
***A Shared Responsibility: Ontario's Policy
Framework for Child and Youth Mental Health***

**Presentation for
“Empowering Leadership in Challenging Times”
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Ministry of Children and Youth Services



Child and Youth Mental Health Policy Framework

- In November 2006, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) released *A Shared Responsibility: Ontario's Policy Framework for Child and Youth Mental Health* (<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/topics/specialneeds/mentalhealth/framework.pdf>).
- The Framework has four over-arching goals:
 1. A coordinated, collaborative and integrated child and youth mental health (CYMH) sector at all levels, creating a culture of shared responsibility
 2. Children and youth have timely access to a flexible continuum of appropriate programs within their own cultural, environmental and community context
 3. Enhanced understanding of, and ability to respond to, CYMH issues through the provision of high quality and effective services at all levels of need
 4. An accountable and well-managed CYMH sector

Child and Youth Mental Health Policy Framework (continued)

- The Framework reflects 12 mental health functions across a continuum and delivered across various child and youth serving sectors that are necessary to meet the mental health needs of children and youth
- The continuum includes a range of programs and services, from prevention programs for children and youth who are currently not at risk and not experiencing mental health issues, to those with complex, severe diagnosable mental illness who require intensive intervention
- Services may vary in type, intensity, specialization and mode of delivery, depending on local context, resources and level of need
- Children and youth may enter the continuum at any point

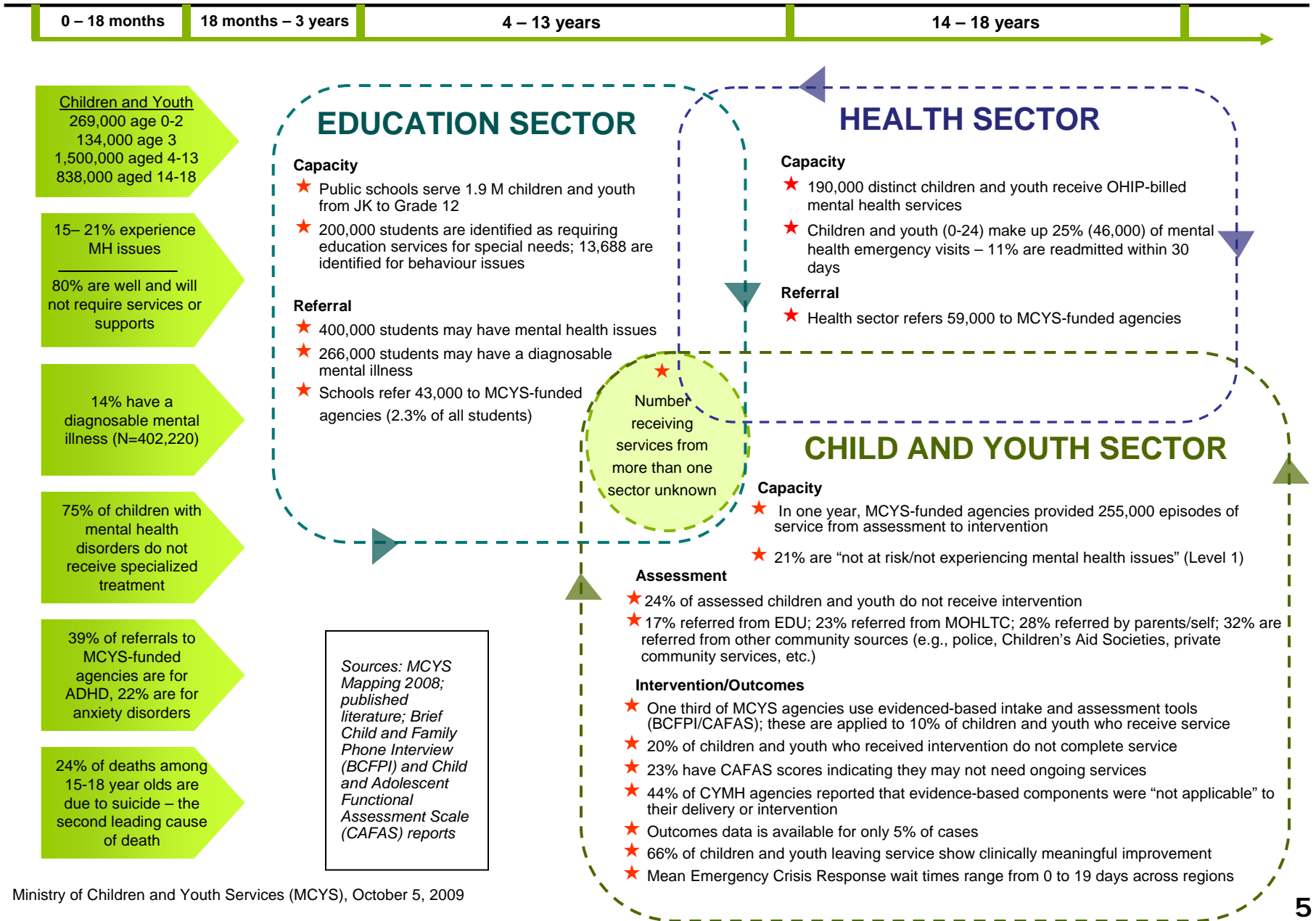
Mapping and Other Sources of Data

- A. Mapping, a “point in time” snapshot of child and youth mental health service delivery in 2007/08 fiscal year
 - MCYS funded agencies completed a survey for each individual program to collect data on
 - types and locations of programs and services (functions)
 - who currently receives these programs and services (target population)
 - sources of funding
 - wait times
 - 373 agencies reported on 1503 programs for 255,000 clients (not distinct)

- B. Provincial Assessment Tools: Brief Child and Family Phone Interview (BCFPI) and Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS)

- C. Additional data sources (e.g., published literature on prevalence)

Map of the Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) System



Areas of Inquiry

- Areas of inquiry include:
 - Service delivery and planning across sectors, (e.g., schools, health, agencies)
 - Risk screening, intake and assessment tools and processes for service planning and data collection
 - Establishing a baseline and expectations for evidence-based service delivery
 - Wait time management strategies

Priority Activities for Next Three to Five Years

1. Improve access to information about the child and youth mental health system for children and youth, parents, caregivers and other individuals involved with the child and youth sector
2. Implement a common approach to early risk screening, intake and needs assessment of children and youth across sectors
3. Develop referral and information sharing protocols to better manage transitions between service sectors
4. Establish standardized data and information collection procedures to enhance information portability across agencies and sectors
5. Establish a wait list management strategy which would include a standard definition of wait times, provincial expectations for wait times, and identified supports available while waiting for services
6. Identify specific program categories and develop common definitions with respective service delivery standards with outcome measures, to support improved effectiveness

Priority Activity # 2: Common approach to screening, intake and needs assessment

- A common approach to risk screening, intake and needs assessment across sectors will support early identification, increased appropriateness of referrals, and accurate prioritizing of clients, so that children and youth receive the right service at the right time based on their needs
- To inform future provincial policy direction, MCYS has partnered with the Ministries of Education and Health and Long Term Care to implement a Coordinated Risk Screening and Needs Assessment Pilot
- The goals of the Pilot are to:
 - support cross-sector collaborations with child and youth mental health
 - build a common understanding of mental health issues across sectors
 - build capacity for cross sector partners to identify and refer children and youth appropriately, including providing the tools necessary to support these activities
 - increase the use of evidence based practices to support a service delivery system that is based on needs
- The Pilot will test two models that screen children and youth to provide the right services at the right time to children and youth based on their needs. The Pilot will also review related service delivery processes (information sharing, transition and discharge protocols) between sectors to improve relationships and increase access to services between schools and community agencies