



Population mental health promotion for children and youth - a collection for public health in Canada

The six [National Collaborating Centres for Public Health \(NCCPH\)](#) developed this collection to increase understanding of population mental health promotion for children and youth and start a discussion about how to better integrate and strengthen public health practice in this area. The documents give complementary perspectives across the priority focus areas of the Collaborating Centres to provide numerous entry points for the public health sector. Our hope is that this collection will inspire and guide public health practitioners and professionals to explore positive mental health for children and youth as an essential focus for public health practice.

ABOUT THE COLLECTION

Mental health is a public health priority that requires competent, confident front-line staff to work in collaboration with others to build healthy and resilient communities, and engage with individuals and families to provide appropriate supports. Although many public health practitioners report they are already doing this work, they have also shared that they continue to feel uncertain about how to integrate mental health promotion into their current practice.

This collection is intended to clarify key concepts and begin the work of exploring the public health role from a variety of perspectives. The foundational paper provides definitions and background on key concepts, including determinants of mental

health for children and youth. Discussion papers on five public health topics align with the core work of the NCCPH. These papers are supplemented with a scan for relevant Canadian organizations and resources at the national level.

Each of the topical papers includes:

- relevant evidence
- gaps in knowledge
- public health roles in population mental health promotion for children and youth
- resources and organizations to help public health practitioners/professionals with training, tools, guidelines, frameworks and other resources to guide their work.

The resource scan database and summary documents supplement the discussion papers with additional information from key Canadian organizations. This includes a list of relevant resources for public health, categorized by population, equity themes, type and format of the resource.

METHOD

The papers in this collection used a literature search to identify peer-reviewed and grey literature, written in English and published within the past 10 years (2005-2016). A range of databases were accessed to ensure relevance for each topic, including: CINAHL, EBSCOhost, MEDLINE, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, PubMed, Sociological Abstracts, and WorldCat. Google and Google Scholar search engines were also used to find gray literature, along with hand searches of the sites of relevant organizations and networks.

A common set of search terms were used for combinations of various keywords:

- Mental health OR (Mental health promotion, Public mental health, Population mental health, Population mental health promotion, Wellbeing, Mental wellbeing, Socio-emotional wellbeing, Wellness) AND
- Child OR (Adolescent, Young Adult, Young Man, Young Woman, Minor, Teen, Youth, Juvenile, Pubescent, Preteen, Kid, Girl, Boy, Emerging adult)

To ensure attention to health equity, and Indigenous health and gender equity issues specifically, the following search terms were incorporated:

- Equity, inequity, equality, inequality, social determinants, Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, Inuit, Aboriginal, sex and gender.

Additional sources of information, organizations and resources were identified through references within the documents from all searches, with particular attention paid to Canadian sources. Resources were selected based on relevance to population mental health promotion for children and youth, the public health audience and the focus topic.

POPULATION MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Visit NCCPH.CA to download the complete collection

General resources

- Population mental health promotion for children and youth – a collection for public health in Canada
- Foundations: definitions and concepts to frame population mental health promotion for children and youth
- Scan Report: resources for population mental health promotion for children and youth in Canada
- Database of resources for population mental health promotion for children and youth in Canada

Topical papers

- Environmental influences on population mental health promotion for children and youth
- Chronic diseases and population mental health promotion for children and youth
- Infectious diseases and population mental health promotion for children and youth
- Healthy public policies and population mental health promotion for children and youth
- Considerations for Indigenous child and youth population mental health promotion in Canada



LIMITATIONS

This collection is intended to introduce concepts of population mental health promotion to a public health audience, and is not an exhaustive review of the literature. A number of issues that would benefit from further exploration include: evidence-based actions, mechanisms to address organizational and system barriers, and guidance on how to implement interventions, support public health capacity and sustain

population mental health. Although an equity lens has been integrated across this collection, the depth of analysis varies across documents, depending on the current state of the literature.

We encourage users of this collection to undertake additional evidence searches for specific interventions to address sustainability, and identify collaborative opportunities to create the conditions and capacity for sustainable implementation of programming across public health.



Source: iStock

Population mental health promotion for children and youth is a collaborative project of the six National Collaborating Centres (NCCs) for Public Health. The NCCs work together to promote and improve the use of scientific research and other knowledge to strengthen public health practices, programs, and policies in Canada. A unique knowledge hub, the NCCs for Public Health identify knowledge gaps, foster networks and provide the public health system with an array of evidence based resources, multi-media products, and knowledge translation services.

Download this document, and others in this collection, at www.nccph.ca.

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