



Stigma-Free Community,

This month, we're offering hands-on tools to help you support youth mental health with confidence. Learn how you can make an impact and access our brand-new resources for school staff, parents, and caregivers.

- **Don't Miss Our Upcoming Events:** Join us in Fort St. John, BC on November 12th to learn about our upcoming Rural Minds Matter Awareness Campaign! Plus, don't miss Andrea Paquette and Mike Skrypnek at the [NCLGA Mental Health and Addictions Symposium](#), where they'll be speaking on stigma, mental health, and important implications for leaders.

- **Access the [Student Mental Health Toolkit](#) in French:** We've translated the Toolkit to make our resources accessible for French-speaking students, educators, and parents/caregivers across Canada!
- **Spotting Student Mental Health Concerns:** Learn how to recognize potential signs of mental health challenges in students and how you can respond as an educator.
- **Make An Impact by Sharing Your Story:** We are accepting contributions from parents and caregivers for our [Inspiring Stories](#) collection.
- **New Downloadable Resource on [Cyberbullying and Social Media Addiction](#):** Tips for youth to use technology in a healthy way and address online safety.

www.stigmafreementalhealth.com

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

# RURAL MINDS MATTER

Leading Together for Resilience



Delivering an anti-stigma & mental health awareness campaign to reach all BC residents living in rural or remote areas across Northern British Columbia.

AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING & ACCEPTANCE IN CANADA'S RURAL COMMUNITIES

## YOU'RE INVITED!

### Learn more about the awareness campaign that will:



Sharing relatable messages, lived experiences, and online resources such as the Society's school and rural online mental health toolkits.



Establish in-person peer support groups in BC's rural communities and schools.

### Andrea Paquette



**President & Co-Founder,**  
Stigma-Free Mental Health Society

### Mike Skrypnek



**Program & Development Lead,**  
Stigma-Free Mental Health Society

Please join us for an information session to discuss Stigma-Free Mental Health Society's 2024 Rural Minds Matter Awareness Campaign.



12 November, 2024  
4:30 pm - 7:00 pm PST



Pomeroy Sports Centre,  
Fort St. John, BC

#### To RSVP contact:

Tiffany Hetenyi: [Tiffany@fsjchamber.com](mailto:Tiffany@fsjchamber.com)  
Alice Wilcox: [info@stigmafreementalhealth.com](mailto:info@stigmafreementalhealth.com)

#### Presented by



#### RSVP

- Free event
- Seats are limited
- Appetizers & beverages will be served

#### Visit our website:



Thank you  
for your  
interest  
and support.

### Join Us at the NCLGA Mental Health and Addictions Symposium

We're pleased to announce that Andrea Paquette, President of the Stigma-Free Mental Health Society, and Mike Skrypnek, our Rural Minds Matter campaign lead, will be speaking about stigma and mental health, and important implications for leaders, at the [NCLGA Mental Health and Addictions Symposium](#) at the Prince George Conference and Civic Centre on November 13th and 14th. Don't miss the opportunity to learn their expert insights and strategies for breaking the stigma surrounding mental health and promoting mental well-being through education.



If you're attending, be sure to please stop by our exhibitor booth and say hello! Let's connect and explore how we can work together to make a difference.



## JOIN OUR ONLINE LEGACY LEARNING EVENT

NOVEMBER 26TH

On November 26th, we are hosting an event to share important information that will benefit you and your family. This will be an informative and entertaining presentation by our special guest and Program Lead, internationally recognized philanthropic author and speaker, Mike Skrypnek. Mike will share stories of legacy and give actionable ideas on tax and giving.

In Mike's 75-minute presentation you'll learn:

- That estate taxes can be minimized and even eliminated
- You can prevent yourself from being taxed "twice"
- How to defer capital gains when selling investments. Even with today's proposed budget changes!
- How to generate income for life with asset you own
- How you can take control of your legacy, and our government supports it.

## About the Speaker

Mike Skrypnek is the author of nine books, such as “BIG IMPACT GIVING” for philanthropic Canadians, and his most recent, “UNLlimited WORTH”. He’s an expert in guiding families in their personal journey to realize a bigger impact in their lifetimes and legacy. Since 2021, he helped families re-direct \$12.5 million to charitable causes that matter most to them.

Mike has conducted entertaining and educational presentations for thousands of baby boomers, lawyers, accountants, executives, and philanthropic professionals in Canada and the United States.

Mike and his family have been actively involved in volunteering and fundraising in Calgary and Squamish for the past twenty-five years. Their charitable fund is the Fit Family Fund and he is founder and Chairperson of UNLlimited WORTH Wellness Society.

Mike has been a member of the Professional Advisor’s Committee of The Calgary Foundation, board member of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners – Southern Alberta Roundtable and member of the Canadian Society Gift Planning Advisory Cabinet, board member with Sea-to-Sky Community Services and Stigma-Free Mental Health Society. He is a committee member and special advisor to numerous non-profit organizations in Calgary. Mike is looking forward to seeing you June 25th!

**Please join us: Tuesday, November 26th 2024**

**4:00 – 5:15 pm Pacific Time**

**Online Zoom Video Conference**

**RSVP before November 22nd by  
emailing [info@stigmafreementalhealth.com](mailto:info@stigmafreementalhealth.com)**





# The **STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT** IS AVAILABLE IN FRENCH

*Francophone educators, school counsellors, parents, and caregivers: you can now access the French version of our Student Mental Health Toolkit!*

These resources are designed to encourage mental health awareness, helping you to effectively support the young people in your life and while taking care of your own personal well-being. By offering the Toolkit in French, we aim to reach a wider audience and make no-cost mental health resources accessible to communities across Canada.

Start providing comprehensive mental health education at your school: visit the French Student Mental Health Toolkit to explore lesson plans, conversation guides, activities, and more. We invite you to share the Toolkit with those in your network who could benefit from it. Our goal is to ensure that every student, no matter their language or background, feels supported and understood.

[Visit the French Student Mental Health Toolkit](#)





## RECOGNIZING EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Educators are in a unique position to recognize when students may be dealing with mental health challenges. In your day-to-day interactions with students, you may notice changes that indicate they are going through a difficult time. While these changes don't necessarily mean that a student has a mental health condition, and only a qualified professional can provide a diagnosis, being aware of potential concerns can help you support your students and show them that you care. [Addressing mental health concerns](#) early on can make a significant difference in children's well-being and academic success.

Here are some signs to look out for and how to take action.

**Changes in Their Usual Behavior:** If a student's behaviour, mood, or class engagement suddenly shifts, it's a good idea to acknowledge this and prepare to monitor the situation. When these behaviours negatively impact them and their academic performance, and occur for a long period of time, this could indicate a need for further support.

*Helpful Tools:* Our [Conversation Cards](#) help educators initiate discussions about mental health in the classroom. You can also have your class take the Distress Quiz, available in the [Coping with Mental Health](#) section of our Student Mental

Health Toolkit. This quiz helps students assess their mental health and may be a helpful activity if you've noticed concerning behaviours.

**Signs of Anxiety:** Anxiety in students takes many forms, but it may appear as extreme worry about academics, shyness around other students, or a reluctance to participate in class. If you notice a student consistently worrying about their performance and refusing to do certain tasks, anxiety could be a factor.

For more information on signs of anxiety, depression, and OCD in children, refer to [Your Child & Anxiety: Information to Help While You Wait for Diagnosis](#). This downloadable resource provides valuable insights for parents, guardians, and educators.

**Mood Concerns:** Students may no longer be interested in activities they once enjoyed, be noticeably more angry or sad, or become easily irritable. However, mental health challenges might also present as periods of extremely high energy or confidence, so it is important to recognize if their usual behaviour has suddenly shifted.

---

## Taking Action

If you are concerned for a student's well-being, consider these next steps:

- If appropriate, have a conversation with the student. Let them know what you've noticed and ask if they would like to talk. Be supportive, encouraging, and listen actively to help them feel heard.
- Discuss the situation with parents/caregivers if necessary. Note that this is a necessity if the student has indicated they are planning to hurt themselves or someone else.
- Document any concerning behaviour.
- Consult other school staff, such as your school counsellor or principal, to facilitate further support and resources for the student.
- Make sure to follow your school's protocol for addressing mental health challenges in students or offering them support.
- Provide mental health education for your class to create a safe and stigma-free environment for all students.

Our Student Mental Health Toolkit provides **no-cost** resources for school staff to educate students on mental health and create a supportive classroom. We invite you to browse the following lesson plans that teach students how to understand and address mental health challenges:

[Understanding Mental Health Disorders \(Grades 8-12\)](#)

[Your Brain on Anxiety \(Grades 8-12\)](#)

[Talking to Trusted Adults About Mental Health and Reaching Out for Help \(Grades 4-7\)](#)



## [When Worries Become Worrying: Understanding Chronic Anxiety \(Grades 4-7\)](#)

Our lesson plans are conveniently adapted to align with both Manitoba and BC curricula. Browse the full library and search by topic and grade level:

[Manitoba Lesson Plans](#)

[BC Lesson Plans](#)



**PARENTS &  
CAREGIVERS:  
Share  
Your  
Inspiring  
Story!**

STIGMA-FREE  
MENTAL HEALTH  
AWARENESS UNDERSTANDING ACCEPTANCE

Are you a parent or caregiver who has supported a young person facing mental health challenges or has a mental illness? Do you have a story to share about your own mental health journey? We invite you to contribute to our [Inspiring Stories](#) collection, a platform where parents and caregivers can share personal stories to destigmatize mental health and offer encouragement to others facing similar challenges.

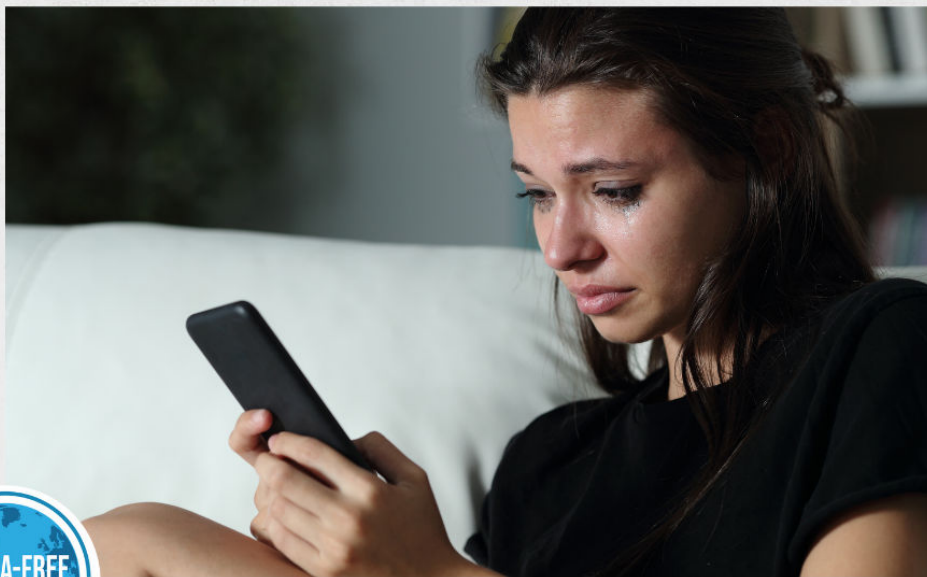
Connecting with others is a powerful way to reduce the shame and stigma that caregivers often face when coping with their own mental health challenges, while caring for a child who is experiencing a mental illness. Our Inspiring Stories provide a space for you to share your experience and make a difference in others' lives. For those selected, we provide a modest honorarium as a thank-you for your time and commitment.

If you're interested in contributing, [apply to share your story today](#) and make a positive impact on other families and caregivers!

## New Downloadable Resource

---

### Cyberbullying & Social Media Addiction



Social media is a staple in many young people's lives, and our newest resource tackles two pressing issues: cyberbullying and social media addiction. This guide is designed to help school counsellors, parents/caregivers, and educators talk to young people about navigating the online world safely. You can use it to encourage healthy tech habits among youth while teaching them how to recognize cyberbullying and problematic social media use. This resource is part

of a wide range of materials available for download at **no cost** from our Student Mental Health Toolkit:

[Access Our New Resource: Understanding Cyberbullying and Social Media Addiction](#)

[Register for full access to the Student Mental Health Toolkit](#)

**Stay  
Connected  
with us!**



[www.stigmafreementalhealth.com](http://www.stigmafreementalhealth.com)

Thank you for being part of our mission to raise mental health awareness and reduce stigma in communities across Canada. If you have questions or need help implementing our resources, feel free to [contact us](#). Let's work together to make a difference in your school and beyond!

With appreciation,

Andrea Paquette, President, SFMHS and the Stigma-Free Team





*Copyright © 2024 Stigma-Free Mental Health Society, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [unsubscribe from this list](#).