



## Public Health Lead (PHL) Role



### What is the YMHAC Initiative?

The **Youth Mental Health and Addiction Champion (YMHAC) Initiative** is a partnership between the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario and public health units across the province of Ontario. The program supports students to become mental health champions in their schools.

The main goals of the YMHAC Initiative is to improve the health and well-being of youth by promoting mental wellness initiatives, helping to reduce the stigma about mental illness, and discouraging the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.

[Health Unit/Agency] has partnered with [school board] to identify and implement the YMHAC Initiative into interested schools.

### How does the Initiative Work?

Youth will be trained and supported to take on the role of “**Youth Lead**” and “**Youth Champion**” at their school and will form the *Network of Champions*.

The **Public Health Leads** will work closely with the **School Staff Lead(s)** (i.e., Child and Youth Worker, teacher), **Mental Health Lead**, **school principal/vice-principal or designate**, **Youth Leads** and **Youth Champions** to plan and carry out initiatives promoting mental health throughout the school year.

### What is the role of a Public Health Lead?

Primary responsibilities of a **PHL** are in the areas of planning, implementation and evaluation for the RNAO's YMHAC Initiative, in the local Public Health Unit. The **PHL** will:

1. Be the linking agent between the RNAO International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines Program and their home organization.
2. Have a membership on the local steering committee.
3. Network with other professionals in their organizations, district school boards and local communities about the YMHAC Initiative.
4. Seek, create, and coordinate opportunities to promote best practice guidelines related to youth engagement and mental health and addiction.





5. Provide support to other health unit staff implementing the YMHAC Initiative.
6. Assist with operational support for the program integration within their organizations, community and schools.
7. Be a resource to the local organization and/or local region for knowledge transfer.
8. Actively be involved in creation and dissemination of local communication plans.
9. Provide support in planning, promoting and delivering all YMHAC Initiatives/events.
10. Deliver a local training session/workshop to students interested in the YMHAC Initiative.
11. Collaborate with the **School Staff Lead(s)**, to develop and mentor **Youth Champions** and **Youth Leads** throughout the YMHAC initiative.
12. Incorporate Youth Engagement principles and practices, as well as demonstrate interest in promoting best practices.
13. Communicate with the **Mental Health Lead**, the **School Staff Lead(s)** and the **principal/vice-principal and/or designate** on action items and outcomes of the YMHAC initiative.
14. Co-chair **Network of Champions** meetings with **Youth Leads** and **School Staff Lead(s)**. Meetings will be held once a week during lunch hour at the participating school (dates and location TBD).
15. Coordinate evaluations of the YMHAC Initiative.

