ABC’s of Mental Health

Presented by:
Bethann Levinson
Despina Papadopoulos
This Webinar will be recorded, so that it can be available on the Centre’s website as an educational resource.

The slides have been sent to participants.

Slides will be translated.
Housekeeping Notes

Addressing Questions:

- The session is interactive and you may ask questions at any time by:
  - Typing your question or comment into the questions box
  - Raising your hand online

- We will have opportunities for group discussions
Presenters

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Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health

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The Hincks-Dellcrest Centre
Webinar Overview

- Brief Overview of SSLI and Centre’s role
- Update on SSLI Webinar survey and Information Gathering Template
- Presentation on ABC’s of Mental Health
- Your input / feedback
ABOUT THE CENTRE
What is the Centre?

Bringing people and knowledge together to promote the best mental health and well-being for every child and youth.

**Learning**

**Collaboration**

**Leadership**

Full continuum of effective and accessible mental health service for children and youth.
How is the Centre supporting SSLI

• Monthly **webinars** (Webinar Survey Update)

• **Information gathering template**

• Quarterly **e-Newsletter**
The ABCs of Mental Health
Mental Health Resource Materials for Parents and Teachers

http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/abc
**Logic Model**

**Activities**
- Assess parent/teacher needs (surveys, focus groups, reviews of similar resources)
- Write/edit chapters
- Develop website framework/content management system
- Evaluation of website
- Holding/attending media events, conferences and conventions to promote website, and online linking with other websites.
- Capacity building: Training of parents and teachers to train others on use, promotion of website

**Outputs**
- List of behaviours most often listed as worrisome by Teachers and Parents
- Chapters Written
- Chapters uploaded, well-organized, well-functioning website
- Improved website based on user feedback
- Increased awareness of website
- Network of parents and teachers trained in use and promotion of website

**Short Term Outcomes**
- Increased usage of resource by teachers and parents in the school/home
- Website usage by: native/not, urban/rural, different age groups, different regions
- Usage of information from resource in school and homes
- Knowledge increase and increase in parent/teacher confidence handling children's/adolescents' behaviour issues

**Long Term Outcomes**
- Increased parent/teacher collaboration; more consistent use of strategies between parents and teachers
- Recognition of when no intervention is needed, more direct intervention by parents/teachers themselves when appropriate; more referrals to mental health resources when needed
- More appropriate responses to child/adolescent behaviour by teachers and parents
- Widespread use of resource
- Parents/teachers will be able to apply knowledge beyond the classroom and their own families
- Improved child/adolescent behaviour
- Resource used in teacher training and professional development
A web-based resource for parents and teachers grades JK to 12

In response to Parents’ and Teachers’ requests for mental health resource material

• Based on children’s/students behaviours in the classroom

• To help parents and teachers understand these behaviours

• To build parents’ and teachers’ capacity to manage behaviour problems in the classroom and at home
A web-based resource for parents and teachers
grades JK to 12

The information helps parents & teachers to:

• Describe and monitor behaviours in the classroom or at home that cause them concern.

• Understand factors that might lead to behaviour problem

• Plan a strategy in the classroom or home to prevent mental health problems, to address troublesome behaviours, and to promote learning and mental health

• Seek appropriate supports for students whose behaviours suggest a mental health problem
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Actions</strong></th>
<th>provides descriptions of student behaviours that teachers/parents may find confusing or troubling.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beliefs</strong></td>
<td>describes possible factors that may be causing or influencing the Actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course to Follow</strong></td>
<td>provides tips and ideas for responding to the Actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A focus on worrisome behaviours and not diagnosis

• What behaviours in your classroom or at home are worrisome to you?

• List of behaviour problems seen in school-age children/students

• Guidelines on evaluating the level of severity of the problem and the level of intervention needed

• Problems are grouped within 11 broad categories

• Not based on a mental health diagnosis
What behaviours concern teachers and parents the most

• General issues in good mental health
  • Worry and anxiety
    • Sadness
    • Self-harm
  • Anger and aggression
  • Poor social relations
    • Defiance
  • Attention problems
  • Eating problems
• Unusual behaviours
• Drug and Alcohol Abuse
Using the ABCs of Mental Health

• Searchable by behaviours observed in the classroom or at home

• Four age groups

• Behaviours are categorized by level of concern and need for intervention, and not by diagnosis

• Interventions for use in the classroom or at home for behaviours at various levels of severity
Actions

Behaviours Observed in the Classroom or at Home

- **Teachers’** or **Parents’** concerns about the mental health of children from age 3 to 18

- **Descriptions** of behaviours that could indicate possible mental health problems.

- **Clear and simple guidelines** for understanding how children change as they get older, how boys and girls may differ, and how their special needs can affect their mental health.

- **Framework for understanding** behaviours as they relate to children’s mental health
Actions

Teachers’ and Parents’ concerns about the mental health of children

• Behavior lists compiled through consultations with educators

• Behaviours might stand alone or cluster with other behaviours

• The same behaviour might occur for a number of different reasons related to the child’s circumstances or mental health

• The list of behaviours is comprehensive, and might link to different issues in child development and mental health
Developmental Descriptions of behaviours that could indicate possible mental health problems

- Experts in children’s mental health describe the behaviours that are troublesome to teachers and parents

- Other behaviours to watch for that might occur at the same time

- Four age groupings show how a behaviour is likely to be presented at different ages and stages of child development
  - Early childhood age 3 to 5
  - Middle childhood age 6 to 12
  - Early adolescence age 13 to 14
  - Adolescence age 15 to 18
Actions

Clear and simple guidelines for understanding children’s/students behaviour

• How boys and girls may differ in their behaviour

• How behaviour problems may escalate or change as children get older

• How children’s special needs can affect their mental health

• The impact of significant events and issues within the family

• The impact of significant events in the child’s/student’s environment
Actions

Framework for understanding behaviours as they relate to children’s mental health

• Framework categorizes behaviours into three levels of severity or concern

• The same framework provides levels of interventions as suggested strategies for teachers to try in the classroom, (parents to try at home) to address children’s/student’s behaviour problems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green Light</td>
<td>Actions are behaviours within normal expectations for the child/student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Light</td>
<td>Actions are behaviours that are beyond normal expectations, and that cause concern and warrant further consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Light</td>
<td>Actions are behaviours that are serious enough to need referral to a mental health specialist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**B is for Beliefs**

- Possible factors that may be causing or influencing the child’s/student’s behaviour

- Consideration of these different factors could lead to different strategies for supporting the child/student

- Biological, congenital, health factors

- Family circumstances and events

- Disabilities

- Cultural or religious factors

- Trauma, loss, or turbulent environment
C is for Course to Follow

What Teachers and Parents Can Do

• A framework for planning interventions in the classroom and at home

• Promoting good mental health of all students in the classroom and at home

• Knowing when and how to deal with troubling behaviour in the classroom and at home

• Knowing when a child’s behaviour would require mental health support
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Green Light</strong></th>
<th>Strategies for promoting good mental health for children/student in the classroom or at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow Light</strong></td>
<td>Intervention strategies for the classroom and to share with parents to try at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red Light</strong></td>
<td>Intervention strategies that will require the support of mental health professionals, possibly outside the school</td>
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</tbody>
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Course to Follow

Promoting good Mental Health in the Classroom and at Home

Green light zone interventions for all students in the classroom

• Helping children/students to cope with everyday challenges

• Ensuring that a behaviour does not escalate or become troublesome

• Preventing troublesome behaviours
Course to Follow

Knowing when and how to deal with troubling behaviour in the classroom or at home

- Yellow light zone interventions
- Linking the behaviour observed to the appropriate interventions
- Knowing when the behaviour may be managed within the classroom
- Specific strategies designed for the age and level of severity of the problem
- Working together with parents
Course to Follow

Knowing when a child’s behaviour would require mental health support

- Red light zone interventions
- Knowing when to bring in support through Board resources
- Knowing when to seek mental health support through community resources
- Working together with parents to address a student’s mental health needs
How to Use the Resource

Two Access Methods

I wish to utilize the Resource to:

- I wish to **investigate** a worrisome behaviour or potential mental health problem
- Engage in **review a chapter** related to potential mental health problems
Choose the age of the child of concern to you

- 3-5 years old (early childhood)
- 6-12 years old (middle childhood)
- 13-14 years old (early adolescence)
- 15-18 years old (adolescence)
What type of child are you wondering about?

Broad behaviour categories / chapters:

- **The Worried or Anxious child**
- The Sad Child
- The Self-Harmful Child
- The Angry or Aggressive Child
- The Defiant or Misbehaving Child
- The Child with Social Skills Problems
- The Child with Attention and Memory Problems
- The Child with Unusual Behaviours
- The Child with Eating Problems
- The Child with Drug and Alcohol Problems
The Worried Child

Behaviours List

• Introduction
• Separation Worries
• Excessively Compliant
  • Specific Fears
• Frightening Memories
  • Social Anxiety
• Panic Responses
• Fixed behaviours
The Worried Child

ABCs of Mental Health > Teacher Resource > The Worried Child > Frightening Memories and Thoughts

Actions Observed

Middle Childhood (5-12 years old)
Frightening Memories or Thoughts

Behaviours

- Disturbing drawings or imaginary play with frightening or aggressive themes
  - Always vigilant and on alert, even in safe situations
    - Excessive alertness to danger
      - Easily startled
      - On guard
  - Makes efforts to avoid specific events or people that are safe, for no apparent reason
    - acts detached or distant from others
    - becomes quiet and mute
    - shows little emotion, looks preoccupied
    - shows general lack of responsiveness
    - wanting to talk about something frightening
  - having flashbacks and re-experiencing the event
    - Telling others about flashbacks
    - Telling others about nightmares
Reading Through the Resource

• Engage in review a chapter related to potential mental health problems in elementary or high school aged children.

• PDFs to download for sub-chapters
More Resources Coming

- Parent Resource for ages 3 to 18 years, in four age groups

- Train the Trainer sessions in all regions of Canada in 2011-12
http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/abc
An open, internet based resource
Usability Testing Version on line now

For further information contact
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416-972-1935
Questions?

- To submit questions electronically, use the Question box located in your control panel.
- To submit questions verbally, use the ‘Raised Hand’ icon also located in the control panel.
Contact Us For More Information

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