**Ontario Ministry of Education**

**Mental Health Literacy Modules for Career Studies (GLC2O)**

Implementation Resource for School Administrators –

Optional Templates for Communication

The Ontario Ministry of Education has developed two modules/lesson plans to support **a new and an updated** **mental health literacy expectation** within [Strand A of the **Career Studies** curriculum](https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/secondary-guidance-and-career-education). The lessons (which are available in both in-person and online learning formats) will enhance mental health literacy and help equipstudents with culturally responsive, evidence-based knowledge, skills, and strategies to support their mental health and well-being.

These templates for communication are optional and meant to be used flexibly to meet the needs of schools and students. Included are ready-to-use materials to communicate learning within the school and to continue to support the ongoing promotion of student mental health in the school community.

The resources include:

* a staff introduction slide deck
* school-wide promotion announcements
* a school notification system message
* a newsletter/webpage insert
* a handout for parents/caregivers

All materials can be adapted to meet the school administrator’s own context within their school/board.

**Staff Introduction Slide Deck**

A brief [slide deck](https://smhosmso-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/documents_smho-smso_ca/EQKBpXpD2HxFm-gjdV4PZTkB8ZHh1K76I6IELRnsBLUIHQ?e=Oin5gS) with speaker notes that may be used to create awareness of the lessons (e.g., at a staff meeting to raise awareness for the entire school team and/or in a departmental meeting for Career Studies educators) has been provided.

**School-Wide Promotion Announcements**

These messages are based on concepts from the Mental Health Career Studies lessons but are also helpful and appropriate to share with all students.

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| 1. Mental health is something we all have. What supports yours? Knowing and practicing strategies that help you feel well is important every day, not just when we face challenges. Make mental health strategies part of your daily routine!  2. We all feel stress at times. Some stress can be a good thing! It can help us in many ways. Managing stress is a skill we can practice and get better at. There are strategies that can help.  3. Noticing changes in your mental health can help you know when to use strategies that work for you. Seeking help when you need it is also an important mental health strategy!  4. The words we use can add to stigma related to mental health and mental illness. Thoughtful words can help others feel comfortable to share their experiences and seek help if they need it.    5. Would you know where to go to talk about a mental health problem? The adults in this school community care about you. If you need to talk, please reach out to a trusted adult. Problems don’t have to be big to share them.  6. Sometimes we play a role in supporting our friends. Sometimes we need other people to play a role, too. We don’t have to manage a concern for a friend all alone, and it’s okay to prioritize our own mental health while we are helping a friend. Our mental health matters, too. |

**School Notification System Message**

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| At [NAME OF SCHOOL], we support student mental health and well-being. As part of the ongoing work in all school boards in Ontario, the Ministry of Education has introduced two lessons to support the revised **mental health literacy expectation** within the Grade 10 **Career Studies** curriculum. This learning will help equip students with inclusive, culturally responsive, evidence-informed knowledge, skills, and strategies to support their mental health and well-being, knowing this looks different for everyone. We are excited to bring this additional learning into the Career Studies course!  If you have questions about this learning or mental health supports, please reach out to [ADD NAME], OUR SCHOOL’S ADMINISTRATOR [OR APPROPRIATE STAFF]. |

**Newsletter/Webpage Insert**

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| New Grade 10 Career Studies Mental Health Literacy Modules Support Student Mental Health and Well-being  The Ministry of Education has introduced two modules to support **a new and an updated** **mental health literacy expectation** within Strand A of the **Career Studies** curriculum. This learning will be delivered by educators (both in-person and through online learning) and will offer ways to enhance the delivery of curriculum and focus on mental health literacy.  This learning will help equip students with inclusive, culturally responsive, evidence-informed knowledge, skills, and strategies to support their mental health and well-being.  There are important reasons to bring these modules into the classroom:   * Responds to students requests to learn more about mental health at school. * Helps students develop skills that support positive mental health. * Supports learning in all other areas. * Encourages students to reach out for support when they need help with their mental health.   This [introductory video](https://youtu.be/VUmQSVybbp4?si=Ak1GGCna6l6MXlFf) provides more information.  If you have questions about this learning or mental health supports, please contact [INSERT NAME] |

**Letter for Parents/Caregivers**

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| [School Letterhead]  Dear Parents/Caregivers,  We all want good mental health and well-being for our teens. We want them to thrive during times of stability and during times of stress. We want them to know how to care for their own well-being and how to use effective coping and support strategies during challenging times. That’s why Grade 10 Career Studies students are participating in two lessons from the Ministry of Education that support the Career Studies curriculum and we wanted to share the learning with you, too.  Here are a few key ideas students will explore:   * Possible signs of stress in ourselves and others. * Strategies to manage stress and take care of our mental health. * Ways to make stress management strategies part of our daily lives. * Signs that indicate stress may be becoming problematic and how to seek support for ourselves and our friends, should we need it.   There are important reasons to prioritize mental health learning:   * Students [**want**](https://smho-smso.ca/online-resources/hearnowon-2021-student-voices-on-mental-health-final-report/) to learn more about mental health at school. * This learning helps students develop skills that support positive mental health and well-being. * Mental health learning supports learning in all other areas. * This learning can encourage conversations and help students in need reach support.   There is also a [brief video](https://youtu.be/VUmQSVybbp4?si=Ak1GGCna6l6MXlFf) that provides and overview of the lessons and content.  As always, students will be made aware that there are many adults at school they can connect with, should they have additional questions about the learning, and opportunities for follow up support and will be provided. If you have questions about these lessons or mental health supports, please reach out to me.  You are an important part of supporting your child’s learning about mental health and well-being.  Sincerely,  [SCHOOL PRINCIPAL NAME] |

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| **School Administrator Reflection:**   * How can I help ensure mental health learning reaches ALL students in my school and support a whole school approach? * Who would like to know about this learning? For example, will I share it with parents/caregivers to highlight one of the many ways our school is supporting student well-being? Would it be helpful for any school support staff or mental health professionals that may be part of my school to know? * How am I modelling taking care of my own wellness and encouraging my staff to do the same? * How could this learning help spark broader mental health literacy that reaches all students? |

**Who should I contact if I have questions about the modules?**

You can either connect with your mental health leader or superintendent with responsibility for mental health.

Interested in learning more?

Find additional resources for school administrators on the [School Mental Health Ontario website](https://smho-smso.ca/school-and-system-leaders/)

Consider enrolling in the [free online course](https://smho-smso.ca/school-administrators/mental-health-literacy-course/) for school administrators, or access the [Leading Mentally Healthy Schools ebook](https://smho-smso.ca/leading-mentally-healthy-schools/) – a comprehensive guide, packed with actional ideas based on the latest evidence.