
Community Partnerships

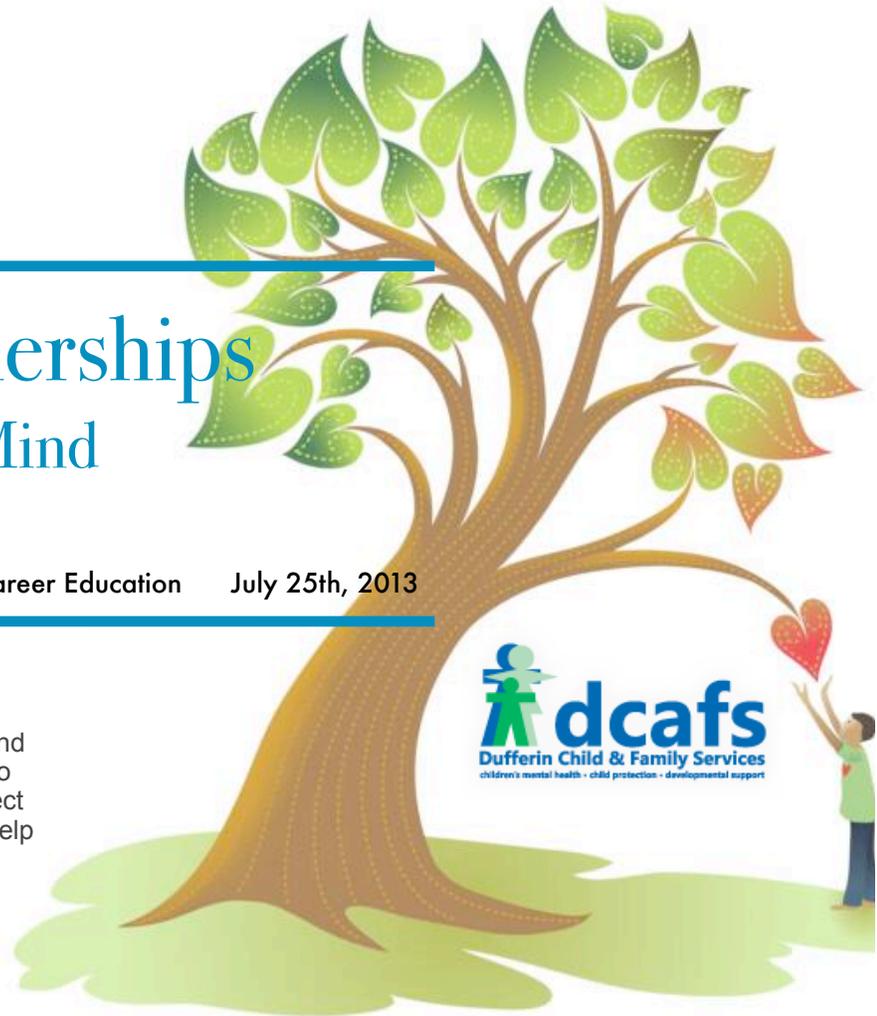
The Child's Welfare In Mind

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“Due to the stigma associated with the illness, many people have found that they lose their self-esteem and have difficulty making friends. The stigma attached to mental illness is so pervasive that people who suspect that they might be mentally ill are unwilling to seek help for fear of what others may think.”

Canadian Mental Health Association



 **dcafs**
Dufferin Child & Family Services
children's mental health • child protection • developmental support

If you are interested to learn more about the program offerings at DCAF and their work at our school, please contact your guidance counselor.

Rooted in the Welfare of Children



We at XYZ Middle School take pride in the community partnerships we've made that allow us to provide support to our students that go beyond what is traditionally offered in school. In Dufferin County, the programs provided by the child support team at the Dufferin Children and Family Services encompass a wide range of disabilities including

“One in 5 of children and youth under the age of 19 in Ontario has a mental health problem. This means that at any given time, almost 20% of students in an 'average' classroom will be dealing with some type of mental health problem - making it difficult for them to learn, or behave appropriately.”

Children's Mental Health Ontario

mental health. This was in direct response to a mounting crisis of youth who were diagnosed with a form of mental illness, the increase in the number of clients who were seeking support and the stigma still running rampant in Canada through negative imagery and misinformation.

The team at DCAF works together to form an effective,

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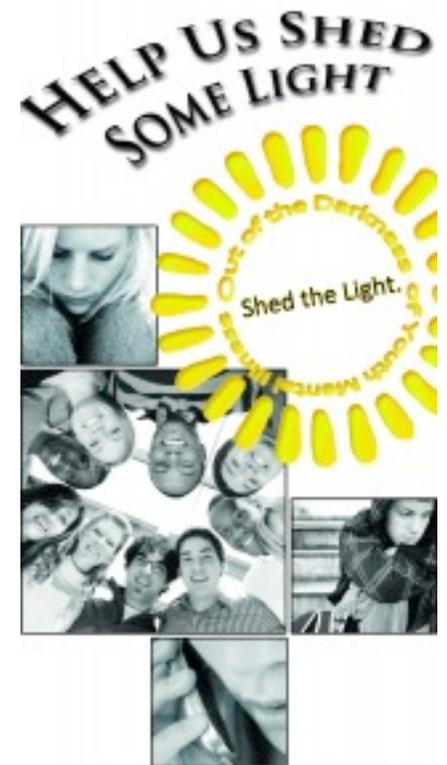
supportive and respectful treatment coalition with clients and their families. They also coordinate their services with others within the area. What is important to know are the current statistics of mental health issues: 1 in 5 children in Ontario struggle with their mental health and suicide is the most common cause of death in teens. All the care workers at DCAF hold firm to the belief that there is no shame in having a mental health issue and the dignity of clients must always remain foremost in any treatment program. Dufferin Child and Family Services employs IT staff, Finance Administration, Administrative Support Staff, as well as Direct Service Employees which include Child Protection Workers, Child and Family Therapists, and Developmental Support Services Workers.

Called Into Action

Stigma is a barrier that thwarts the efforts of those who seek help. Many people living with a mental illness say that the stigma they face is “...often worse than the illness itself”. Mental illness can take many forms which include anxiety, depression and even schizophrenia. Qualified representatives from DCAFS have long been working in schools to not only educate children (and teachers) about mental illness, but to develop empathy for those afflicted by it. A team of DCAF care workers is ready and equipped to work alongside our guidance team to offer support to students who experience mental health related issues.

Creativity, Diversity and Flexible Services outside of the school.

In our region, suicide, which is often the tragic result of a teen feeling worthless or without hope, is, sadly, commonplace. The dynamic teams at DCAFS have worked tirelessly to inform the public through community workshops, coffee houses, informative web site resources, guest speakers (including celebrities such as Clara Hughes) and liaise with medical staff at the local hospital in Orangeville,



Ontario. Teams are also available to present their support programs and coordinate their efforts with guidance counselors from our local schools.

The new facility built strategically at the highest point in the city serves as a “...bright beacon of

hope” and, although the teams are only a phone call away, provide drop-in services including after hours, in-home appointments if approaching a counselor at school seems uncomfortable. Individuals that choose to contact DCAFS will see that there is quick support for those in crisis and can be guaranteed immediate problem solving and information about mental health. You will be impressed by the skilled, caring, knowledgeable staff and that a trained, qualified counsellor was



always on hand to field a question or to provide assistance. The questions asked of prospective clients, while seemingly general, serve to spark a therapeutic discussion between counsellor and client. Also, while several of the clients are individuals who contact DCAFS with mental health issues, the team wish to build ties between clients, their own team and the families of clients (identified as “stakeholders”). DCAFS welcomes and accepts the diversity of their clients, irrespective of culture or race. Service in a language other than English is readily available.

Among the service offerings is a theatre arts program geared towards youth with special needs. Although not specifically an offshoot of the mental health programs designed by DCAFS, the

drama, music and improv for children program is held at the same location and receives generous sponsorship.

Shedding the Light on Mental Health

DCAFS built an exciting program to inform youth and members from the community that mental health challenges are a serious matter. They pooled together several young people, who have struggled, to talk about their challenges to peers and to increase awareness - and to reduce the stigma about youth mental health issues and how they overcame many of the hurdles. A large part of the recovery process is the willingness to seek help and to take advantage of the services organizations like DCAFS offers. “Your Not Going to Fix Yourself” is printed on banners and literature which is directly linked to testimony from a pre-recorded video featuring Clara Hughes. These resources and presentations are available for viewing through our guidance office. Ms. Hughes had to learn how to manage her mental health through the direct intervention of qualified counselors and her presentation in late Fall of 2012 showed how the support of people in her life helped her deal with depression. Her message is that a person with mental illness is not alone. There is hope.



❖ Statistics:

- ❖ Youth, ages 15-24, are the most likely to suffer from selected mental disorders;
- ❖ Almost 1 in 5 report symptoms of substance abuse and mood and anxiety disorders;
- ❖ Suicide is the leading cause of death in Canadian youth, ages 10-24, after motor vehicle accidents;
- ❖ In the 15-19-year age group, the suicide rate is 9 per 100,000 (12 for males, 5 for females);
- ❖ In the 20-24-year age group, the suicide rate is 12 per 100,000 (19 for males, 5 for females). While the overall rate is not changing, the rate for females is rising slightly.

<http://www.queensu.ca/cmh/index/CMHFinalReport.pdf>

Here's a good place to assess your mental health:

<http://www.healthcoach4me.com/en/index.html>

<http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening/madisontech>



Please Contact

Have a question? Need someone to talk to? Check out the following:

<http://www.kidsmentalhealth.org/>
<http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/>
<http://www.mentalhealth4kids.ca/>
<http://www.cmha.ca/mental-health/your-mental-health/children/>
<http://org.kidshelpphone.ca>

<http://www.cmha.ca/get-involved/find-your-cmha/>

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