

Wellness Innovation Lab

QUESCREN Education and Vitality Forum 2023

Friday, November 3rd 2023
Presenter: Bobbie Variantzas
LEARN



LEARN

Leading English Education and Resource Network

LEARN's Provincial Resource Team (PRT) supports the
CLC Community School Network.

CLCs are dually mandated to support student success
and the vitality of the ESC.

Currently 90 CLCs in the province.
(9 English-language school boards
and 1 centre de services scolaire)



Overview of Wellness Innovation Lab

- Three year project funded by Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)
- The project is aimed at youth aged 15-29 in Secondary and Adult Education Centres
- Brings together youth, teachers, school staff and key community partners to develop local solutions to address mental health and wellness challenges.



What's the big idea?

- Follow a design thinking process to brainstorm and refine regular and ongoing activities that take place in the school and community
- Ideate and prototype activities that contribute to Social Emotional Learning competencies and a positive school climate
- Choose 1 or 2 ideas that can be implemented fairly quickly and easily. Revise, and do it again.



Avoiding the Program Trap

MYTH

'one-off' mental health programs & presentations are effective enough



FACT

school-based mental health programs work best when embedded in regular curricula



- Process, not product
- Youth, teachers, school staff and community partners co-ownership
- Ideas that can be practiced regularly and positively impact school climate

Who are we inviting?

- Students
- Teachers
- School Staff (School Counselors, Spiritual Animators and Administrators)
- School Board Staff with experience around mental health and wellness
- Mental Health professionals connected to the school (CLSC/CIUSSS)
- Community Partners working to support mental health and wellness

Groups of 7-25 people. Mostly students!



Some numbers ...

Wellness Innovation Lab



5

English-language School
Boards/Centre de Service
Scolaire



7

High Schools



31

School Staff



17

Community
Partners



105

Youth

5 English School Boards

English Montreal SB
Eastern Shores SB
Centre de Service Scolaire
du Littoral
Riverside SB
Lester B. Pearson SB

7 High Schools

Laurier Macdonald HS (2x)
Queen Elizabeth HS
St-Paul's River HS
Métis Beach School
Baie Comeau HS
St-Lambert International HS
LaSalle Community
Comprehensive HS

31 Staff

Principal - Vice Principal
Teacher
Student Councilor
Librarian
Psychologist/Intern
Nurse
SB Representative
Leadership Teacher
Child Care Worker
Family & School Support
Treatment Team Social
Work Technician
CLC Community
Development Agent

17 Community Partners

Municipality - Métis Beach
Heritage Lower St-Lawrence
North Shore Community
Association Sept-Iles
North Shore Community
Association Baie Comeau
Centre of Excellence for
Mental Health
Montérégie East Partnership
for the English-Speaking
Community
CLSC LaSalle
Ministère de L'Éducation du
Québec - DSREA
Community Health and
Social Services Network
Agape English -Speaking
Senior Wellness Centre
Preville Fine Arts Centre
East Island Network for
English Language Services
Pact de Rue
Camp LIFT

105 Youth

15 to 29 years of age
Sec 3-4-5



Laurier Macdonald HS

What was already happening?

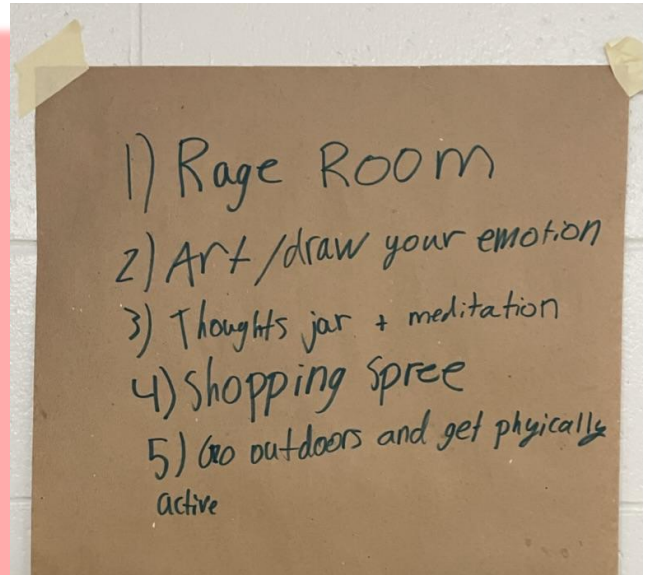
What was the impact?

Laurier Macdonald HS ... what happened

- Identified mental health initiatives already active in the school
 - Participants explored how they could be even better if ... and
 - came up with ideas for new initiatives, some of which could easily be implemented
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- Rage Room
 - Art time/meditation
 - Animal Therapy

Implemented during week of final exams

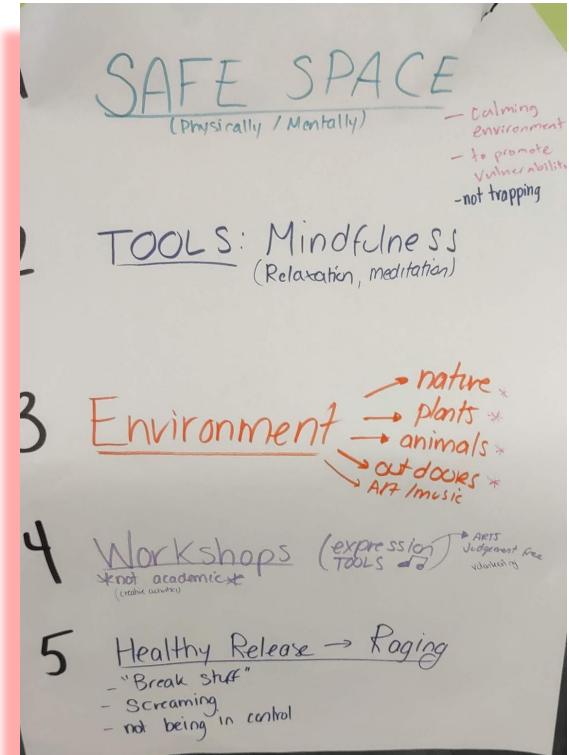
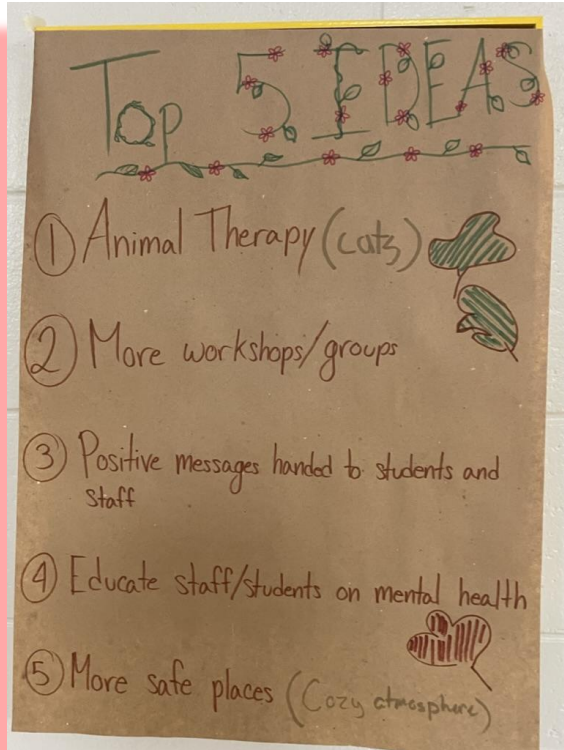
Students felt heard and validated

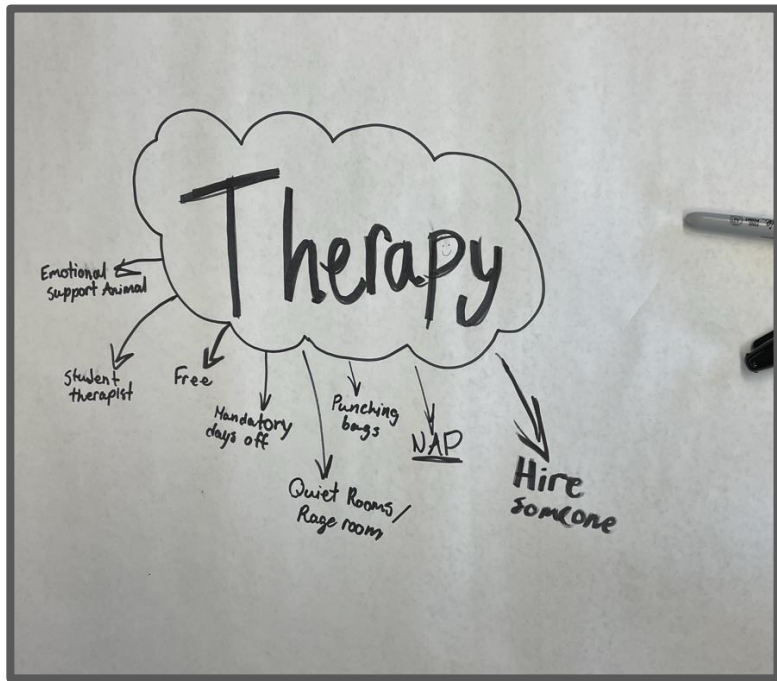


Recurring Themes

- More student outings
 - Opportunities to learn out of school - fresh air
- More access to therapy services, therapeutic spaces and peer support
- Information about wellness and opportunities for more sports, mindfulness and rage rooms!

A Thousand Words





No sleep

Therapy

Get that bag from school

Mental Health Check-Ins


WHO: Students + Staff


WHAT: Visual system to display how you are feeling and what you may need (need to leave, want to talk, etc.)

WHERE: On their desk

WHEN: As needed. Implemented now.

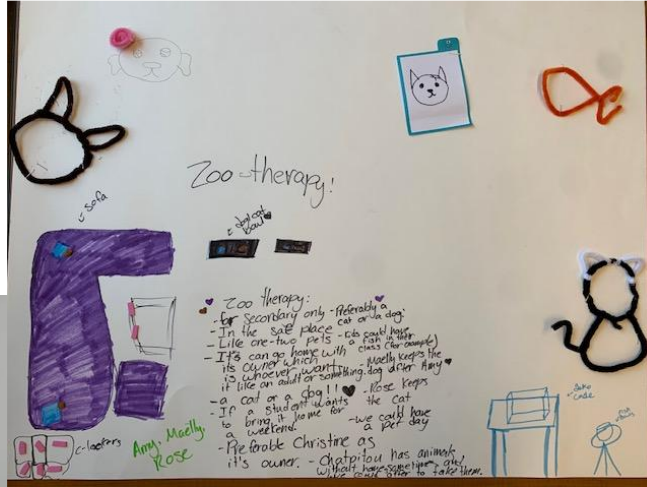
WHY: To acknowledge how you are feeling in a simple, discreet format. Give a means of communicating their feelings other than verbal.

 Feeling something, need a quick break (2-3 min)

 Feeling good

A Thousand Words

Some of the initiatives

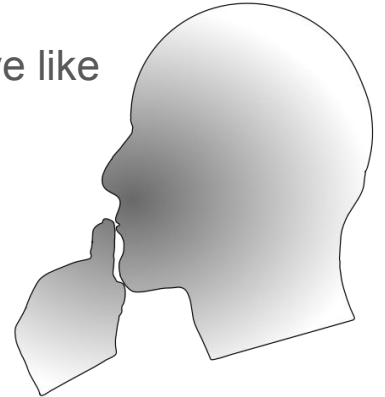


- Safe spaces
- Art therapy
- Animal therapy
- Buddy system
- Garden areas
- Cooking initiatives
- Music programs
- Awareness programs



To Consider

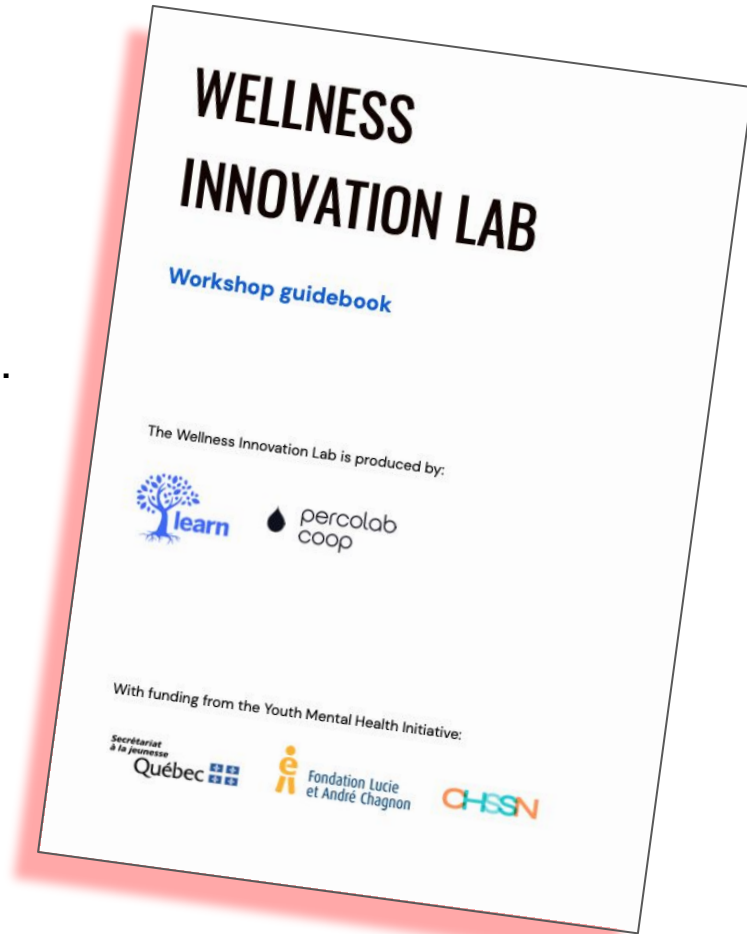
- What are the natural fits in your School/Board/Community to host an activity like a Wellness Innovation Lab?
- What are the barriers and concerns to hosting a Wellness Innovation Lab?
- What could we offer to reduce the challenges of bringing an initiative like this to your School/Board/Community?



We have a Guide!

- Interested?


Let's start with a conversation.





Thank You to our funders!

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**For more information,
please contact**

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