



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

# School is in! Helping those who educate

Nitika Rewari, Manager, Research, Evaluation &  
Knowledge Translation, Workplace Mental Health  
Mental Health Commission of Canada

Janet Hicks, Senior Manager, Human Resource Services  
York Region District School Board

May 25, 2016, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. ET

#WorkplaceMH



@MHCC\_



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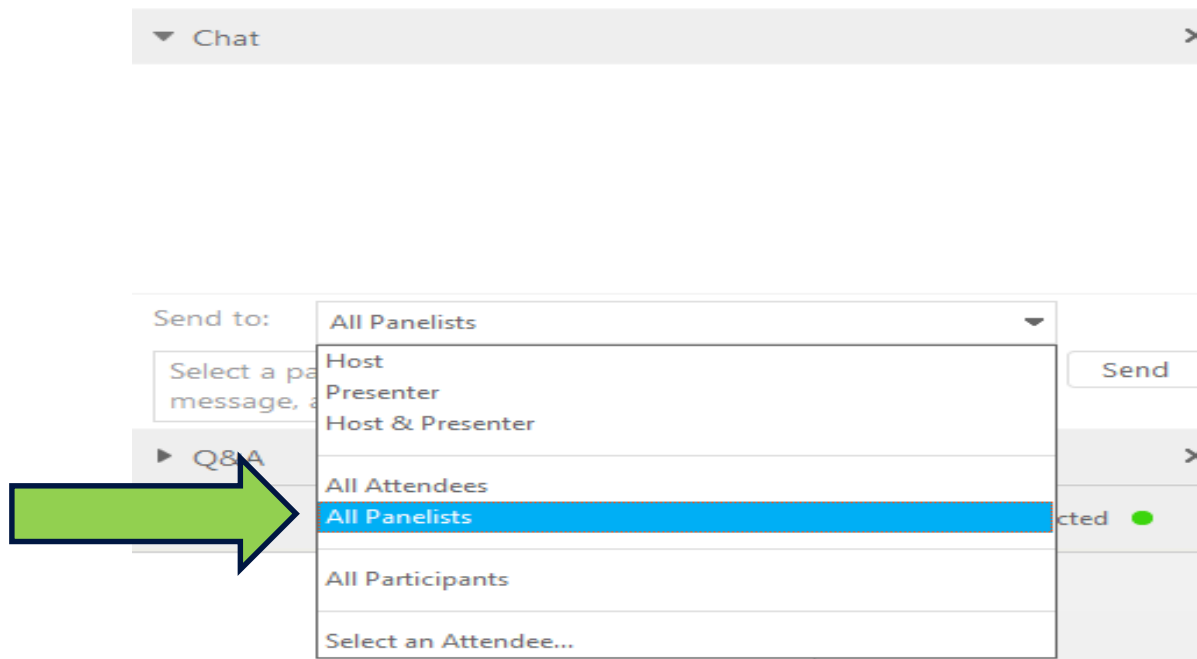


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Important! Send questions/comments to  
'All Panelists'



# Presenters



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**Nitika Rewari**

Manager, Research, Evaluation  
& Knowledge Translation,  
Workplace Mental Health  
Mental Health Commission  
of Canada



**Janet Hicks**

Senior Manager, Human  
Resource Services  
York Region District  
School Board

## Focus of Today's Webinar

- Mental Health of Workers in Schools
- York Region District School Board (YRDSB)
  - About the School Board
  - Importance of Workplace Mental Health
  - Their Journey
  - Next Steps
- Q & A



**“The most valuable asset of a 21st-century institution, whether business or nonbusiness, will be its knowledge workers and their productivity”**

**Peter Drucker (Management Challenges for the 21st Century)**





# Education Sector



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## The Cost of Doing Nothing

- ✓ Absenteeism
- ✓ Presenteeism
- ✓ Disability claims
- ✓ Injuries / illnesses
- ✓ Grievances / complaints
- ✓ Turnover
- ✓ Legal implications





# Workplace Mental Health at York Region District School Board

Janet Hicks

*Senior Manager, Human Resource Services*



**Inspire** Learning!

# YRDSB Background

- Largest employer in York Region
- Third largest school district in Ontario
- Over 122,000 students in 174 elementary schools and 32 secondary schools
  - Over 200 unique work locations
- Over 15,000 employees
- Unions and Federations
  - ETFO, ETFO-OT, OSSTF, CUPE 1734, CUPE 1196, OPSEU

# Organizational Challenges

- Publicly funded
- Decentralized
- Different sized work locations
- Highly unionized
- Schools not viewed as workplaces
- Communication barriers
- Limited training opportunities

# Board Priorities

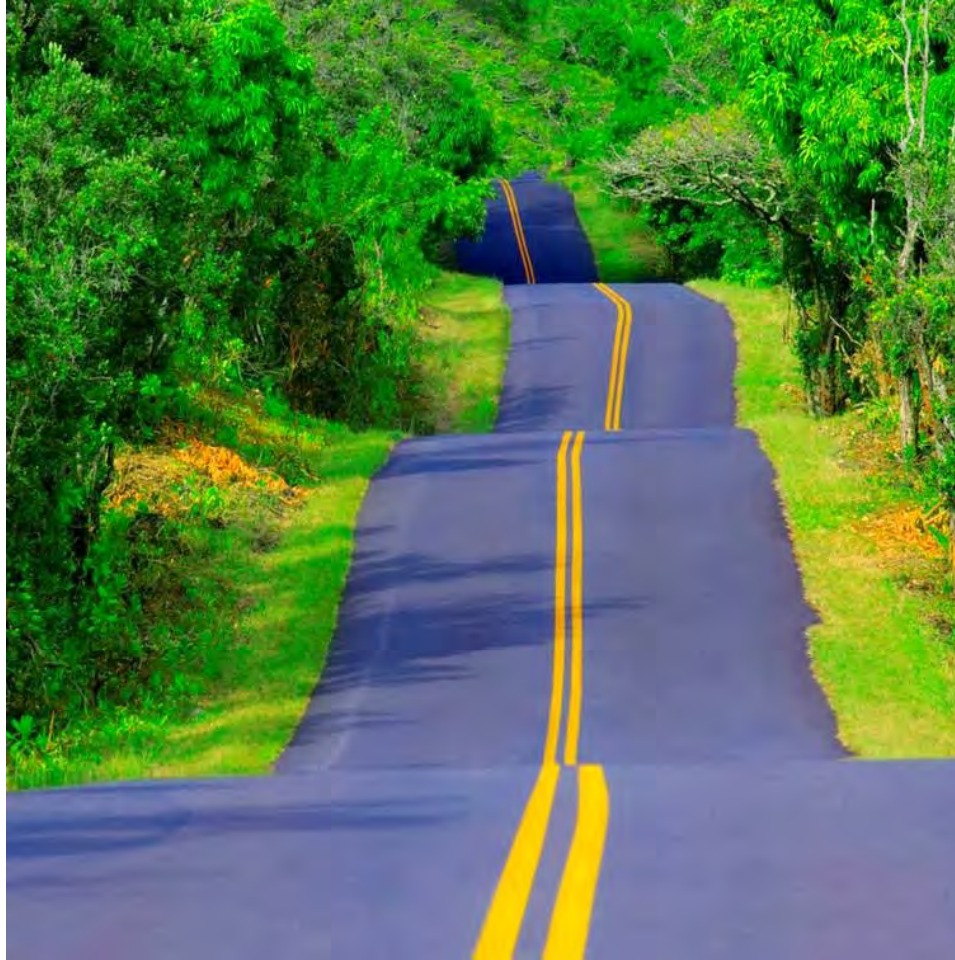
- Board mission – to advance student achievement and well-being
- Trustees' Multi Year Plan – student and staff mental and physical well-being
- Director's Annual Plan – mental health being one of the three focus areas
- Board Improvement Plan with a focus on student and staff wellbeing

# Staff Wellbeing

- Staff are our most valuable asset, we believe we have hired the best and we need to do our best to retain our staff
- Need healthy staff to support student achievement and wellbeing
- In the education sector, staff model behaviour for our students



# Our Journey



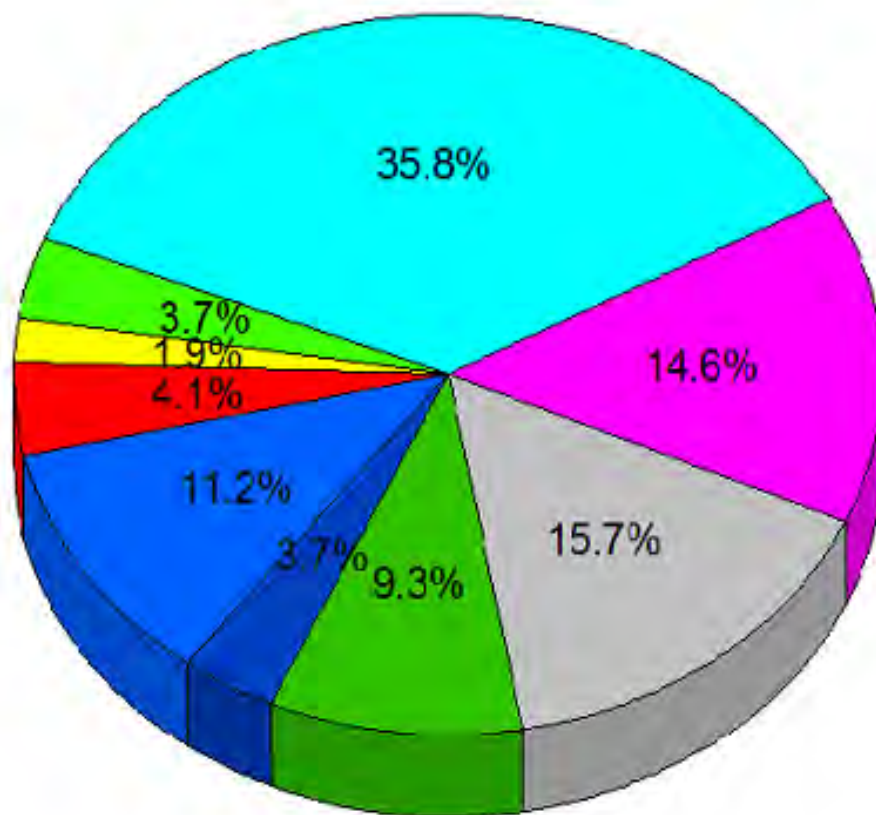
# Assessing Needs and Identifying Opportunities

- Joint Healthy Workplace and Mental Health at Work, Excellence Canada application
- Conducted 16 focus groups with 13 different employee groups
- Resulted in a system-level action plan to address gaps identified through self assessment process

# Assessing Needs and Identifying Opportunities

- Annual Employee Health Update which looks at a number of factors including:
  - sick leave utilization
  - LTD claims
  - WSIB data
  - EAP usage
  - Disability Management data
  - Health Claim data
  - Labour relations data

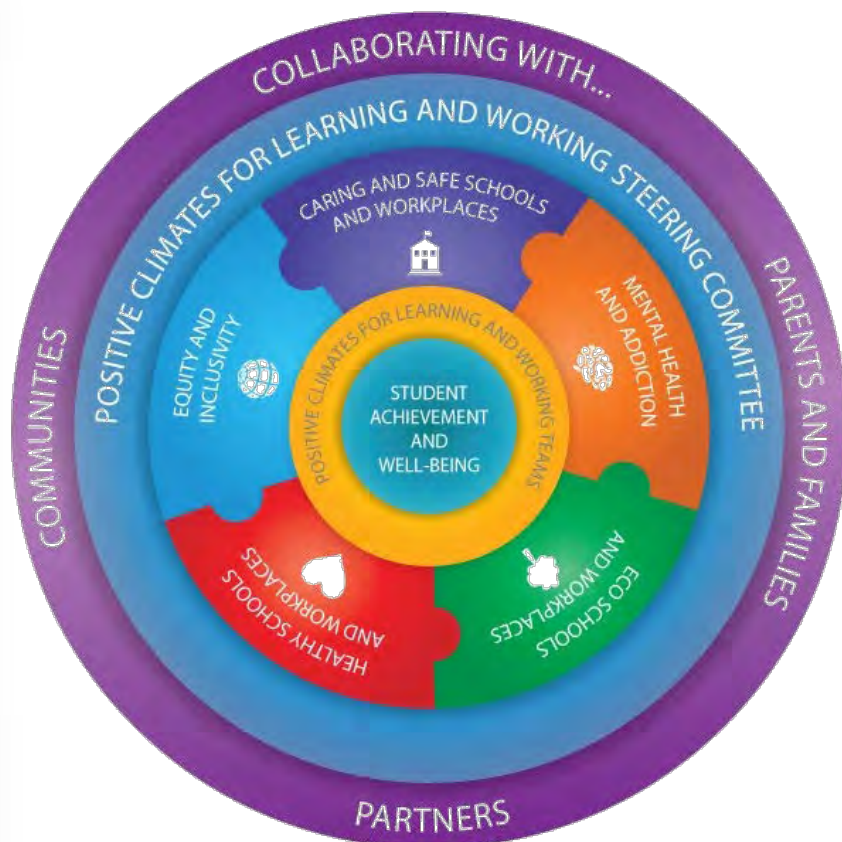
# Claimant Diagnosis Analysis



Cancer	11.2%
Circulatory System	4.1%
Digestive System	1.9%
Injury & Poison	3.7%
Mental/Nervous Disorders	35.8%
Musculoskeletal & Connective Tissue	14.6%
Nervous System & Sense Organs	15.7%
Other Diseases	9.3%
Unknown	3.7%
Total:	100.0%



# Well-Being at YRDSB





# YRDSB Well-Being Strategy

- Aligned Board Implementation Plan with Ministry of Education Well-Being Strategy and Foundations for a Healthy School
  - YRDSB Healthy Schools and Workplaces Framework
  - Updated YRDSB Healthy Schools and Workplaces Policy and Procedures

# School and Department Level

- Healthy School Action Plans submitted annually (student-focused)
  - Supported by York Region Public Health and Community Partners
- Redeveloped Action Plans to integrate Healthy Schools and Workplaces

# Healthy Schools and Workplaces Framework



## York Region District School Board Healthy Schools and Workplaces Framework



Topics Supporting Policies, Procedures and Programs	Impact Focus	FOUNDATIONS:				
		Learning and Development	Shared Leadership	Student and Staff Engagement	Social and Physical Environments	Community Partnerships
		Learning and development is an area that offers a wide range of opportunities for students and staff to learn, practise and promote positive and healthy behaviours and to practise how to lead healthy, active lives.	Shared leadership focuses on creating a positive school and workplace environment by identifying shared goals, priorities, and responsibilities related to the health needs of students and staff.	Student and staff engagement refers to how students and staff feel a sense of belonging; are empowered to participate in and lead activities; and are actively involved in their learning and work.	Healthy, safe, and caring social and physical environments support learning and working, enabling students and staff to achieve better cognitive, emotional, social, and physical outcomes.	Partnerships that engage students, parents, extended family, board staff, and the community support, enhance and promote opportunities for healthy learning and working.
<b>Mental Health</b>		Good mental health helps us all to learn and work productively, cope with stress, maintain physical health, build positive relationships, and contribute to our school, workplace, and broader community. We can strengthen our mental well-being through the school and workplace environment we develop and the lifestyle choices we make every day.				
<b>YRDSB Mental Health and Addiction Strategy</b>	Students Only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying areas of the curriculum where mental health promotion can be taught throughout the year</li> <li>Integrate adaptive strategies (e.g., cognitive appraisals, positive refocusing, positive reappraisal) into lessons to help students develop self-regulation skills. (5.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students actively contribute to developing their All About Me portfolio or Individual Pathways Plan (IPP), as part of the school's education and career/life planning program, which helps to ease transition anxiety. (5.1)</li> <li>Establish a school council committee to discuss and coordinate mental health initiatives in the school and community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students take advantage of opportunities in the school to redirect, express or address emotions in healthy ways (e.g., engaging in physical activity, communicating effectively, staying calm). (2.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students contribute to the planning and identification of places in the school (e.g. library, guidance, wellness room, etc.) where they can go to learn about and discuss issues related to mental health (e.g., stress, conflict, relationships) with staff and peers. (3.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students and their family members are made aware of and access programs, services and activities that are available to them in their school and community to promote positive mental health and support their mental health issues (6.3)</li> </ul>
	Staff Only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide staff learning opportunities that include information and resources grounded in evidence-based practices to promote positive mental health and to help individuals recognize and respond appropriately to the signs and symptoms of mental illness. (4.1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a staff leadership team to facilitate staff-related mental health initiatives within the school or workplace community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use team building exercises in staff team meetings to help facilitate a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and trust among staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing an area and/or designated times for staff members to participate in physical activity or social clubs, such as board games, especially during the winter months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff members liaise with the Mental Health Lead and Wellness Advisor to identify and implement workplace mental health awareness strategies. (6.3)</li> </ul>
	Both Students and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing programming that does not stigmatize mental disorders and that promotes positive health behaviours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a student and staff committee to promote positive mental health through events and other activities. (3.3)</li> <li>Provide staff and student leaders with information from research to empower them to facilitate ongoing dialogue within the school/ workplace community to support positive mental health. (5.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a wide range of school, workplace and community supports to engage students and staff in activities that promote positive mental health (e.g., stress relief, relationship building) throughout the year. (4.7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a climate of safety and sensitivity that reflects awareness of mental health and addiction, and in which talking about mental health and mental illness is accepted and encouraged. (3.3)</li> <li>Create a safe, inclusive, peaceful and comfortable learning and working environment (e.g., dedicated quiet space, outdoor learning or meeting areas, e-learning opportunities). (2.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage board partnerships with community organizations that have mental health expertise (e.g., local agencies) to help promote mental health among students/ staff and provide appropriate support for mental health issues. (6.3)</li> </ul>

# YRDSB MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION STRATEGY

Reducing  
Stigma

Supporting  
Understanding and  
Building Capacity

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Developing  
Mentally Healthy  
Environments

Creating  
Collaborative  
Care Pathways



**READ ABOUT YRDSB MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION STRATEGY**

<https://bwww.yrdsb.ca/services/student/MentalHealth/>





# WHERE ARE YOU ON THE MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM?

## HEALTHY

- Normal mood fluctuations
- Calm & takes things in stride
- Good sense of humour
- Performing well
- In control mentally
- Normal sleep patterns
- Few sleep difficulties
- Physically well
- Good energy level
- Physically and socially active
- Not using substances to cope
- None or limited gambling

## RESPONDING/ REACTING

- Irritable/impatient
- Nervous
- Sadness/overwhelmed
- Procrastination
- Forgetfulness
- Trouble sleeping
- Intrusive thoughts
- Nightmares
- Muscle tension/headaches
- Low energy
- Decreased activity/socializing
- Regular but controlled substance use/gambling

## INJURED

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Pervasively sad/hopeless
- Negative attitude
- Poor performance/workaholic
- Poor concentration/decisions
- Restless disturbed sleep
- Recurrent images/nightmares
- Increased aches and pains
- Increased fatigue
- Avoidance
- Withdrawal
- Increased substance use/  
gambling is hard to control

## ILL

- Angry outbursts/aggression
- Excessive anxiety/panic attacks
- Thoughts of suicide
- Can't perform duties, control behaviour or concentrate
- Can't fall asleep or stay asleep
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Physical illness
- Constant fatigue
- Not going out/answering phone
- Substance or gambling addiction
- Other addictions

**We ALL have Mental Health**  
**Learn more about Mental Health on the BWW**





# Mental Health Resources

- Reducing stigma
  - “Not Myself Today”
  - YouTube Video: Just Notice, Listen, Connect
  - “Notice, Listen, Connect, Reflect”
- Supporting understanding and Building Capacity
  - Leaders’ Guide to Employee Mental Health
  - Wellness committees and site champions

# Mental Health Resources

- Developing Mentally Healthy Environments
  - Corporate fitness and recreation discounts
  - Employee and Family Assistance Program
  - Workshops for building staff resiliency
- Creating Collaborative Care Pathways
  - Check up from the Neck Up
  - Feeling Better Now
  - STOP Tobacco Cessation Program

# Continuing the Journey

- Developing, implementing and evaluating a psychological health and safety management system
- Pilot Guarding Minds at Work survey
- Modifying our staff survey

# Continuing the Journey

- Continue to develop strong partnerships with our unions, federations, health providers and community partners
- Continue to find opportunities to align staff wellbeing initiatives with the work being done to support student wellbeing
- Peer to Peer Support

# Resources

## **Mental Illness and Mental Health Awareness at YRDSB**

[www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/Healthy/Pages/Mental-Illness-and-Mental-Health-Awareness.aspx](http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/Healthy/Pages/Mental-Illness-and-Mental-Health-Awareness.aspx)

## **Awareness Campaigns**

Partners for Mental Health – Not Myself Today

[www.notmyselftoday.ca](http://www.notmyselftoday.ca)

Youtube video – Just Notice, Listen, Connect

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMjAvyLDAGw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMjAvyLDAGw)

Check Up from the Neck Up- Mood Disorders

[www.mooddorders.ca/program/check-up-from-the-neck-up](http://www.mooddorders.ca/program/check-up-from-the-neck-up)

Feeling Better Now – Healthy Minds Canada

[www.healthymindscanada.ca/feeling-better-now](http://www.healthymindscanada.ca/feeling-better-now)

## **National Standard**

National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

[www.csa.ca/z1003](http://www.csa.ca/z1003)

Assembling the Pieces - An Implementation Guide to the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

[www.csa.ca/z1003](http://www.csa.ca/z1003)

## **Training**

Mental Health at Work® - Canada Awards for Excellence

[www.excellence.ca/en/knowledge-centre/resources/mental-health-at-work](http://www.excellence.ca/en/knowledge-centre/resources/mental-health-at-work)

Mental Health First Aid Training

[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/MHFA](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/MHFA)

The Working Mind

[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/initiatives-and-projects/working-mind](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/initiatives-and-projects/working-mind)





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# Questions



# Next Workplace Webinar

**Date:** June 29, 2016 at 12:00pm to 1:00pm ET

To watch our past webinars, visit our website at:  
[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/workinar](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/workinar)



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Please fill out the survey  
that opens **after** you leave  
the webinar



# Thank you

## **Mental Health Commission of Canada**

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Visit us: [www.yrdsb.ca](http://www.yrdsb.ca)