

PRESS RELEASE

High school students learn how to reduce stigma related to mental health problems and mental illnesses

(Winnipeg, February 11 & 12) – High school students from schools across Winnipeg are attending a one day regional summit to learn how to reduce stigma towards mental illness. This summit, taking place on Wednesday, February 11 and Thursday, February 12 at St. James Collegiate has been organized by the Canadian Mental Health Association – Winnipeg / Manitoba (CMHA), with support from the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), as part of MHCC HEADSTRONG, the Commission’s national youth anti-stigma campaign.

At the Summit, students will hear personal stories of hope and recovery from people who have lived experience of mental illness, as well as learn about mental health and mental illness. Participants will also engage in activities that can be easily replicated in order that they may take the awareness-raising and stigma reduction messages to their own schools.

It is anticipated that by 2016, over 4,000 high school students across the country will have participated in anti-stigma summits as a result of the HEADSTRONG campaign.

QUICK FACTS

- 70 per cent of adults living with a mental illness say the onset occurred before age 18.
- Early intervention can make a dramatic difference in a child’s quality of life.
- Stigma is one of the key barriers preventing many people from seeking help.

QUOTES

“I am thrilled that so many students will be learning about mental health and breaking down stigma. It is so important to encourage youth to get help if they need it and to make the school environment a safe and welcoming place for all,” says Tessa Blaikie, Youth Mental Health Promotion Worker at CMHA-Winnipeg / Manitoba.

“I have heard people say that living with stigma is worse than living with the mental illness itself. Knowing that our communities are full of young champions of mental health gives me hope for real change,” says Louise Bradley, President and CEO of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

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Media can access to the summit at St. James Collegiate (1900 Portage Ave) on Thursday, February 13. On camera interviews with youth panelist (11:45 AM to 12:40 PM) or video access to speaker panel (12:45 to 1:30 PM) with prior appointment. Contact:

Tyler Pearce
Regional Affairs, Public Policy, and Communication
Canadian Mental Health Association – Winnipeg / Manitoba
204-982-6107 (office); 204-801-7174 (cell); tpearce@cmhawpg.mb.ca