Introduction to the MHCC & Opening Minds

A presentation to:
Together Against Stigma Conference
San Francisco, CA
Friday February 20, 2015
Mental Health Commission of Canada

A non-profit organization, funded by the Health Canada, but at arm’s length from the government

We are a catalyst

Projects / Initiatives:

• Homelessness Research
• Knowledge Exchange Centre
• Mental Health Strategy for Canada
• National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
• Mental Health First Aid
• Opening Minds
Opening Minds Approach – Bottom Up

- Use an evidence-based approach, identify successful interventions
- Determine ‘active ingredients’
- Identify gaps and potential solutions
- Create toolkits and training materials
- Replicate successful interventions
- Advocate for structural change
Four Key Target Groups

Youth
Healthcare Providers
Workforce
Media
PHASE I

Launching HEADSTRONG at the National Youth Anti-Stigma Summit in Ottawa Nov. 16 - 21

PHASE II

Magnifying the results via regional events, supported by traditional & social media
HEADSTRONG REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

High Level Summary

- 14 community organizations have submitted high level proposals for a total of 22 regional summits
  - To date, plans are underway to host more than 5-thousand students from 191+ high schools
  - The total estimated cost of these summits is $72,400
  - 9 summits will be organized before April 1st 2015
Opening Minds: Lessons Learned
Lessons Learned

• One-offs don’t work
• Booster sessions are needed
• Voluntary attendance isn’t effective
• People need to be engaged
• Literacy programs can be harmful
• Not all contact based education is effective
• Big media campaigns aren’t effective at changing attitudes
• Structural or cultural change is needed
• It’s easier to change behaviours...attitudes will follow
• Grassroots networks and champions are needed
Thank you

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