

Lakehead Public Schools' 3-year mental health strategy promotes the wellbeing of every student with a specific focus on social emotional learning that can be beneficial across all aspects of learning. Engaging school leaders to understand the importance of mental wellbeing, mental health promotion and prevention activities, and collaborating with school and system partners will ensure student and staff wellbeing is prioritized. With a focus on capacity building at all levels, each student in all learning environments will benefit from the universal promotion of mental wellbeing.

Lakehead Public Schools aligns its 3-year strategy with the strategic goals of School Mental Health Ontario, a Provincial Implementation Support Team that works together with school districts to support student mental health and develop mentally healthy schools that adopt a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Lakehead Public Schools emphasizes the importance of helping children thrive, learn and succeed by providing opportunities for them, and the adults around them, to develop the strengths and coping skills that underpin resilience.



# 1

## PROVIDE A TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

### TIER 1 – Good for all

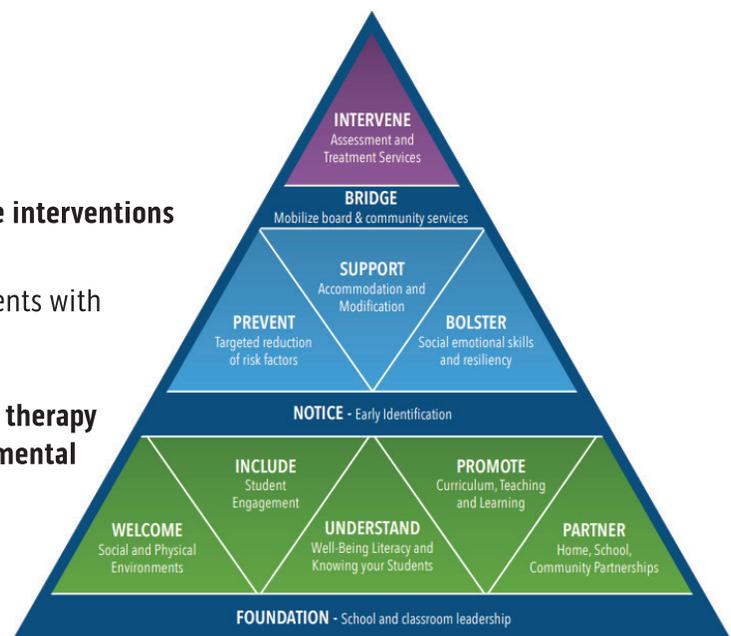
- Create caring conditions for learning
- Develop social and emotional skills
- Strengthen mental health knowledge

### TIER 2 – Necessary for Some (preventative interventions for students at risk)

- Provide mental health support for students with mild to moderate challenges

### TIER 3 – Essential for few (more intensive therapy for students struggling with a significant mental health problem)

- Ensure strong system pathways to community mental health providers for students and families needing more intensive support



## 2

# ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Engaging school and program leaders is an integral part of promoting mental wellbeing in schools. Understanding the importance of mental health promotion and prevention activities that can be undertaken by educators will help with embedding these practices into all learning environments and curriculum. Collaborating with school and system partners and establishing clear roles and responsibilities can create strong pathways for students and families in need of additional mental health support.

We can establish this goal by:

- working with educators to ensure mentally healthy spaces for learning and providing emotionally safe environments that promote academic achievement;
- working closely with the special education team to support students identified as having social emotional difficulties and providing support in the learning environment;
- working with caregivers to create circles of support that ensure supports are available for students and there is a wraparound approach; and
- partnering with community providers to ensure there are clear pathways to more intensive services when needed.



# LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS

## 3

Lakehead Public Schools is committed to ensuring student and staff mental wellbeing is a priority. Establishing wellness champions in every school to focus on and prioritize mental health promotion and information will be critical in setting the vision for moving ahead in establishing the organizational conditions necessary for embedding mental health into the fabric of our daily routines and tasks.

Lakehead Public Schools will communicate this vision by:

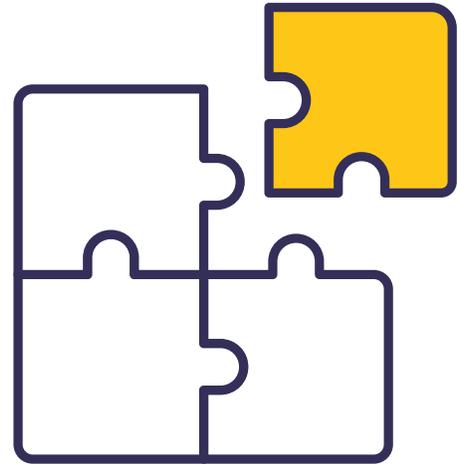
- promoting mental wellbeing and resources to ensure a culture of wellness for staff, prioritizing self-care and compassion;
- committing to ongoing quality improvement in the area of mental health ensuring that those focused on providing services to students are utilizing evidence-based frameworks and tools in their practice. These include social emotional learning strategies, therapeutic modalities, screening tools, and risk assessment tools; and
- communicating the Mental Health Strategy in all areas of the board to promote a shared understanding of mental wellbeing, mental health prevention and intervention at the staff and student level.



# 4

## CAPACITY BUILDING

Lakehead Public Schools acknowledges the need to prioritize belonging, relationships and safety for students to learn, be successful and reach their full potential. Beyond this foundational understanding that administrators, educators and staff possess is the opportunity to increase capacity and knowledge. This will focus on the areas of mental wellbeing, mental health promotion and prevention by way of professional development and training initiatives, educational opportunities, and awareness activities. We are committed to the ongoing learning and development of members of our school board.



Future opportunities for learning and development include:

Concentrating on the professional development for staff including:

- crisis intervention training;
- mental health literacy courses;
- how mental wellness impacts education and learning;
- the importance of understanding trauma, its impacts, and trauma informed approaches in classrooms; and
- understanding adverse childhood experiences and their impacts on students and families.

Concentrating on promotion of mental wellbeing for students by using the knowledge teachers accumulate, as well as the resources that enhance our curriculum such as School Mental Health Ontario materials and other educational resources developed and promoted by our valued community partners.

This will teach:

- in-class social emotional learning strategies;
- basic mental health literacy; and
- mental wellness and self-care.



**Committed to the success of every student**

[www.lakeheadschoools.ca/mentalhealth](http://www.lakeheadschoools.ca/mentalhealth)