



Mental Health Lead (MHL) Role

What is the YMHAC Initiative?

The **Youth Mental Health and Addiction Champions (YMHAC) Initiative** is a partnership between the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario and public health units across the province of Ontario. The program supports students to become mental health champions in their schools.

The main goals of the YMHAC Initiative is to improve the health and well-being of youth by promoting mental wellness initiatives, helping to reduce the stigma about mental illness, and discouraging the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.

[Health Unit/Agency] has partnered with **[school board]** to identify and implement the YMHAC initiative into interested schools.

How does the Initiative Work?

Youth will be trained and supported to take on the role of “Youth Lead” and “Youth Champion” at their school and will form the Network of Champions.

The Public Health Leads will work closely with the School Staff Lead(s) (i.e., Child and Youth Worker, teacher), Mental Health Lead, school principal/vice-principal or designate, Youth Leads and Youth Champions to plan and carry out initiatives promoting mental health throughout the school year.

What is the role of a Mental Health Lead?

The primary responsibility of the Mental Health Lead is to be the liaison between the School Staff Lead, Public Health Lead, Youth Leads and the School Board and will assure the alignment of goals with the overall Board of Mental Health strategy. The Mental Health Lead will:

1. Have a membership on the local steering committee.
2. Provide support for the program integration within their Board as well as support other School Boards implementing the YMHAC initiative.
3. Network with other professionals in their Board and local communities about the YMHAC initiative.
4. Collaborate with the Public Health Lead, School Staff Lead(s) and school principal/





vice-principal or designate throughout the 2015-2016 school year to support the Youth Leads and Youth Champions during the YMHAC Initiative.

5. Provide support to the School Staff Lead(s) who are implementing the YMHAC Initiative.
6. Support the youth engagement principles and practices, as well as demonstrate interest in promoting best practices throughout the YMHAC initiative.
7. Be a resource for knowledge transfer and collaborate in the dissemination of local communication plans.
8. Assist with the promotion of the events.
9. Participate in evaluation activities (i.e., surveys, focus group), if required.
10. Provide feedback and recommendations to the initiative for long term sustainability.

