



Centre of Excellence for
MENTAL HEALTH

To: *Our colleagues throughout Quebec* From: *The Lester B. Pearson School Board, SSD*

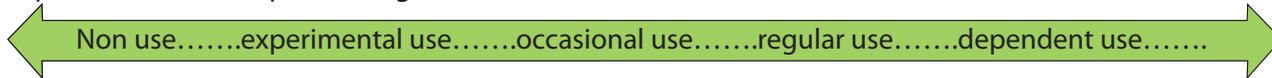


Promoting optimal mental health includes preventing substance abuse

At the Centre of Excellence for Mental Health, when we think of mental health promotion we also think of keeping kids safe from the harmful effects of drug or alcohol abuse. This issue of the CEMH postcard is dedicated to substance abuse prevention.

Drug use continuum

A person's relationship with drugs or alcohol can be viewed on a continuum:



Click on the following link to see how the continuum of use can be used to support and inform students:
http://www.camh.net/education/Resources_teachers_schools/Drug_Curriculum/Secondary/curriculum_gr10expect1ts1.html

Prevention 101

Goals of drug and alcohol prevention can include helping young people:

- Avoid drug and alcohol use
- Delay the onset of alcohol and drug use
- Reduce the harmful effects of drug and alcohol



Making prevention work

For more information on effective prevention, click on the following links:

http://www.camh.net/education/Resources_teachers_schools/Youth%20Scoop/youth_scoop_programs_work.pdf
<http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/infacts/lessons-prevention-research>

For easy-to-implement classroom activities, click on the following link:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/parents-teachers>



Free workshop for secondary 1 students

The MY INDEPENDENCE MATTERS TO ME workshop is available in English across the province!
Contact La Maison Jean Lapointe at 514-288-2611 (Montreal) or 1-800-567-9543 (the rest of Quebec)

Words Matter

Stigma remains the biggest barrier to addiction treatment. The words we use can contribute to increasing or decreasing stigma. Instead of using words like addict or alcoholic, refer to the person as experiencing problematic alcohol use or problem substance use.

"If you want to care for something, you call it a flower. If you want to kill it, you call it a weed"
(ref. DON COYHIS)

The process of change

Change isn't easy! Ask anyone who has ever tried to quit smoking, or who has vowed to maintain a physically active lifestyle or lose those last five pounds! Learn more about Prochaska & Diclementes stages of change and corresponding strategies for each stage.
http://www.camh.net/about_addiction_mental_health/drug_and_addiction_information/addiction_information_guide/addiction_change.html#stages

Believe in me...it can make a difference!

Did you know that in the treatment of addictions, a high degree of self-efficacy directly correlates with a higher rate of treatment success? The more a person believes that they can change, the better chance they have of changing! As educators, our own expectations about a young person's likelihood of changing can have a powerful effect on outcome, acting as a self-fulfilling prophecy. We can be motivators of change.

The Readiness Ruler...a practical tool

Use the readiness ruler to assess your degree of readiness for change:
<http://www.peelregion.ca/health/workplace/employees/pdfs/Readiness-Ruler.pdf>



The importance of early intervention

Pavillon Foster Addiction Rehabilitation Center (<http://www.pavillonfoster.org/>) provides services to youth, aged 12 to 17 who are experiencing substance use problems. We asked Alyssa Mew, Lead Program Advisor at Pavillon Foster about the importance of early intervention. Here are some of the facts that she has provided:

- The adolescent brain is still developing and is consequently more vulnerable to addiction; adolescents are more sensitive to the effects of substances of abuse (Squeglia, Jacobus & Tapert, 2009; Dayan et al., 2010)
- The earlier the age of onset, the longer the substance use career (years from first use to 1+ years of abstinence) (Dennis et al., 2005).
- Intervening early to mitigate risk factors (e.g., aggressive behavior and poor self-control) often has a greater impact than later intervention as it changes an adolescent's life path (trajectory) away from problems and moves them toward positive behaviors (Ialongo et al. 2001; Hawkins et al. 2008).

If you have found this postcard to be helpful and informative, please share it with colleagues.
Dissemination of information about mental health is the first step toward promoting better mental health!
This postcard was created by Viviane Briand, Consultant in Addictions Prevention, CEMH

For more information: Elana Bloom, Ph.D., OPQ
Psychologist-Coordinator, Centre of Excellence for Mental Health,
514-422-3000 ext. 4125, ebloom02@lbpsb.qc.ca