



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

**LA TÊTE HAUTE  
HEADSTRONG**



**PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP**

# HEADSTRONG: AN EVIDENCE BASED YOUTH ANTI STIGMA INITIATIVE

*Ottawa April 7-8, 2016*



# Welcome

Bob Heeney: National Coordinator, MHCC Headstrong



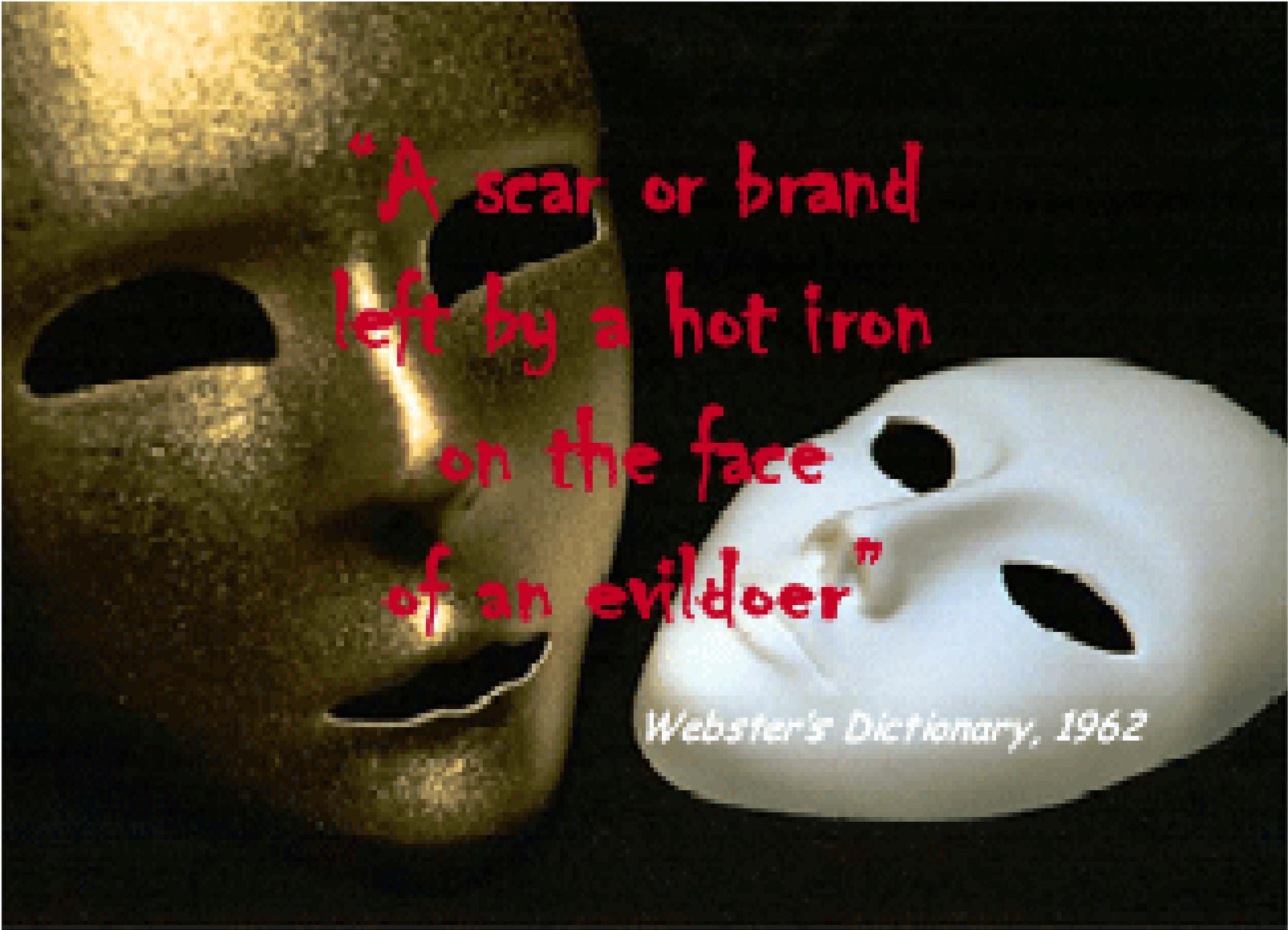


## Group Overview

Why did you choose this workshop?

What do you hope for?





“A scar or brand  
left by a hot iron  
on the face  
of an evildoer”

*Webster's Dictionary, 1962*



# History of Opening Minds

---

- NOT a national advertising campaign
- Take a targeted approach: Youth, Healthcare providers, the Workforce and News Media
- NOT reinvent the wheel
- Build on existing strengths in communities across the country
- Issued an RFI in 2009 to organizations who ran programs to reduce stigma aimed at one of our first two target groups
- About 250 submissions for Youth and Healthcare programs designed to reduce stigma
- OM has evaluated about 60 programs to see what works to reduce stigma





## Why MHCC Works to Reduce Stigma

7 Million Canadians will experience a mental health problem this year

Males and females are equally affected by mental health problems

Many people living with a mental illness say the stigma they face is worse than the illness itself



40% of Canadian parents would not tell anyone if their child had a mental illness

75% of young Canadians with a mental health problem do not seek help

60% of youth who sought treatment in the last year say they have been affected by stigma



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



## From the Commission

Stigma is the result of negative and prejudicial attitudes and behaviours that are expressed by people to those living with a mental health problem or a mental illness. Stigma is destructive. It leaves a mark of shame that makes people feel different and socially excluded. It is a major barrier to recovery.





# Mental Health Continuum



Optimal Mental Health

Optimal Mental Health *with* a Mental Health Illness (diagnosed)

Optimal Mental Health *without* a Mental Illness

Serious Mental Illness

No Symptoms of Mental Illness

Poor Mental Health *with* a Mental Illness (diagnosed)

Poor Mental Health *without* a Mental Illness



Poor Mental Health



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP

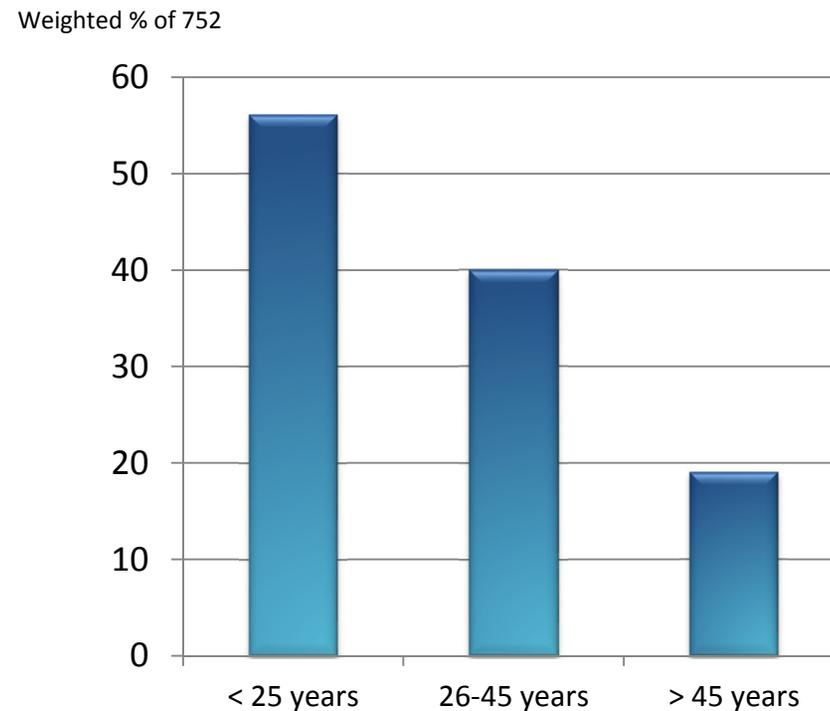


## Youth are a High Risk Group

- The majority of mental disorders begin during youth so they are at high risk for stigma
- Youth are interested in mental disorders, stigma, and are willing to learn
- Youth bring a sense of social justice to the table that is important in fighting stigma
- Access to youth in school makes targeted programs feasible
- CTF survey showed that teachers want mental health to be a priority

***“Young people feel the impacts of stigma more than any other group in Canada.”***

12-month Stigma Impact by Age Group for Those Treated for a Mental Health Condition in Past Year who Reported Some Stigma



(Source: Rapid Response Survey (n~10,000), Opening Minds, MHCC & Statistics Canada, Opening Minds Supplement, Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 2014)



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



## Opening Minds Youth Pilot Projects Bottom-Up Approach to Sustainable Development



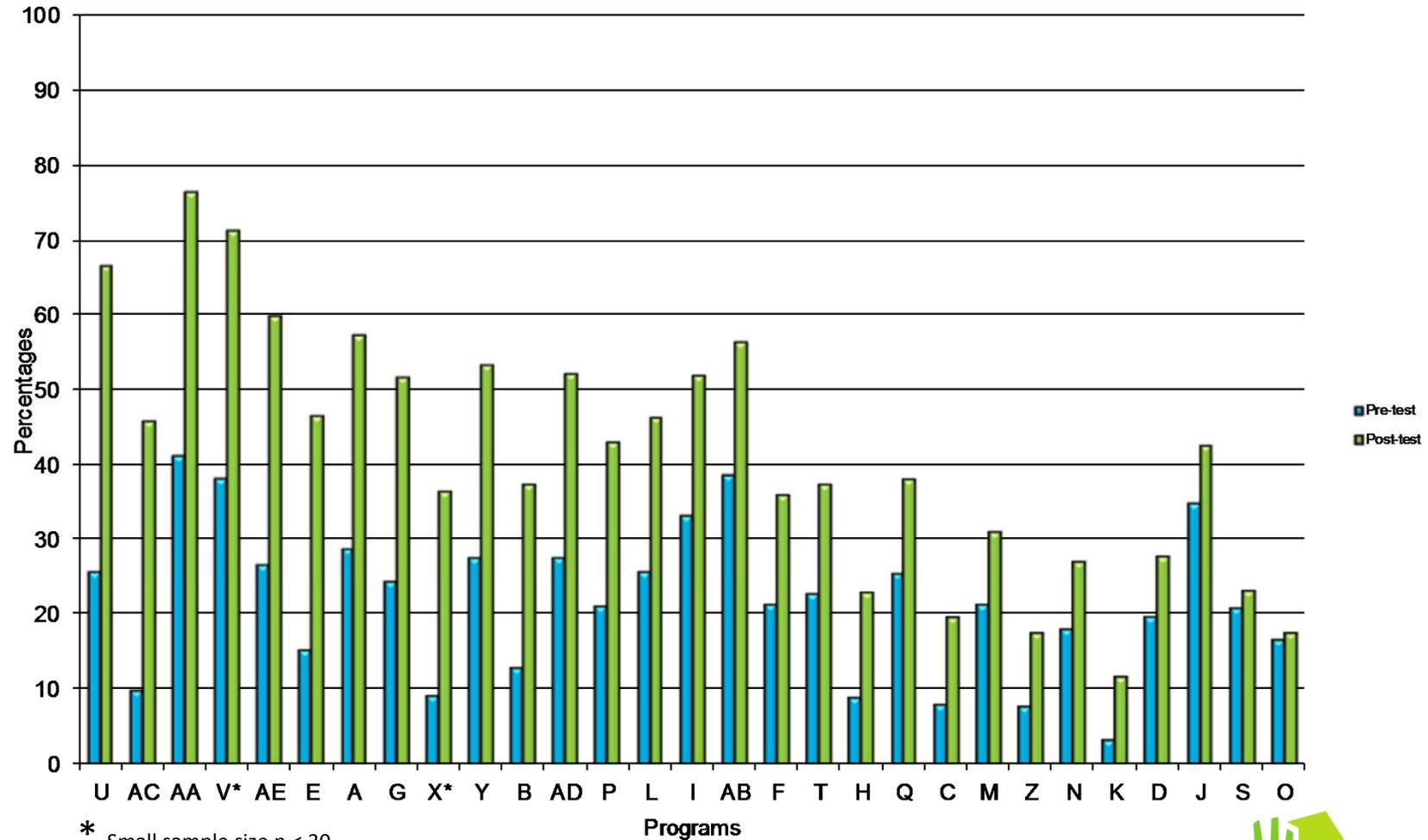
- Identified existing program partners using promising practices (25+ programs using contact based education)
- Created new outcome measures (tested on 600 students)
- Evaluated effects using new measures (10,000 students)
- Distilled best practices across programs (30+ 'fidelity' characteristics) and conducting validation studies
- Creating toolkits and training materials (for teachers, students, speakers, community developers)
- Supporting communities to adopt better practices (National and Regional Summits; Local coordinators)
- Helping to build networks and coalitions (encouraging collaboration and partnerships)



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



## 80% Threshold Stereotype Scale Items by Program



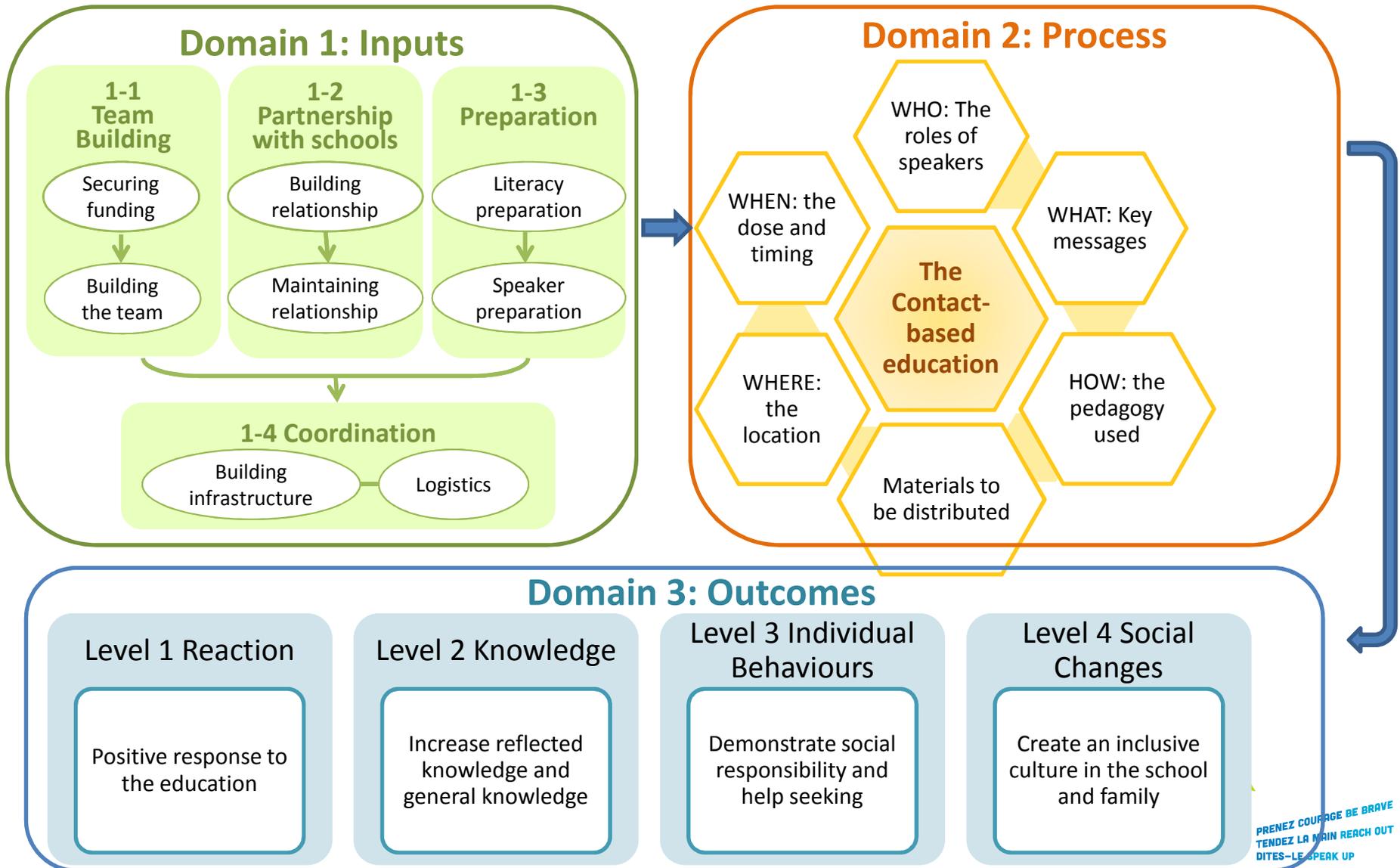
\* Small sample size n < 30



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# The Logic Model (Chen, Stuart, Krupa, 2013)



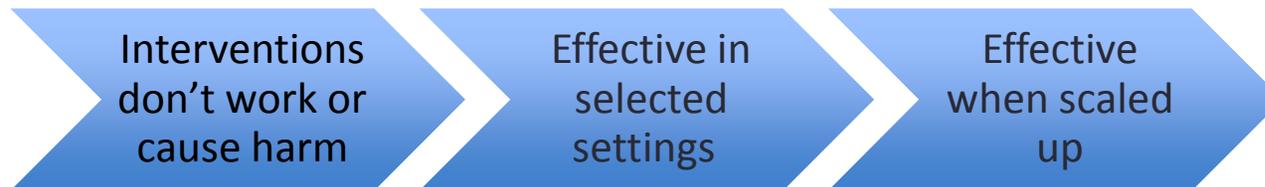


## Not-so promising practices

- Brief one-offs
- Low teacher and school engagement
- Speakers who are not in recovery
- Large numbers of students with little opportunity for engagement
- No sustainable development

## Promising practices

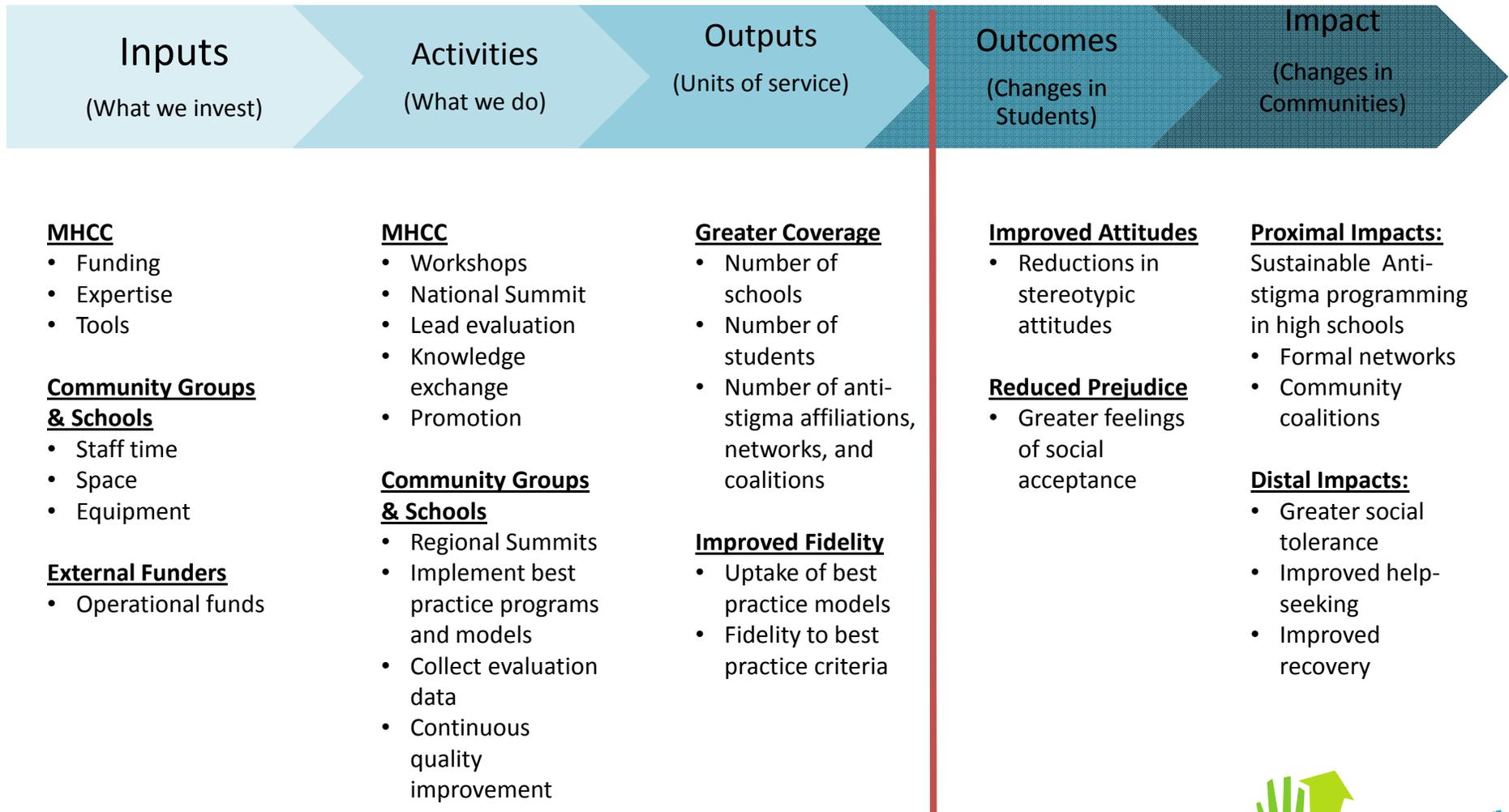
- Buy-in from teachers and Boards
- Teacher training and support
- Good stories and storytellers
- Transformative learning (interactive, small group)
- Whole school approach
- Emphasis on local sustainability



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# Our Initiative Change Model



Source: Dr. Heather Stuart (used by permission)



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# How did Opening Minds choose **HEADSTRONG?**

Out of many programs evaluated, Opening Minds looked for something that:

1. Had positive evaluation results in reducing stigma
2. Could reach a large number of youth across Canada, in many different geographic areas
3. Was complimentary to mental health education programs already in existence in different schools and provinces
4. Could include and empower youth



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# Headstrong

National Launch November 2014

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvknTTAV6Kk>





# The Summit Model

## Contact Based Education

Opening Minds chose a summit program where many schools sent a few students and teachers to a day-long event, then students took different anti-stigma activities back to their own student populations





## 3 Keys to a successful Summit

- **Education:** Participants hear inspiring stories of hope from people who have recovered or are managing a mental illness. This is known as contact-based education.
- **Action planning:** Students work together to plan awareness activities to take back to their own schools. Both students and school staff are provided with toolkits and student resources that include action guides and activity starters
- **Contact:** Summits connect students, teachers, school administrators, persons with lived experience, and community mental health professionals. Students experience first-hand the importance of networking, and they learn who they can turn to for support in planning their own anti-stigma activities.



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# Post Summit School Based Activities



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# HEADSTRONG: OUR FIRST YEAR

## Selected Accomplishments:

- National Youth Summit
- Leader in Coordinator training and regular teleconferences
- Leader in speaker training and summit training webinars
- Collection and analysis of pre and post test data
- Supporting Regional Coordinators to engage community partners
- Creating a long term vision for Headstrong

## Selected Accomplishments

- 19 regional coordinators delivered 25 regional summits and 3 provincial events
- Headstrong reached 404 schools and 5244 participants with an estimated reach of 186,000 students
- Quality improvement via regional summit reports & statistics provided for analysis
- Quality Improvement via Coordinators & Speakers Surveys
- Completion of Headstrong National Report and all Regional Reports



PRENEZ COURAGE BE BRAVE  
TENDEZ LA MAIN REACH OUT  
DITES-LE SPEAK UP



# Headstrong Priorities

- Make a positive difference to eliminate stigma among students and staff, making schools stigma-free environments
- Build regional sustainable community coalitions that embrace school boards and districts as key members
- Identify key processes in speaker training, support and recognition
- Learn from the research and develop a clear vision of next steps
- Design a check list of structural changes required in order to conquer stigma



# Current Regional Coordinators

Peel DSB

Lambton Kent DSB

Stony Plain DSB

BC Children's Hospital

CMHA: Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Kingston, Cornwall, Regina

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

YouthNet

Quebec AQRP

Prairie Mountain Health Authority

Nova Scotia Health Authority and Schools Plus

Ministry of Education and Culture NWT



# HEADSTRONG TOOLKITS

[www.mhccheadstrong.ca](http://www.mhccheadstrong.ca)

Your Speaker's Story

Sharing Your Personal Story

Planning a Youth Anti Stigma Summit

MHCC Headstrong School-Based Activities

MHCC Parent/Teacher Pamphlet

Summit Webinar

Speaker Training Webinar

MHCC Headstrong Report 2014-2015



# Can you embrace Headstrong?

Identify key member agencies and stakeholders in your region

- Reach out to the most appropriate leader
- Could be board staff (mental health leaders) or community professionals: “It’s about leadership—NOT ownership.
- Talk about the Headstrong Summit model
- Who is the leader; who is on board?
- How can MHCC Headstrong support you?
  - Teleconferences, on site visits, connecting you to regional coordinators; funding documents; regional and national final reports
- Support attendance at summits
- Support school based activities: Headstrong Committee





# Questions?





# Thank you

Contact us: [headstrong@mentalhealthcommission.ca](mailto:headstrong@mentalhealthcommission.ca)

Visit: [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

Follow us:



*The views represented herein solely represent the views of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.  
Production of this document is made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada.*

*Les opinions exprimées aux présentes sont celles de la Commission de la santé mentale du Canada.  
La production de ce document a été rendue possible grâce à la contribution financière de Santé Canada.*

