



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada



# A Standard for post-secondary mental health...

## One year later

The CSA Z2003:20 National Standard of Canada for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students (the Standard) — the first of its kind in the world — is a set of flexible, voluntary guidelines to help post-secondary institutions support the mental health and well-being of their students.

Since the Standard was released in October 2020, campuses across the country have started their implementation journey. While each journey looks different, there are many successes to celebrate during this year of rapid change.

“This Standard is meant to bridge the gap between students and administrators, allowing them to co-create higher learning communities that increase academic performance, improve overall satisfaction, and ensure that no student — regardless of their background or personal circumstances — is left behind.”

— Donovan Taplin, vice-chair, Technical Committee on the Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students

## Getting started

After downloading the Standard, access the Starter Kit - designed to help post-secondary institutions take first steps towards implementation.

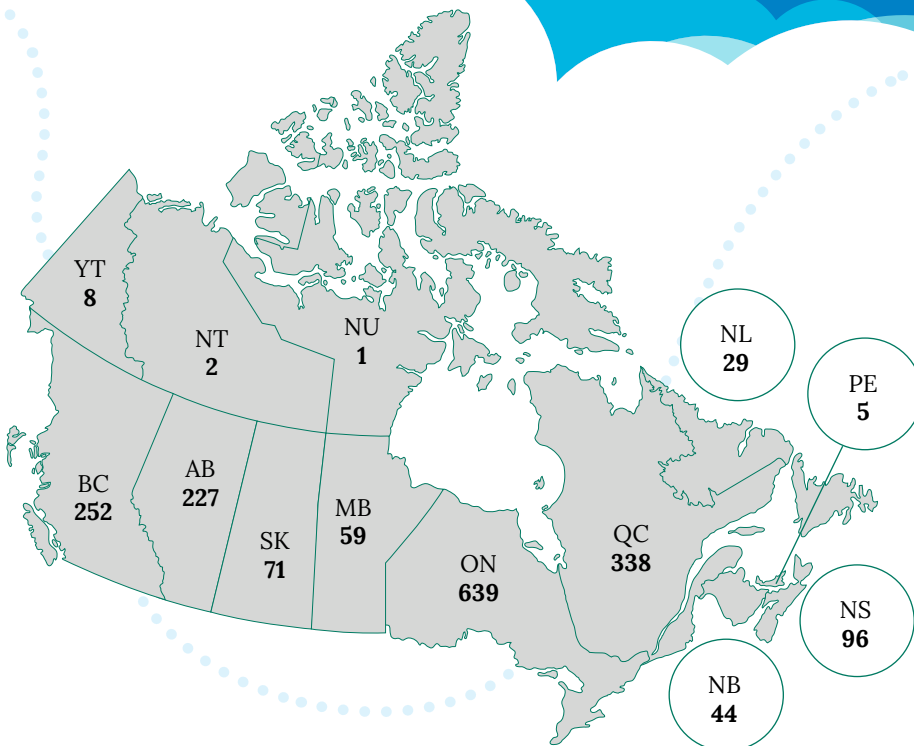


## Different ways campuses have started their implementation journey

- ✓ Completing the sample internal audit tool
- ✓ Allocating resources to lead this work
- ✓ Setting up a committee to look at opportunities
- ✓ Embedding the Standard in strategic planning
- ✓ Identifying and focusing in on a priority area
- ✓ Reviewing policies through a mental health lens
- ✓ Getting support and buy-in



Use the Standard to support your work and reflect the unique values and priorities of your community!



## Downloads of the Standard

Campuses of all sizes and settings across Canada have started working with the Standard to reaffirm their commitment to student mental health and well-being.

Over the past year, the Standard was downloaded over **1,900 times!**

The Standard also drew international interest from Australia, the U.S., France, and other countries.

## Institutions are supporting students through a global health crisis



“While COVID is a storm we are all weathering, if we are ships at sea everyone is in a different ship. Some have a big boat; others only have a raft and are struggling. It hasn’t been equal among groups of students. Stress, anxiety, worry, and financial pressure were top of mind in the summer of 2021 for students.

Students are worried about their own health, the health of loved ones, and finding employment. They are worried about the impact of the pandemic on their futures.

We don’t have to go back to the way things were. Some students said this was the best year for their access to education. What systemic structures can we make better? While we are eager to return to normal, who is that normal serving? Take this opportunity to work with the Standard and come back to a more inclusive and mentally healthy community.”

— Kalin McCluskey, executive director, Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA)



See CASA’s latest survey on how students are doing and how the challenges, gaps, and barriers have evolved over the past year.

## Campuses are partnering with students to implement the Standard

### By listening

*“For work to continue to be centred around students, we have to listen and cultivate environments that feel safe to share stories. Feedback from students has allowed our institution to reflect and further develop supports throughout their journey. The Standard has been a critical resource in building this community of learners.”*

**Ranabelle Stroh, manager, Student Supports,  
Saskatchewan Indian Institute of  
Technologies**

### By building strength and resiliency

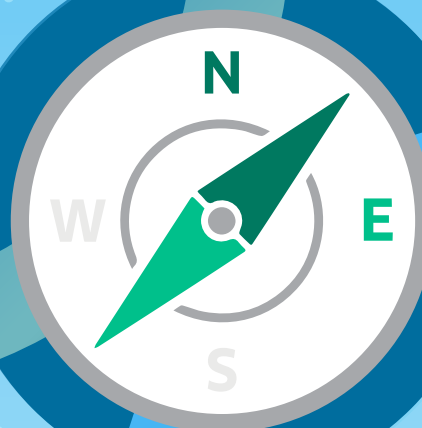
*Our commitment to adopting the National Standard begins and ends with student voices. “Let’s Face It”, our campus mental health awareness group engages the College and community in building strength and resiliency through outreach to high schools, on-campus activities, and facilitating student-to-student mentorship. Diverse student voices are centered in keeping us responsive to the current and changing needs of students.”*

**Jenna Strydonck, mental health audit  
project lead, Student Success,  
Lambton College**

### By empowering them

*“Students have to be a part of the whole process from consultations to development and implementation of the final framework. This not only means that student voices have to be heard, but that students are an active part of the process, guiding, designing, implementing, and evaluating it.”*

**Andrew Szeto, director, Mental Health  
Strategy, University of Calgary**



# Post-secondary communities are...

## Welcoming continuous improvement

*"The Standard is thorough, deep, and intense. Because it is flexible, institutions can celebrate and lean into the flexibility and find focus areas to set priorities for one year, two, or three years into the future.*

*You don't have to take on all the pieces at one time. Focus on one small piece step by step. Small goals are big wins."*

**Sarah Mughal, Technical Committee member, and partner and subject matter expert at The Cawley Group**

## Building the Standard into their strategic plans

*"The Standard has been a strategic model for us, and is now part of our Strategic Development Plan. I see the Standard as a pretext for discussion. It is based on science and tells us what we should do to improve the mental health and well-being of our students. We started with an audit of our practices and identifying certain challenges that we still have to meet. We then came up with various projects."*

**Guillaume D'Amours, Director of Student Life and Educational Success at the Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne**





## Post-secondary institutions are embracing the flexibility of the Standard

*“The Standard was designed for flexibility. That means the content should validate ongoing efforts and provide reassurance to post-secondary institutions that they’re on the right track, and that they’re already meeting the clauses of the Standard.”*

**Daniel Major, Technical Committee member and student at University of Alberta**



### Campuses are continuously adapting to the evolving needs of students

Like many other post-secondary institutions, Brandon University in Manitoba, saw the fall 2021 term as a “time of transition” and was hoping to get more students back on campus.

They shared they would be “aiming to where the puck is going to be this fall”.



Join efforts  
across Canada  
to co-create  
conditions for  
students to  
flourish

Start your journey today.



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of the Standard

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and create a CSA Store  
account to download it



Download the Starter Kit



Join the community  
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Outreach, Resources,  
and Engagement  
(CORE) to access  
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