



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

HEADSTRONG

Your Speaker's Story

SPEAKER TRAINER TOOLKIT



**BE BRAVE
REACH OUT
SPEAK UP**

ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit will help equip you with the skills and knowledge to share your personal story of hope and recovery from mental illness. If you are a family member or caregiver, becoming a speaker and sharing your experiences with mental health problem or mental illness are also important to an anti-stigma program. By the time you have completed the training process, it is our hope that you know how important your story is to the success of reducing stigma.

ABOUT OPENING MINDS

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) was established by Health Canada in 2007 with a 10-year mandate to act as a catalyst for improving mental health systems and reducing the stigma associated with mental illness. The MHCC launched Opening Minds in 2009 to tackle the stigma problem head-on.

Seven million Canadians will experience a mental health problem or a mental illness this year. This means that most of us will know someone who has experienced a mental health problem, yet there still exists the troubling and frustrating stigma related to mental illness. Many describe stigma as more life-limiting and disabling than the illness itself, and stigma is also a major barrier to people seeking help.

In 2001, the World Health Organization declared stigma as the “single most important barrier to overcome.” Over the last five years, Opening Minds has become the largest systematic effort in Canadian history focused on reducing stigma related to mental health problems or mental illnesses, and the only anti-stigma initiative in the world with such a broad base of academic support. Following five years of extensive research, Canada is now considered a world leader in stigma research. The launch of the Youth Anti-Stigma Initiative signals a shift from the research phase to the roll out of evidence-based, anti-stigma programs to schools and communities across the country.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit is based on the work of many, including research from Heather Stuart, Queen's University, Principal Investigator (Opening Minds, Youth Projects), along with her team of researchers. As well, the fine work of the Durham Talking About Mental Illness Coalition (TAMI) and Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services must be acknowledged as invaluable in the creation of this toolkit. This toolkit and all of the work undertaken at the Mental Health Commission owe a debt of gratitude to people with lived experience with mental health problems and mental illnesses who willingly share their stories of hope and recovery.

Opening Minds, the anti-stigma program of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, would also like to acknowledge the work of:

Calgary Partnership Program
Laing House
Stop the Stigma
The Dream Team
SAS Partnership Program
Beautiful Minds
CMHA Calgary.

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of:

**CMHA Community
Education Program**
Calgary, AB

Youth Speak
Halifax, NS

Mental Health Matters
Digby, NS

Iris the Dragon
Perth, ON

Edward the Crazy Man
Toronto, ON

Mind Your Mind
London, ON

TAMI Ottawa
Cornwall, ON

**Difficult Lives.
Inspiring Stories.**
North Bay, ON

Elevated Grounds
Toronto, ON

Partners for Life
Montréal, QC

Key 56
Montréal, QC

Partnership Program
Regina, SK

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Your Role

AS A SPEAKER TRAINER

WHAT WE LEARN FROM TAMI

The Durham Talking About Mental Illness Coalition (TAMI) has held 10 high school summits, four intermediate grade summits, and consulted on seven summits in other areas of the country. TAMI has been using speakers with lived experience in both summits and classroom-based presentations since it was formed in 2002, and through their experiences we have learned the following:

- The key to success of a contact-based education program is the proper training, support, and ongoing recognition of the speaker group.
- Don't rush the process. Make sure that each person who came forward to share their stories followed the same processes for storytelling.
- Individuals reach milestones at different times and the training process is designed to complement their differences.
- The group being trained hears the consistent message that their contribution is the most important piece of the program.
- Speakers are teachers. The process they participate in to become a "speaker teacher" is respectful, caring, and flexible.
- The health of speakers is a priority and they will not be asked to speak in front of a classroom until they are comfortable and ready to take on this new challenge.
- Speakers know that the lines of communication are always open between themselves and the Speaker Trainer/coordinator.
- The training process needs to create a sense of trust between you and the speakers in your youth anti-stigma program.
- TAMI speakers have openly stated that the training process and the welcome they receive from students and school staff has a tremendous impact on their own recovery journey.
- It is important that someone from your organization is who is familiar with this training model is present to support the speaker when he or she is making a presentation.



CONTACT-BASED EDUCATION

When youth have the opportunity to interact with a speaker – a person with lived experience of a mental health problem or mental illness who has received support and training in order to share their recovery journey with youth – and to ask questions, they begin to see the person rather than simply their mental health problem or mental illness. It is an important and crucial step in successful, effective youth anti-stigma programs towards the reduction of stigmatizing attitudes and behaviours among young people.

Speaker Recruitment

Contact-based education is at the core of mental health education and the battle to end stigma. Speakers who are properly trained, supported, and consistently recognized for the strength they demonstrate each time they speak to a group, will want to continue to the best of their ability to remain a part of your team.

If you have an existing speaker base, you may want to share the Speaker Toolkit with them to see if any of the information contained in it proves to help edit and/or shape their stories of hope and recovery.

If this is your first venture into the contact-based model of mental health education, there are a number ways to attract the interest of potential speakers. In some communities, the participating organizations designed a speaker recruitment flyer (see **Appendix A**) that had information on the program, the speaker's role, and the contact information of the speaker trainer. Community Organizations may also have their own networks of individuals who are living and managing their mental health problem or mental illness. Speakers also have their own network and in some cases, a trained speaker on your team will refer a colleague to also take the steps necessary to participate the project.

Regardless of how you attract the attention of potential speakers, each community will have a person (coordinator) who is the key point of contact.

In your role as speaker trainer/coordinator, you will want to know some key findings and insights shared by other areas of the country. For example, **Appendix B** includes sample speaker application forms.

Your first contact with a potential speaker may be via email or phone. Either way, this connection is the beginning of a working relationship where honesty, support, and trust are key ingredients. From the beginning, your potential speaker needs to know from that in your role as speaker trainer, you will teach the speaker the skills needed to be a very well-received speaker; however, you are not the speaker's case manager or individual therapist. You will provide support as the speaker crafts his or her story, practice the story, and presents it to the community group. You will take in the recommendations of the group to assist your speaker with any edits to their draft. Each of your speakers need to know that, when they have completed the process, you will be the person who will schedule them and support them at speaking presentations.

VOLUNTEER RETENTION

Once you have your group of speakers trained, it's important to plan retention strategies, including recognition. Providing an honorarium, covering travel costs, presenting awards, and bringing speakers together for social events shows your speakers that you appreciate them and the work they are doing for the anti-stigma program.



Key Items to Include

IN SPEAKER MEETINGS AND TRAINING SESSIONS

REINFORCE THE SPEAKER'S ROLE IN THE PROGRAM:

- Speakers are 'teachers' – educating youth about mental health, mental health problems, and mental illnesses.
- The speaker attend training sessions/meetings to understand the program and acquire presentation skills.
- Each speaker is supported in the development of a 12-15 minute speech highlighting the speaker's own recovery journey.
- When ready, the speaker tells his or her story to groups of 20 or more high school students, either at a summit event or in a school.
- With support from the session facilitator, the speaker will answer – in a positive and genuine manner – the students' questions about his or her own experiences.
- Each speaker must submit to a Police Reference Check. Schools generally require this of anyone that is going to work with students.
- All speakers must be punctual for all presentations – arrive on time! Communication is key to the success of the program and a speakers need to inform the program coordinator as soon as possible if they are unable to attend a presentation so that an alternate speaker can be arranged.
- > Use the elements laid out in *Sharing Your Personal Story: Speaker Toolkit* as a guide to structuring your training program. This should include story development, taking into account the audience, including key messages, presentation skills and dealing with anxiety a speaker might experience along the way.

Four key messages to be included in presentations are:

1. There is hope – people can and do recover from mental health problems and mental illnesses
2. People are not defined by their mental health problems or mental illnesses
3. People living with mental health problems or mental illnesses can and do have happy and successful lives
4. Everyone has the potential to take steps to reduce stigma

CONFIDENTIALITY

In your role as a Speaker Trainer, you will hear very personal stories. You might also hear personal disclosures from students or teachers during or after a presentation.

Keep the things you hear confidential. This applies to your role as a trainer, as well as to the speakers in your program.

In addition, remember that speakers should never use the real names of family or friends, individual mental health workers, organizations or others when telling their story. Instead, use titles such as my "friend," "brother," "nurse," "doctor" to refer to these people. This will ensure that the speakers are honouring the rules of confidentiality.

When helping a speaker develop his or her story and a bad experience is being shared, public criticism of an individual or organization by name is not allowed. It is okay to talk about these experiences, but specific individuals or organizations should never be identified.

Appendix A

SAMPLE SPEAKER RECRUITMENT FLYER



Interested in Becoming a TAMI Speaker?

Are you living with a mental illness?

Or are you a family member/ caregiver of someone living with a mental illness?

The T.A.M.I. program is always looking for new speakers to help stomp out stigmas associated with mental illness.

T.A.M.I. Speaker Training

The T.A.M.I. Coalition is privileged to have members of the community who are living with mental illness share their experiences with others.

Speaker screening, training, support and Recognition is provided by the T.A.M.I. Coalition to the dedicated individuals who are part of the program.

Winner
Minister's Award
for
Innovation in
Health Promotion
2007
Ministry of Health and
Long Term Care

Winner
IBM
Leading Practices Award:
Summits On Stigma -
Enhancing the Patient
Experience Through
Destigmatizing People with
Mental Illness
2007

"Be the change you want to see." - Gandhi

For more information contact:
Christina Papadopoulos
CMHA-Durham
Community Health Promotion & Public Relations
Tel: 905-436-8760 ext. 107

Purpose:

To bring together community agencies, schools, youth, people with mental illness and other community members to develop and deliver awareness programs for secondary school students in Durham Region. This program was originally created by the Mood Disorder Association of Ontario, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the Canadian Mental Health Association.

In Durham Region a local T.A.M.I. Coalition was formed and has been working on addressing the issues associated with stigma and mental illness since 2002.

Goals:

To eliminate or reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

To provide secondary school teachers with the appropriate support and materials to implement an in-class awareness program.

To provide secondary school students and teachers with the appropriate support and materials to develop school wide, student driven awareness programs.

To provide an opportunity for secondary school students to learn from people who have experienced mental-illness first hand.

To help students to understand where and how they can access help for themselves and their peers.

Membership:

Whitby Mental Health Centre
The Youth Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association - Durham
Pinewood Centre of Lakeridge Health
Mood Disorders Association of Durham
Durham District School Board
Durham Catholic District School Board
Durham Mental Health Services
Durham Family Court Clinic
Resources for Exceptional Children and Youth -
Durham Region
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Community Members
Lakeridge Health - Child, Youth & Family Program

Appendix B

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORMS



T.A.M.I.

TALKING ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

Guest Speaker Application

Please note that applicants must be 18 years or older to apply

Date:

Name: (Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms)

Address:

City: Province: P.Code:

Day Phone Number: Call # first

Night Phone Number: Call # first

Cell Phone: Call # first

Email: Call # first

Please indicate which number you prefer we call first

1. How did you hear about the TAMI program? Please be specific.

2. What information do you know about the TAMI program?

3. How do you feel about public speaking?

4. What past experience have you had regarding public speaking?

Appendix B

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORMS

5. How do you feel about sharing your personal story in front of others?

6. How would you feel about having your story on video?

7. As the TAMI presentations happen during school hours (primarily on Thursdays), can you volunteer your time during the day?

Yes: No:

8. As the TAMI presentations are on average 3 hours in length (this includes travel time), how much time can you volunteer? (# per week/ month, etc.)

9. Please describe your involvement with the mental health system?

10. How would you describe your current mental health and/or well-being?

11. Is there a situation/issue that could potentially cause you personal discomfort or concern?

12. Do you have access to transportation to attend speaking engagements?

Yes: No:

Appendix B

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORMS

13. Are you willing to get a confidential Police Records Check?
(Please note: A positive PRC does not necessarily mean that you will be excluded from participating. For further information, please contact the Speaker Trainer.)

Yes: No:

14. Do you have other skills or strengths, which you feel may be beneficial to the TAMI program?

15. Have you read the enclosed speaker job description and are you ready to begin the process?

Yes: No:

Please provide us with two references who are **not** family members:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Please submit your application via mail, fax or email to:

***Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences
Attention: Abby Whitehurst-Oad
700 Gordon St.
Whitby, Ontario
L1N 5S9***

Fax: 905-430-4463

Email: whitehursta@ontarioshores.ca

Once your application has been reviewed by the Coalition, you will be promptly contacted.

Thank you for your interest in the TAMI Program.

Appendix B

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORMS



BEAUTIFUL MINDS VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Must be 14 years or older to apply

Please Print

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone No. (Res.) _____ (Bus.) _____

Cell No.: _____ Email: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone No. _____

Why are you interested in volunteering with Beautiful Minds?

How did you hear about volunteering with us?

Have you had any academic, volunteer or practical experience related to work in the mental health field? Please describe.

On a scale of 1 to 10, rate how comfortable you are in public speaking (1 being Very Uncomfortable and 10 being Very Comfortable)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please check off the times you are most available to volunteer.

Daytime: Mornings _____ Afternoons _____

There may be some Evenings _____ and some Weekends _____

Appendix B

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORMS

Please list your volunteer experience.

NAME OF ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	YOUR VOLUNTEER ROLE

Please list your work experience.

NAME OF ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	YOUR VOLUNTEER ROLE

Please give three references that we may contact on your behalf. Include paid or volunteer work, professionals, and friends.

CONTACT PERSON	STREET ADDRESS/CITY	POSTAL CODE	DAYTIME TELEPHONE NO.

The above information has been provided to the best of my knowledge.

Signature Date

Thank you for filling out this application with our agency. Please return to:

Volunteer Services
CMHA, Beautiful Minds
Orchard Park
5420 Hwy 6N, R.R. #5
Guelph, ON N1H 6J2





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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Mental Health Commission of Canada,
Opening Minds

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Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2C 3G3

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