

For Immediate Release

Media Release

HWDSB Student Senate Plans Conference on Wellness

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton Welcomes Students to the new West 5th Campus

Hamilton, ON – May 13, 2014: Members of Student Senate at Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) concerned about youth mental health are leading plans for a conference that represents the first community run event hosted at the new integrated mental and medical health care facility at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton's West 5th Campus.

Students developed the program theme, itinerary and, in some cases, will develop and deliver workshops with Board and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton mental healthcare professionals at the Senate SWAY (Student Wellness Among Youth) conference. About 120 students will attend (seven per secondary school), with 30 students facilitating workshops and 20 staff supervising.

"For students, mental health and wellness are so important to reaching your potential in learning and in life," Student Trustee Filip Susic said. "It's exciting that we are bringing students together to focus on wellness in a way that will make a real difference as they return to their schools," added Student Trustee Carly Van Egdorn.

Attending students – selected by schools for demonstrating leadership or an interest in mental health and well-being – will gain a holistic perspective towards mental health at the conference. Student Senate encourages participants to use this new understanding to share ideas and participate in mental health actions through their school's Positive School Climate team, Health Action Team or school committee on mental health.

The conference on Friday, May 16 has three goals:

- Promote positive mental well-being among students through three different domains of mental health: Physical, Mental, and Self-Expression
- Educate students about the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle and possible remedies for stresses that they may experience during their daily lives
- Build student relationships with community partners and learn from mental health professionals at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

Workshops align with the three domains of mental health. *Physical* wellness workshops include: the Positive Effects of Outdoor Physical Activity, Urban Nature Walk and The Wellness Olympics. *Mental* wellness workshops include: Laughter Yoga, Deadline (an organizational game) and Open Space Discussions. And *self-expression* workshops include: Creativity Centre (Drum Circle, Music Therapy), Graphic Art and Art Therapy.

"When we opened the new facility at the West 5th Campus, we set out to re-imagine medical and mental health care," says Jodi Younger, Director Mental Health and Addiction Services, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton. "By inviting the community to hold events like this student driven mental health conference at the West 5th Campus, we're hoping to inspire the community's next generation of leaders to envision a tomorrow that helps eradicate the stigma associated with mental illness and addiction."

Media are invited to attend and speak with organizers, Board representatives, mental health professionals, clinicians and researchers from the hospital and student participants.



Conference Details:

WHEN: Friday, May 16, 2014, 9:30 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.

WHERE: West 5th Campus, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton | 100 West 5th Street, Hamilton, ON
Arrive at the Outpatient Entrance off of Fennell Avenue. Event will be held in the public zone of the hospital (conference rooms, auditorium) and outside on the grounds of the facility.

Social:

Live tweeting from the event on Twitter using the hashtag #HWDSBSway. Follow @STJOESHAMILTON and @HWDSB for updates.

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About HWDSB:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has a vision in which all students achieve their full potential. Embracing student achievement, engagement and equity, the Board's staff strives to provide relevant, responsive education so that each of our 49,000 students becomes lifelong learners and contributing citizens in a diverse world. Learn more at www.hwdsb.on.ca or follow us on Twitter @hwdsb

About St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton:

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton is a regional leader in patient-centred care providing acute care, research, teaching, community and international outreach programs throughout our network. Since being founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1890, our hospitals span three specialized campuses in the Greater Hamilton Area (Charlton Campus, West 5th Campus and King Street Campus), with St. Joseph's Villa Dundas providing long-term care and St. Joseph's Home Care providing personalized home care traversing the reach of our region. For more information about St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, please visit www.stjoes.ca.

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