



Evaluation of TVDSB Mental Health Strategic Plan

AERO Fall Conference
December 7, 2012

Philippe Venesoen, Research Associate
Sarah Folino, Research Associate
Thames Valley District School Board

Thames Valley District School Board

- One of the largest school boards in Ontario
- Coverage area of 7,313 square kilometers and spanning Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford Counties and the City of London.
- 166 schools (138 elementary, 28 secondary)
- Approximately 70,000 students
- Approximately 7,200 staff

Building the Foundation of the Mental Health Strategic Plan

Mission

- The purpose of the TVDSB mental health strategic plan is to promote mental well-being in order to enable student success

Vision

- Every school in the Thames Valley District School Board will be a mentally healthy school.

Development of Mental Health Strategic Plan

Plan was developed based on the following:

1. Review of school based mental health literature
2. Review of current mental health programs and services
3. Feedback from Board and community members
4. Teacher survey of mental health literacy and capacity

Review of current mental health programs and services

Services

- School Counseling
- Social Work Services
- Behaviour Support Team
- START Team
- Psychological Services

Programs

- Safe Schools initiatives
- Character Education
- Bullying awareness and prevention
- Inclusion and positive school climate initiatives
- Student Success Initiatives

Feedback from Board and Community Members: Structure

- Twenty focus groups conducted (Spring 2010)
- Participants: students; parents; staff ; administrators and community partners
- The verbatim answers were coded for specific themes
- Questions:
 - Define positive mental health
 - What is the Board currently doing?
 - What is working well? Not so well?
 - What supports would you like to see in the future?

Feedback from Board and Community Members: Findings

- Focus on the needs of students with respect to daily coping and adjustment.
- Students' positive mental health would be reflected in their active participation in their learning and social environment.
- Challenges dealt in a respectful and collaborative manner that promotes a student's sense of confidence and self-esteem.
- Evidence based and coordinated resources and supports available to parents and teachers

Teacher Survey of Mental Health literacy and Capacity: Structure

- Purpose was to survey all elementary and secondary teachers regarding their views and knowledge of mental health issues in their schools
- Survey tool was created using a collaborative process
- The survey was completed during a Special Education professional development day

Teacher Survey of Mental Health literacy and Capacity: Findings

- A total of 3913 teachers responded (87% response rate)
 - The average length of time teaching was 14 years.
 - Teachers had taught in an average of 3 different schools.
- Divisions (currently taught)
 - Primary: 35%
 - Junior: 26%
 - Intermediate: 20%
 - Secondary: 33%

Teacher Survey of Mental Health literacy and Capacity: Findings

- Average of 3 elementary students had been referred for discussion at a team meeting
- Average of 4 elementary students who had significant issues
- Approximately 7 students in a typical class of 24 students were considered by the teacher to have emotional and/or behavioural concerns.

Teacher Survey of Mental Health literacy and Capacity: Findings

Top three Actions taken

1. I changed the way I interacted with this student (76%);
2. I listened to what the child had to say about his/her problems (71%);
3. I discussed the students' issues with a Vice-Principal or Principal (68%)

Bottom two Actions taken

1. Students were referred to PDT or Board Counselling Services (29%)
2. Seek consultation from a mental health professional (22%)

Teacher Survey of Mental Health literacy and Capacity: Findings

Top six problems identified in classrooms: *(could choose multiple items)*

- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 1. Impulse control | 70% |
| 2. Anxiety | 63% |
| 3. Family dysfunction | 59% |
| 4. Anger management | 59% |
| 5. Stress | 47% |
| 6. Bullying/harassment | 43% |

Teacher survey of mental health literacy and capacity: Findings

- Item with lowest ***Awareness*** score:
 - Steps necessary to access local community services for mental health issues (40% not aware)
- Item with lowest ***Knowledge*** score:
 - Legislation related to mental health issues (41% not knowledgeable)
- Item with lowest ***Comfort*** score:
 - Talking with parents about their child's mental health (32% not comfortable)

Teacher survey of mental health literacy and capacity: Findings

- Items identified as having the greatest importance:
 1. More availability of system support staff
 2. Better preparation in teacher training to deal with mental health issues
 3. Greater access to specialized mental health consultations within schools

Evaluation of the Strategic Plan

STRUCTURE

- Mental Health and Wellness Committee
- Mental Health Strategic Plan Advisory Group
 - Multidisciplinary team (Psychology, Social Work, Spec. Ed., Learning Coordinators and Supervisors, SO's, Research & Assessment Services)
- Evaluation Sub-Committee
 - Board members including representatives from Research & Assessment Services

APPROACH

- Objectives Based and Decision Oriented
- Collaborative Process

Prioritized Goals of Mental Health Strategic plan

Building Staff Capacity

Creating Stigma-free Learning Environments

Promoting Mental Health and Resiliency

Building Staff Capacity

Areas of Focus

- Multi-disciplinary Mental Health Team
- Professional Development
- Initial-Teacher Preparation
- Integration with Equity and Inclusive Education
- Mental Health Literacy Resources
- Mental Health Awareness
- Collaborative Problem Solving

Creating Stigma-Free Learning Environments

Areas of Focus

- Student Voice
- Mental Health Youth Advisory
- Family Engagement
- Collaboration with Community partners for Workshops and/or Resources
- Curriculum integration

Promoting Mental Health and Resiliency

Areas of Focus

- Promoting Student Resiliency
- Promote Resiliency Awareness for Elementary Schools
- Database of Mental Health Programs and Resources
- Partnership Agreement Process
- Culturally Relevant Program Considerations
- School Based Practices and Program Review

Planning the Evaluation: Logic Model

Strategic Goal	Objectives	Outcomes	Measures	Activities	Outputs	Target	Timeline & Responsibility
	<i>Specific actions of what you want to accomplish.</i>	<i>What success looks like in the short and long term.</i>	<i>The methods used to measure outcomes.</i>	<i>Specific tasks that you will perform to accomplish your objective.</i>	<i>Short term results (the direct product of your activities); usually tracked for each year.</i>	<i>Individuals or groups to receive intervention/ participate in activity.</i>	

Planning the Evaluation: Logic Model

Strategic Goal	Objectives	Outcomes	Measures
Building Staff Capacity	Increase teacher's skills and knowledge	Increase number of teachers	Teacher survey of mental health literacy and capacity
	Promote wellness and assist students	Use of collaborative approaches	Survey of Psychology and Support staff
	Facilitate access to supports & resources	Increased use of resources	Referral and Consultation Patterns across the Board

Planning the Evaluation: Logic Model

Strategic Goal	Objectives	Outcomes	Measures
<p>Creating Stigma-Free Learning Environments</p>	<p>Create positive learning environment</p>	<p>Increased awareness and understanding</p>	<p>Safe Schools Survey – Mental Health Items;</p> <p>Student and parent feedback re activities</p>
	<p>Develop curriculum based initiatives that teach mental health and well being</p>	<p>Concepts are effectively taught to students</p>	<p>Curriculum review</p> <p>Teacher survey of mental health literacy and capacity</p>

Planning the Evaluation: Logic Model

Strategic Goal	Objectives	Outcomes	Measures
Promoting Mental Health and Resiliency	Integration of appropriate prevention and resiliency programs	Increased use of evidence based resiliency programs by staff and families	Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services Database use and content
	Identify approaches and practices to help direct future resiliency programs	Evidence based resiliency initiatives	Administrators survey re implementation of prevention and resiliency programs and initiatives

Measuring Process & Impact

Major Evaluation Tools and Methods

- Annual Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services
- Safe Schools Survey (additional mental health questions)
- Resiliency project – Administrator feedback
- Collaborative Problem Solving (pre/post survey)
- Participant feedback on MH presentations
- Support Staff Referral Patterns Survey
- Teacher Survey of Mental Health Literacy and Capacity

Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services

- 87% of Elementary Schools
- 93% of Secondary Schools
- Completed by Principals and various other school team members
- Schools to identify both Board and community programs and members.

Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services

Percent of Board Staff Providing Mental Health Support By Panel

Staff	Elementary	Secondary
Principal	90%	73%
Vice Principal	46%	81%
Learning Support Teacher	87%	92%
Classroom Teacher	82%	89%
Psychology Staff	77%	100%
Social Worker/School Counsellors	71%	100%

Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services

Percent of schools that have accessed Board related programs and services by panel

Program or Service	Elementary	Secondary
Friends For Life (Anxiety Program)	4%	8%
Mentally Healthy Schools Program	2%	12%
Mind Your Mind (Gr. 9)	0	46%
Mind Your Mind (Gr. 11)	0	35%

Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services

Community groups currently providing mental health supports – by panel

Program or Service	Elementary	Secondary
Child and Parent Resource Institute	65%	77%
Vanier Children Services	47%	8%
Craigwood Youth Services	12%	50%
Regional Mental Health London (Hospital-based program)	2%	31%
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	0	27%
Oxford-Elgin Child and Youth Centre	29%	35%

Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services

Percent of schools that are aware and have used mental health-related resources by panel

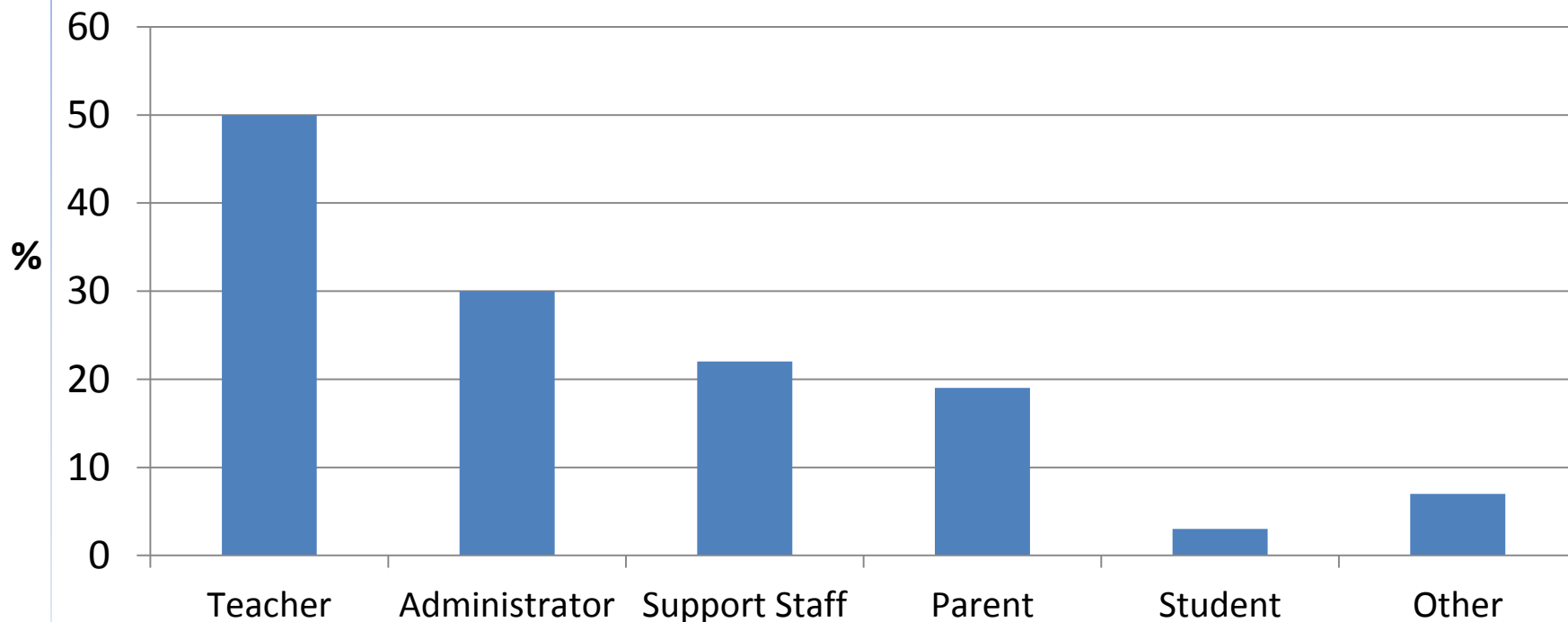
Resource	Elementary	Secondary
The Resilient Classroom <u>Use of this resource</u>	79% <u>21%</u>	92% <u>8%</u>
Mental Health Secondary Curriculum Guide <u>Use of this resource</u>	94% <u>6%</u>	71% <u>29%</u>
Making a Difference: An Educator's Guide to Child and Youth Mental Health Problems <u>Use of this resource</u>	64% <u>37%</u>	62% <u>38%</u>
Website Resources <u>Use of this resource</u>	63% <u>37%</u>	71% <u>29%</u>

Mental Health Consults & Referrals

- **326** consults over a two week period
 - 70% in Elementary schools
 - 30% in Secondary schools
- **601** formal referrals for mental health issues (36% of all referrals), the other 64% were for learning issues

Mental Health Consults & Referrals

Who Identified the Concern (Percentage)



Mental Health Consults & Referrals

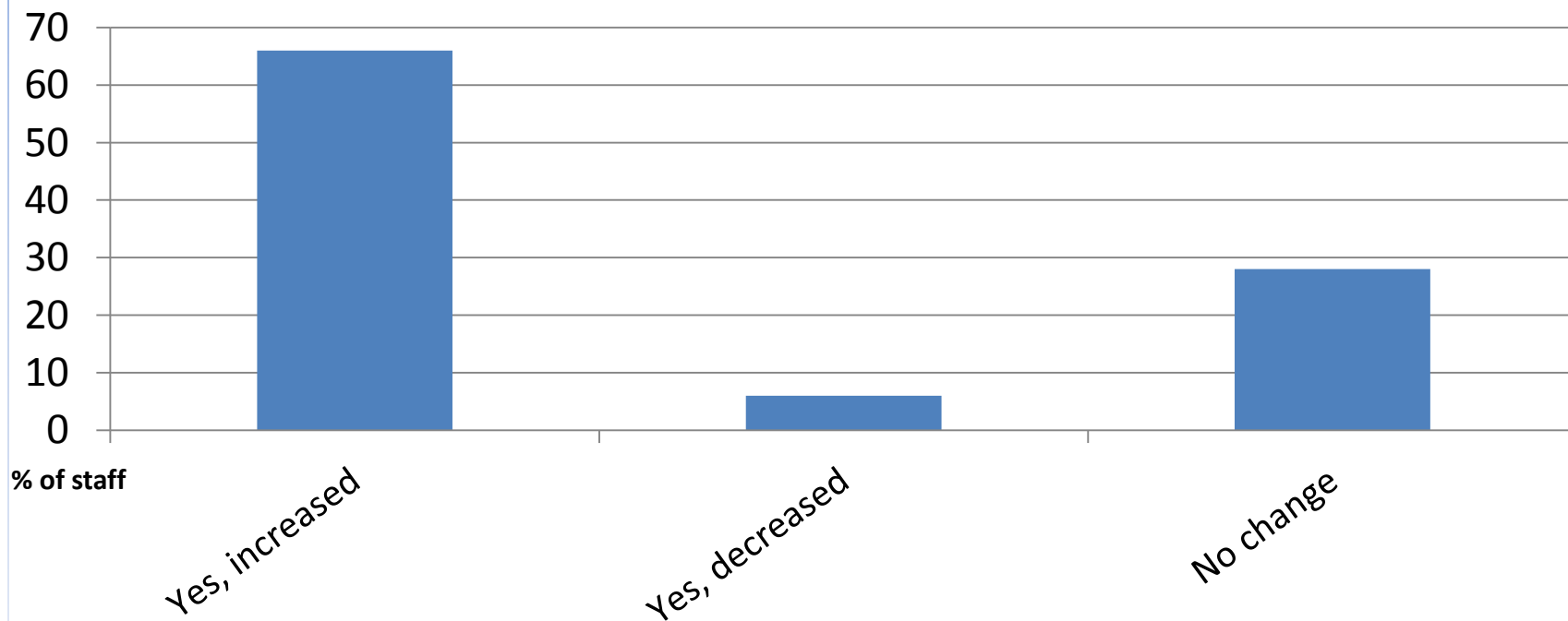
Top 10 Concerns Identified	Response Count (percent)
Mood/Depression	90 (15%)
ADHD	76 (13%)
Social Problems (unspecified)	71 (12%)
Violence/Aggressive Behaviour	59 (10%)
Anxiety	48 (8%)
Internalizing concerns (unspecified)	29 (5%)
Trauma/PTSD	27 (5%)
Suicidal Concerns	25 (4%)
Externalizing concerns (unspecified)	24 (4%)
ASD/PDD	24 (4%)
All other concerns (18)	113 (19%)

Mental Health Consults & Referrals

Next Steps Taken	Response Count (percent)
Provide resources/strategies to staff	153 (25%)
Provide resources/strategies to student/family	112 (18%)
Community referral	105 (17%)
Psychology referral	96 (16%)
Plan for formal team meeting (PDT)	60 (10%)
Referral to other TVDSB staff	32 (5%)
No further follow-up required	18 (3%)
Other	36 (6%)

Mental Health Consults & Referrals

Change in Number of Referrals Compared to Previous Years



Safe Schools Survey

- Nine questions added to Safe Schools Survey
- Questions pertained to feelings and perceived supports
- 23,322 surveys completed in Elementary schools
- Grades 4 to 8

Safe Schools Survey

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Percent of Students who Strongly Agree or Agree **by Division**

Item	Junior	Intermediate
I feel like I belong at this school	70%	66%
I learn better when I'm not feeling worried, sad or angry	84%	82%
People are concerned about the feelings of others	56%	50%
I know where to get help for me or a friend	81%	71%
Students are taught to care about the feelings of others	70%	63%
We talk at school about how we feel or handle stress	45%	34%

Safe Schools Survey

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Percent of Students who Strongly Agree or Agree **by Gender**

Item	Males	Females
I feel like I belong at this school	67%	69%
I learn better when I'm not feeling worried, sad or angry	80%	87%
People are concerned about the feelings of others	51%	57%
I know where to get help for me or a friend	75%	79%
Students are taught to care about the feelings of others	64%	70%
We talk at school about how we feel or handle stress	39%	43%

Safe Schools Survey

STUDENT FEELINGS

Percent of Students who reported Daily, Weekly or Monthly **by Division**

Item	Junior	Intermediate
I feel worried, sad, or stressed at school	35%	36%
I feel angry or upset at school	31%	30%
I am teased, called names and/or gossiped about feeling worried, sad, or angry	25%	22%

Safe Schools Survey

STUDENT FEELINGS

Percent of Students who reported Daily, Weekly or Monthly **by Gender**

Item	Males	Females
I feel worried, sad, or stressed at school	32%	39%
I feel angry or upset at school	30%	31%
I am teased, called names and/or gossiped about feeling worried, sad, or angry	23%	25%

Success Factors

COMMUNICATION

- On-going communication with administrative staff
- Senior administrators deliver key messages
- Communication with community partners and union representatives
- Remain well informed about provincial and national directions in order to align local priorities
- Encouraging feedback and dialogue from students and parents

Success Factors

IMPLEMENTATION

- Stay focused!
- Cultural shift before implementing specific programs
- Alignment with Board system level priorities and strategic directions
- Integration with Board & School Improvement Plans and existing programs

Success Factors

EVALUATION

- Build into overall strategic plan
- Start at the beginning and embed in planning structures
- Collaborate and dialogue over outcome measures, impact indicators
- Continue to ask: “how are we going to know whether or not this is effective?”
- Provide on-going outcome data and reports to planning group so that decisions are based on evidence and data

Next Steps

- Continue to collect and analyze data from various longitudinal sources:
 - Safe Schools Survey
 - Teacher Survey of Mental Health Literacy and Capacity
 - Annual Mental Health Survey of Programs and Services
 - Support Staff Referral Patterns

Questions

- Contact Information:
- Philippe Venesoen
- p.venesoen@tvdsb.on.ca

519-452-2000 x 20115

Thames Valley District School Board

1250 Dundas Street, London, Ontario, N6A 5L1