

Centre of Excellence for Mental Health Consultation Procedures

The Centre of Excellence for Mental Health (CEMH) is a MELS initiative designed to build capacity and assist educators within English Schools Boards across the province in the implementation of best practices in: (1) mental health literacy, (2) health promotion and prevention, (3) the reduction of stigma, and (4) increasing knowledge in the link between mental health and learning.

Purpose of the Consultation:

The CEMH consultation is a service provided to school staff (i.e., teachers, administrators, behaviour technicians, guidance counselors, psychologists, integration aides) working in the youth sector where there is a school-based/systemic mental health concern or there are student(s) experiencing significant or multi-problematic mental health issues. The purpose of the consultation is to provide the school team with direction on how to proceed related to mental health issues, increase the teams' understanding of mental health as it pertains to the school's or student's situation and provide an opportunity for the school team to express their experiences. This is not a psychiatric consultation, but rather a forum for individuals from the CEMH team to provide a new perspective on the situation. A consultation could follow one of two paths; (1) school team has a school-wide/systemic mental health concern or (2) school team would like to problem-solve mental health concerns related to student(s).

Criteria Appropriate for Consultation:

- ✓ Prior school and/or community-based interventions have been attempted, assessments when needed and have done, and discussions about the school-based mental health issue or student(s) have occurred at resource (i.e., prior steps have been taken by the resource team). Despite this, minimal change surrounding the mental health issue has occurred and school staff remains concerned.
- ✓ The mental health concern could either be ***systemic in nature*** or ***student focused*** and must be having a significant impact on school functioning (i.e., student themselves, staff, classroom climate)
- ✓ Situations posing a complex clinical or organizational mental health concern involving students and their families

Expectations/Objectives:

- ✓ Developing a common understanding of a situation as well as the student's and family's mental health needs;
- ✓ Enhance the school team's understanding of the context in which the mental health concern has arisen;
- ✓ Fostering the involvement of school or community-based mental health services;
- ✓ Suggesting new interventions and services as required;
- ✓ Opening the door to other services, where appropriate;
- ✓ Assisting in the continuous access to mental health services if needed;
- ✓ Agreeing on necessary interventions and collaborating with the student and family as needed;

In presenting a systemic/school-based or student(s) mental health concern, please be prepared to speak on the following at the consultation:

- ✓ What are your expectations of the consultation?
- ✓ What would you like to get out of the consultation that you don't already know?
- ✓ Nature of the problem/current mental health concerns of systemic issue or student(s)
- ✓ If presenting on student(s), brief overview of student/family background
- ✓ History of systemic issue or student's school and medical history
- ✓ Steps that have been done at the school and community level related to addressing the systemic issue or to support student/family
- ✓ Previous assessment results if applicable (please bring reports to the consultation)
- ✓ Is a follow-up meeting necessary? Is further professional development for staff in an area of mental health needed?

Attendance/Timeframe:

The consultation will take place at the school for 2-2.5 hrs. The first hour or so will be an opportunity for the school team to explain the mental health concern and their experiences. The second half will be a solution-focused discussion on enhancing the team's understanding of the issues and how best to proceed. It is strongly suggested that individuals on the resource team and classroom teachers that might be directly involved with the mental health concern attend the consultation. This will allow for a more fruitful discussion.

Confidentiality and Follow-up:

- ✓ ***The consultation is completely confidential.*** If discussing student(s) mental health concern:
 - Students' names should not be mentioned.
 - No documentation related to the consultation should be placed in the students' file
 - Informing the parents of the consultation prior to and connecting with them regarding the outcomes of the consultation will be important
- ✓ A follow-up session or specific professional development activity may be suggested
- ✓ At the end of consultation, recommendations will be made and along with themes discussed will be typed and emailed to all individuals

Contact Info:

For more information about the consultation procedures, process or to inquire about having a consultation at your school, please contact one of the coordinators of CEMH:

Dr. Elana Bloom, Psychologist, ebloom02@lbspsb.qc.ca, 514-422-3000 ext. 32470

Dr. Gerry Weintraub, Psychologist, gweintraub@lbspsb.qc.ca, 514-422-3000 ext. 32468