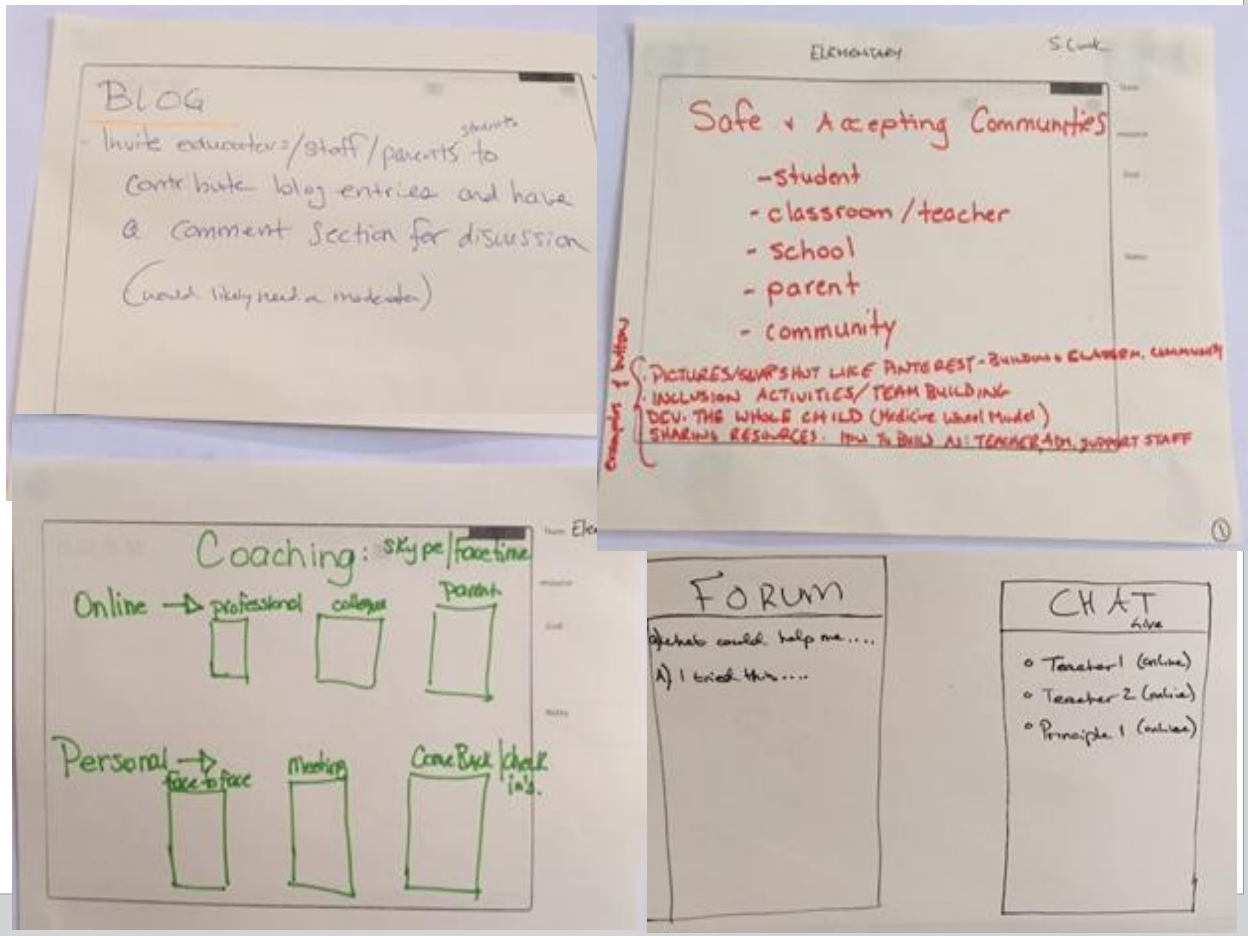
Quick help and more info options (balance between user contribution and validated resources)



Evidence on school-based interventions

A Virtual Staff Room (Gord, Elementary Teacher)

- "If I don't tweet #math I don't have a voice." (Robyn, FNMI consultant)
- "We want a safe discussion forum. There's a Facebook group but confidentiality could be an issue." (Advisory Group)
- "Can there be online coaching?" (Paul, Principal)
- "I want to share pictures and search for ideas for safe and accepting classrooms." (Becky, Behaviour Consultant)
- "We want to share and hear other success stories." (Advisory Group)

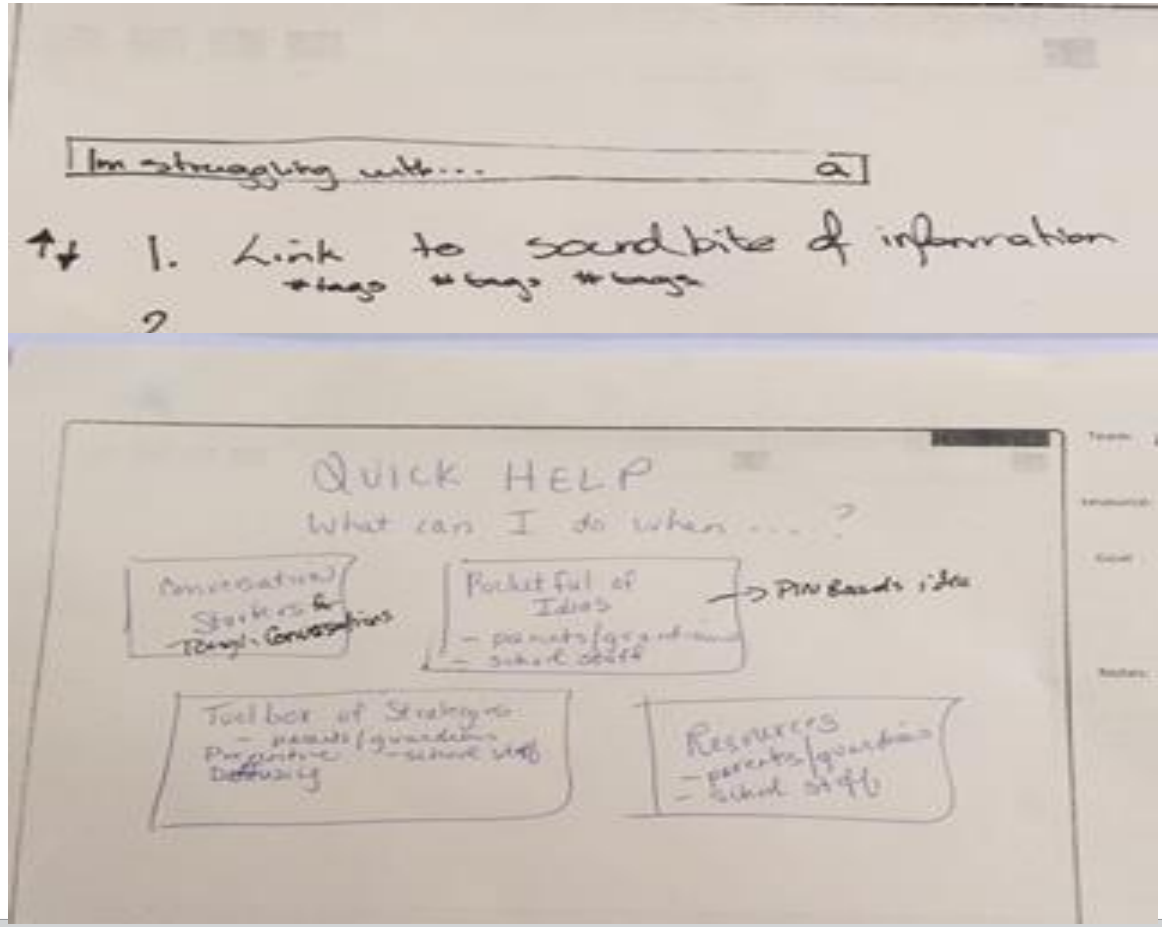


I Need Help With....

"I maybe have time for a top 10 tip list."

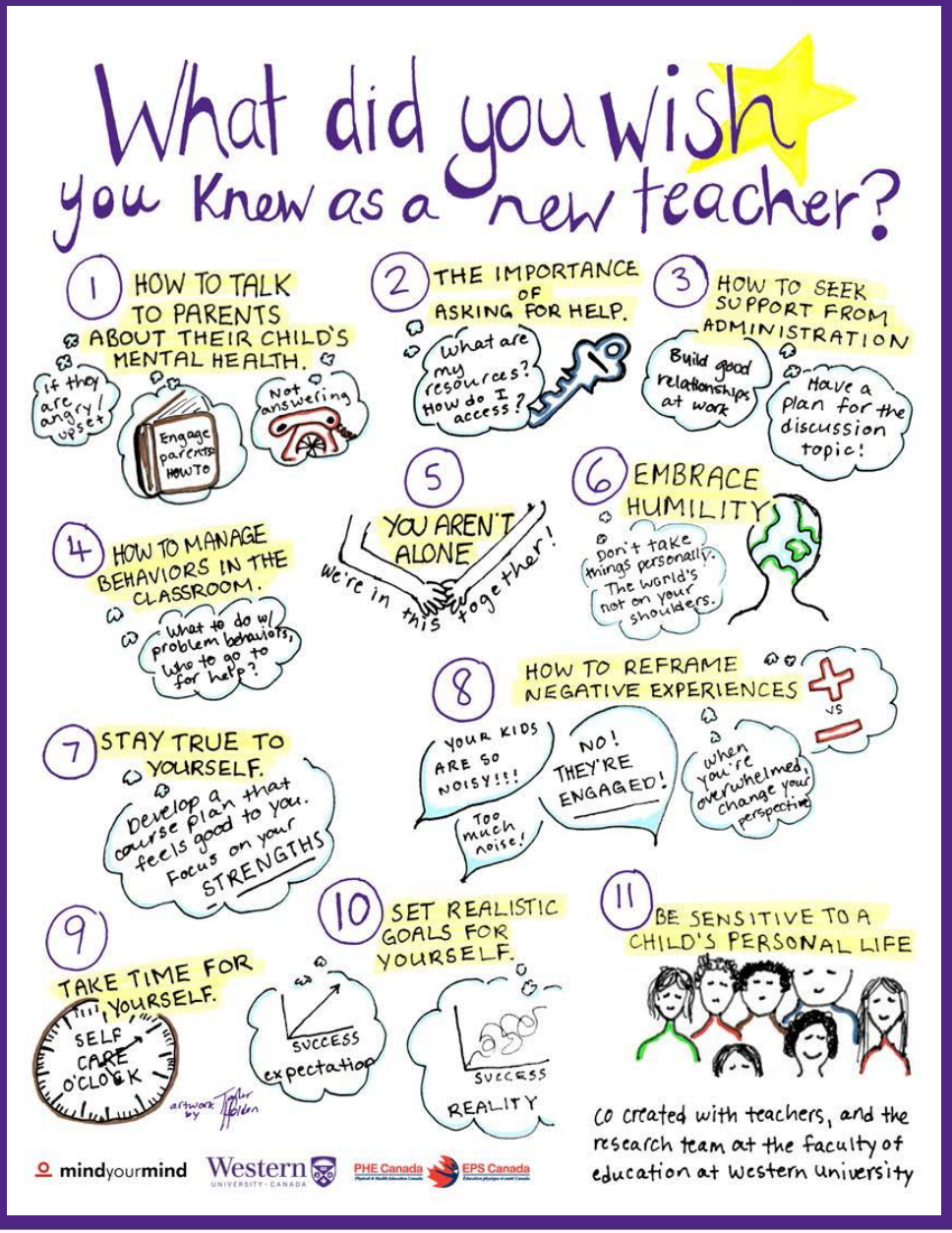
"Make it searchable by topics."

"Balance quick helps with more in-depth information."



TIP SHEET

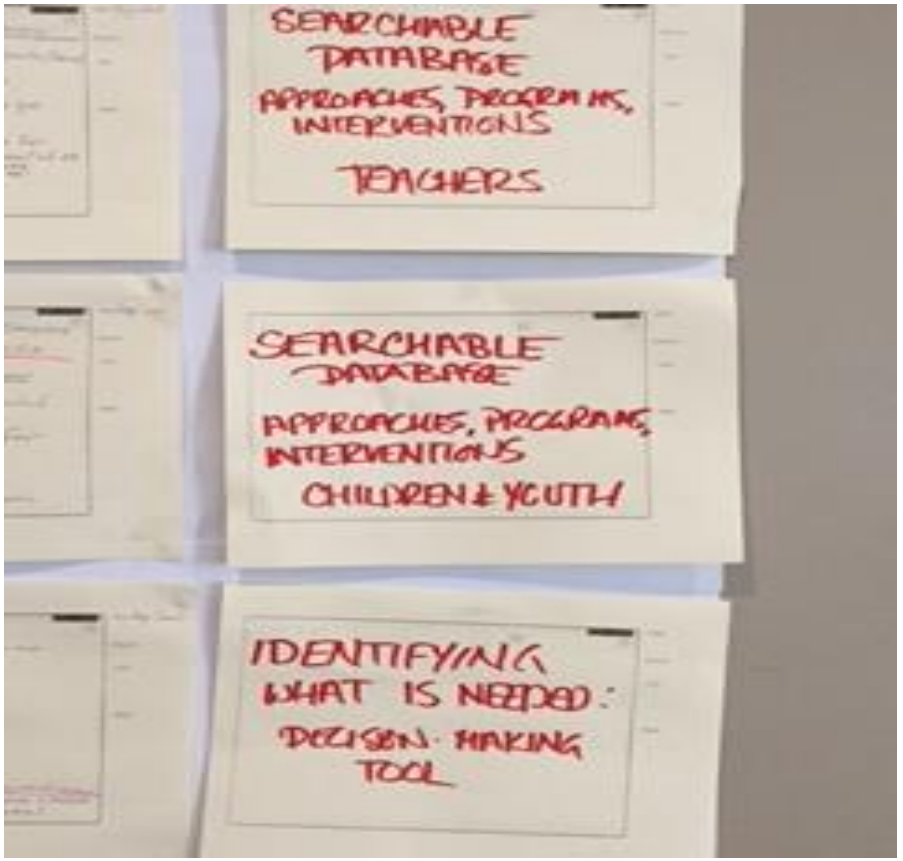
- Created by the Working Group



School-friendly Evidence

"I need links to connect parents to community resources" (Lisa, Principal)

"I look to sources like Edugains for summaries of research evidence" (Sandi, Principal)



Finding the programs with the best evidence for schools

- GRADE: Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation (Tsertsvadze & Moher, 2009)
- GRADE examines the strength of the evidence in addition to producing an assessment of the quality of the evidence and strength of the recommendation.
- Searched for the best studies, then looked at these in terms of the resources needed to adopt them (time, money, 'experts', etc.)
- Linked these to a searchable database (Decision Support Tool)
- Helping schools evaluate programs not included in the database (Program Assessment Tool)

Making the GRADE Being Evidence Informed …

An assessment of the quality of a body of evidence for 6 factors:

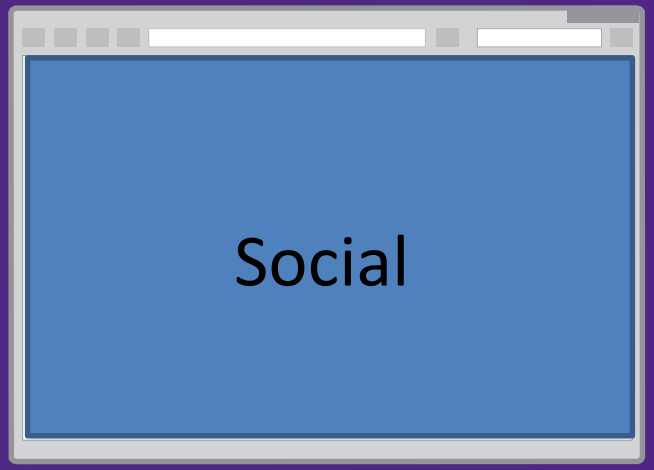
1. Within-study risk of bias (methodological quality)
2. Directness of evidence
3. Heterogeneity (any kind of variability among studies)
4. Precision of effect estimates
5. Risk of publication bias
6. Transferability

- Child and youth mental health prevention, promotion, and early intervention (99 studies)
- Teacher/workplace mental health prevention, promotion, and early intervention (54 studies)

GRADE analyses

- Trauma
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Troubled eating
- Stress Reduction
- Mindfulness
- Emotional intelligence
- General psychological resilience & mental wellness

The Top Three?



Tools

- Tip sheets
- Podcasts
- Videos
- Book corner
- Resources
- Practical, transferable research based practice
- Decision support tool
- Program assessment tool
- community

Teach Resiliency

It's about connecting:

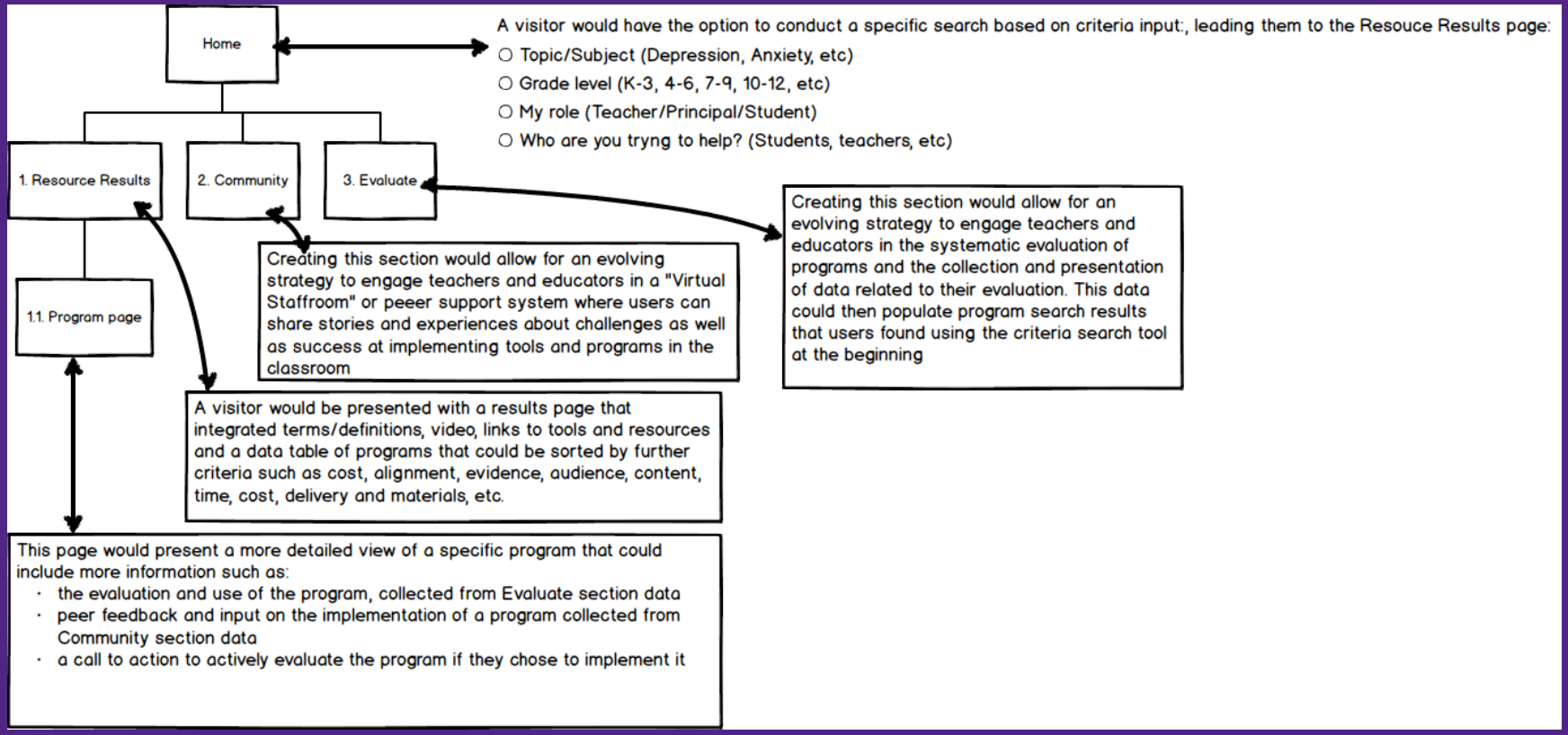
- To practical, evidence-informed resources and tools that support mental health and wellness
- To new research
- To your peers—teachers, administrators, mental health professionals and researchers

Building *Teach Resiliency*

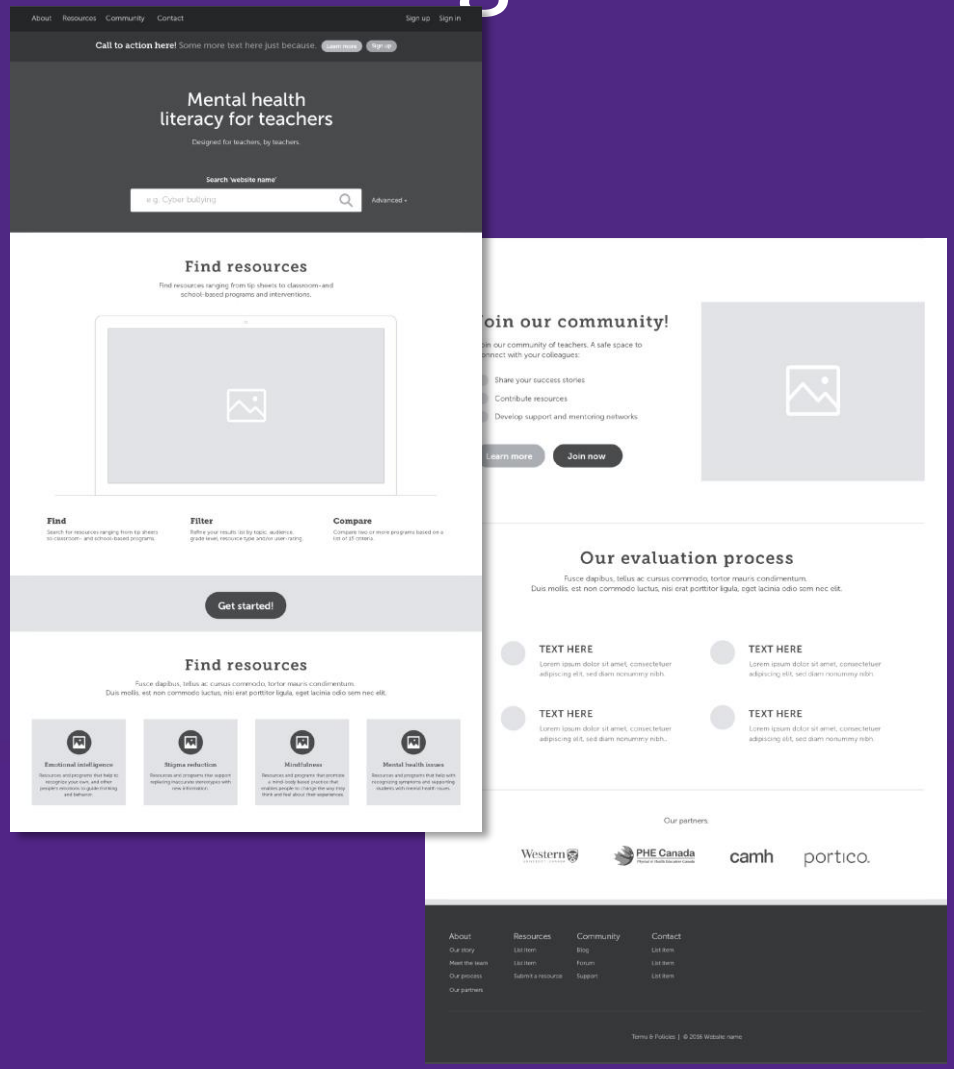
The Portico team began by:

- Reviewing project documents that outlined the research behind the project and Working Group's process for developing and curating resources
- Analyzing user stories that illustrated how teachers would use the site
- Meeting with members of the Working Group

It might look something like this…



Design: Phase 1



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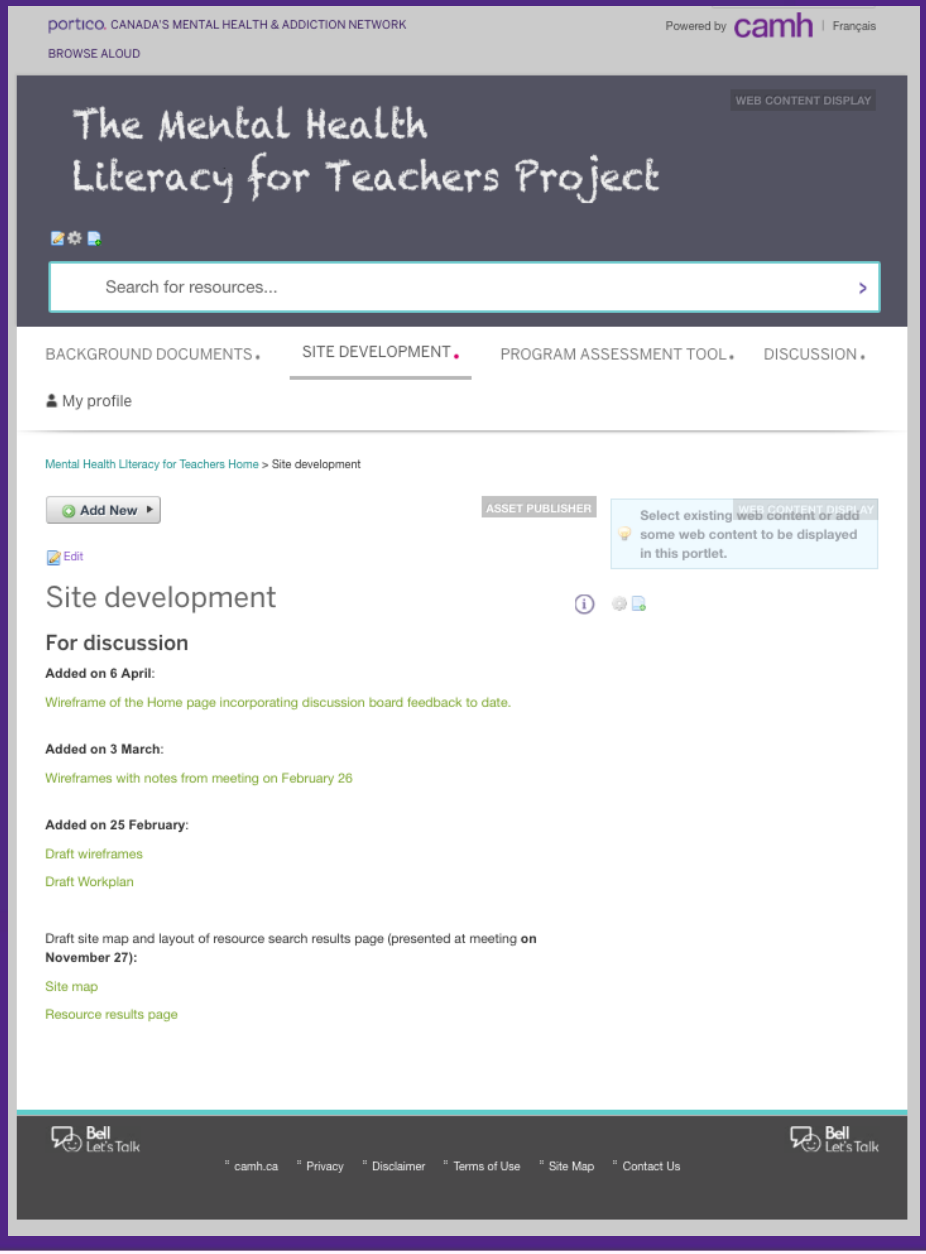
A project worksite was used to collaborate on site development

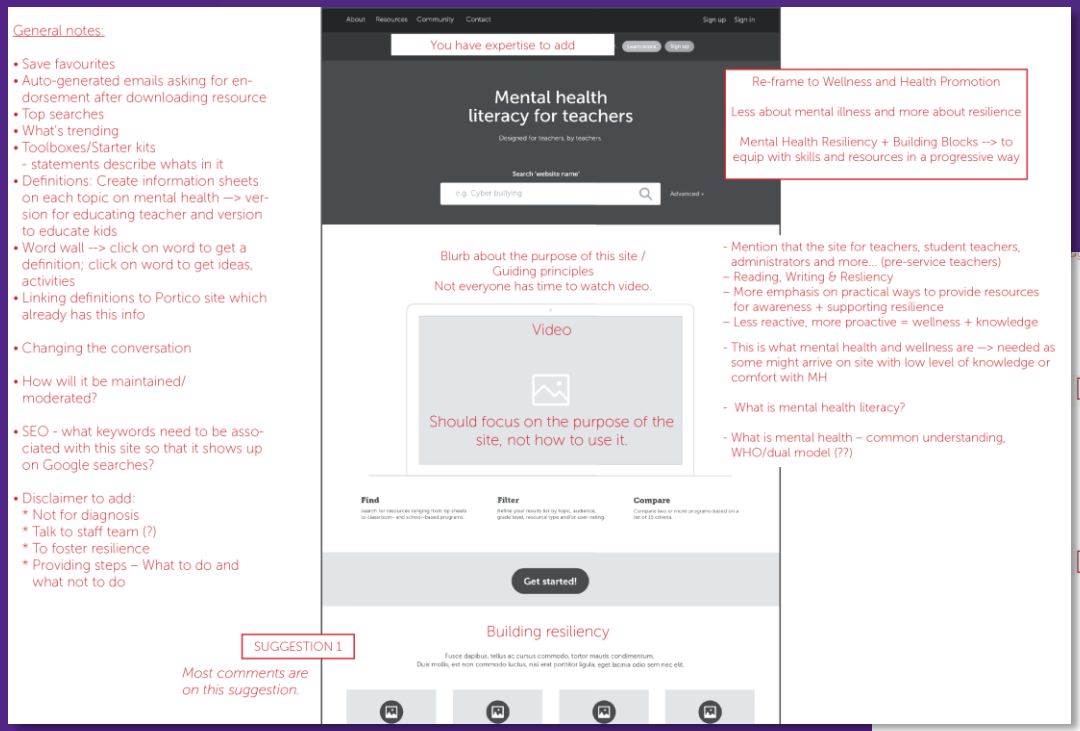
"We have space at the top of the home page (1a home in the wireframes) to add a blurb that introduces the page. On the annotated wireframes we've included suggestions from the meeting about what to include in the blurb. Can you suggest a draft?"

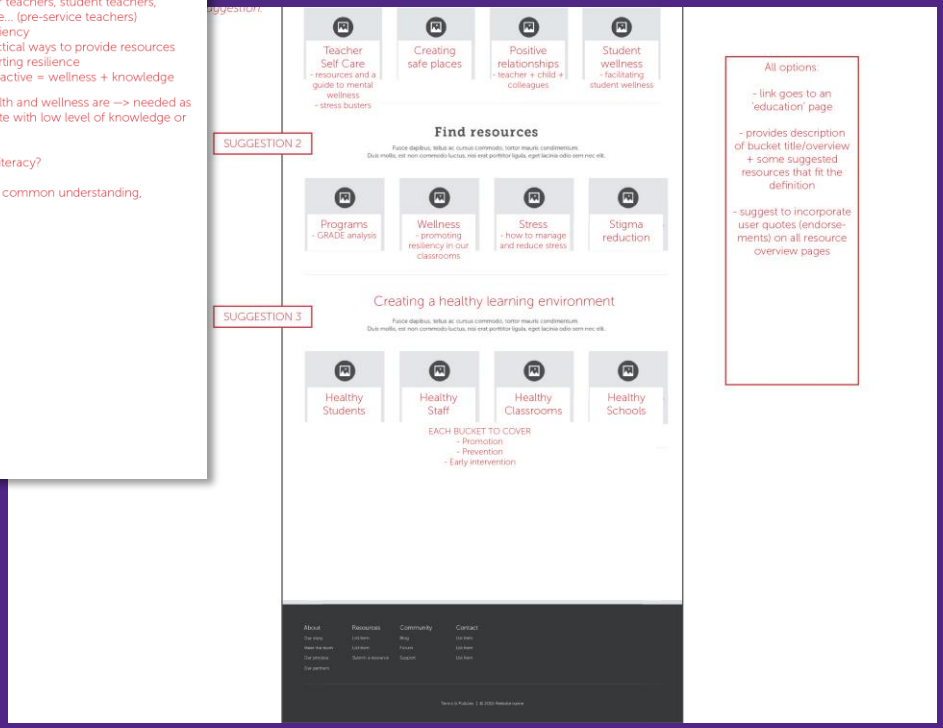
"I like the sound of these buckets, it includes all the main factors we discussed when reviewing the prototype.

I think its a good idea to make the names of the buckets intuitive. As a user who arrives on this website, I should have a good hint as to what is in the bucket (and whether or not it's something I'm looking for) at a glance, or within about 2-3 seconds"



Design: Phase 2





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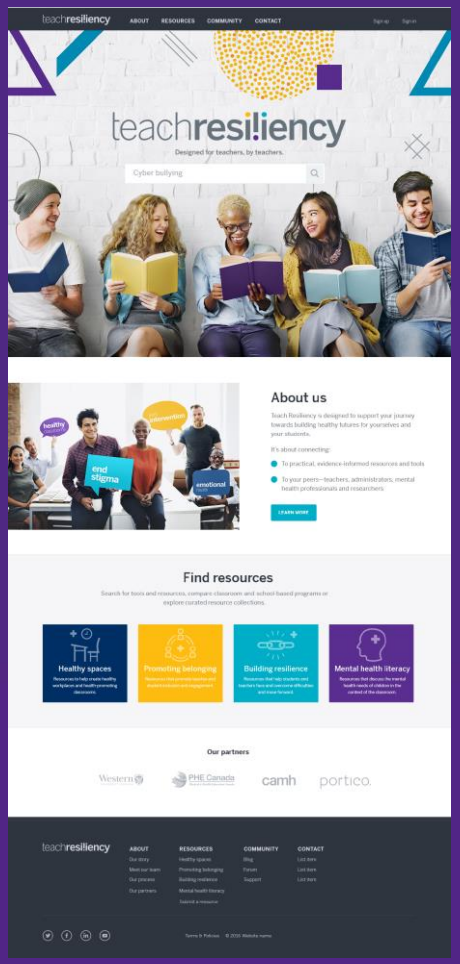
From wireframe to production



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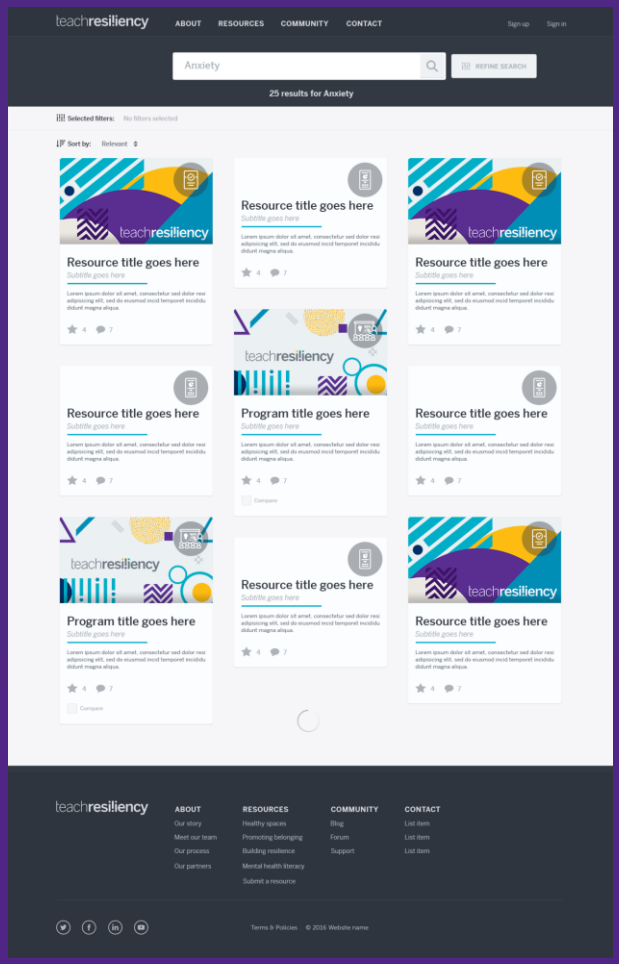
Search results



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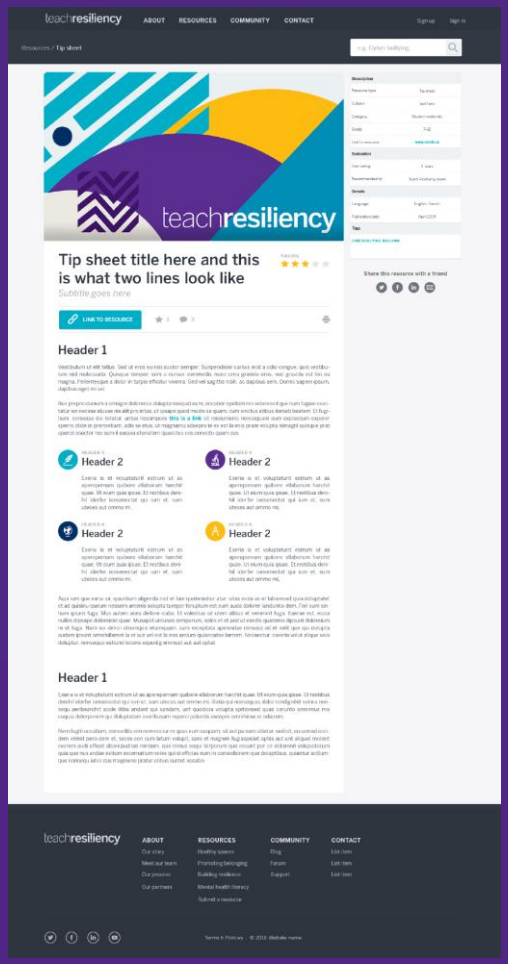
Resource detail



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Pilot testing

- Pilot testing begins in October
- Phase 1 (October 17-28): testing of site navigation, search and compare functions

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