



Mental Health Commission
of Canada Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

**LA TÊTE HAUTE
HEADSTRONG**



**PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT
DITES-LE SPEAK UP**

VIRTUAL HEADSTRONG SUMMIT INFORMATION & APPLICATION PACKAGE

This email package contains everything you need to apply and plan for the **Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit** program for youth in your region. The HEADSTRONG team invites you to complete and return **the Virtual HEADSTRONG application form**. Once it has been submitted, we will connect with you to discuss next steps. You'll find a link to the application form below.

The HEADSTRONG Team recommends reviewing the application form, the Overview and the Frequently Asked Questions below before completing the application. If you have any questions or need clarification after reviewing this information, please contact:

headstrong@mentalhealthcommission.ca

We'll be happy to help!

[Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit Application Questions \(alchemer-ca.com\)](http://alchemer-ca.com)

Please note: Depending on the number of applications received, the dates you selected as your first choice may not be available. Please consider alternative dates before applying.

We may, if necessary, invite schools in different regions to join together in one combined Virtual Summit to ensure HEADSTRONG can reach as many communities as we can each school year.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the goal of the Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit? To spark a shift in thinking about mental health and mental illness among youth through evidence-based activities, lived experience stories, discussion, and videos. This shift in thinking is intended to lead to action in your own schools and communities.

What's the age group for student participants? 12-19 years (for Grade 7-12 and community youth groups). The youth who attend HEADSTRONG Summits and start action-based HEADSTRONG Clubs are aged 12 and over due to the information and the personal stories shared. Youth can self-select to attend or be chosen by school staff. Qualities for a HEADSTRONG student include:

- Leadership qualities (even if they don't recognize it)
- An interest in social issues and social change

- An interest in mental health/psychology
- May have personal or family experience of mental health problems or illness
- May need to hear that recovery is real

Many schools have leadership, health, citizenship, psychology or other classes that are a great fit as participants for HEADSTRONG. Schools can decide whether a class or a selected group of students will attend.

How many sessions in a Virtual Summit and how long are they? There are three 70-75 minute sessions. We recommend the sessions are held during the same week to maintain engagement and momentum. An additional check-in session happens 2-8 weeks after the Virtual Summit for youth to showcase their leadership activities.

Who makes the arrangements to bring the Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit to youth? HEADSTRONG recommends a small team of community agency staff and/or school staff work as a Community Coalition to:

- Promote the Virtual Summit and register students
- Book and confirm arrangements with HEADSTRONG and participating schools
- Work with the HEADSTRONG team in selecting speakers and activities
- Gather any materials needed for activities for each group of students
- Invite community mental health and youth agencies to participate during the chosen summit week
- Support youth attending the summit sessions
- Encourage and support youth in being leaders for mental health awareness and stigma reduction following the summit

Working as a team means that tasks are shared, partnership allows for more youth and community engagement and empowers student leadership.

How is the Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit funded? The Virtual Summits are available through the kind support of the Barry F. Lorenzetti Foundation and the Dollar A Day Foundation.

How many students can participate in the sessions? HEADSTRONG works for communities of every size. We recommend engaging up to 6 junior and/or senior high schools in a region, with 1-2 groups or classes attending from each school. A region can be a single town, a school board district, or a whole province or territory. We've found through our research that 3-6 schools participating in a Virtual Summit creates good energy and a sense of community without feeling overwhelming for students.

The Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit can also be made available for students learning remotely; however, in this case, the number of participants would be limited to a maximum of 12.

Do the students have to attend all the sessions in the series? Yes! Each session contributes to the experience that youth will need as they develop their action strategy to reduce stigma and promote mental health awareness.

How do school staff participate in the Virtual Summit? The staff member leading each class or group will help facilitate some of the in-class activities during the Summit and encourage students to start an

active HEADSTRONG Club. A short training session on the Summit and activities is provided by the HEADSTRONG team. With a staff champion and some support from the community, **students become independent leaders and achieve extraordinary results in long-term change for mental health awareness.**

There's a check-in after the final session, what is it for? Module three focuses on students working on a plan for mental health promotion and stigma-reduction activities that they will hold consistently throughout the rest of the school year in school, in the community and online.. To encourage students to plan and begin implementing their activities, a check-in with the Emcee will be offered two-eight weeks after the final action planning session to chat about their plans and share updates.

HEADSTRONG provides:

- The full Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit experience
- Prepared social media posts/printable posters to share and promote the Virtual HEADSTRONG Summit
- All the information and resources you need before the first session
- What to Expect tip sheets to share with staff and students
- Tip sheets for community mental health and youth agencies who want to promote their services during Summit Week
- Training for staff who will facilitate the in-group activities
- Toolkits for creating a HEADSTRONG Club and resources for post-summit activities.
- Feedback opportunities for sharing progress and activities
- Additional learning opportunities for students and staff
- A continuing partnership for year-on-year success

Communities/Schools provide:

- Support for the Virtual Summit and youth leadership
- A reliable internet connection for each participating site is needed
- A choice of preferred dates to hold the Summit sessions
- Any materials related to specific activities (a list of materials is provided with each activity)
- If available, some snacks for students to enjoy during the sessions
- Technical support to implement the Virtual Summit (ie: platform, support for glitches or connection issues, sharing slides, etc.)

How do we apply? Complete and submit the application (link above)

HEADSTRONG

web: <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/resources/training/headstrong>

email headstrong@mentalhealthcommission.ca



@mhcheadstrong