



Ontario Coalition for
Children AND Youth
Mental Health

Let's put our heads together.

Coalition ontarienne
pour la santé mentale des
enfants ET des adolescents

Réfléchissons ensemble.

Natalia Kusendova, MPP, Chair
Eric Rennie, Clerk
Room 1405, Whitney Block
Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

December 6, 2019

Dear Eric Rennie

email : comm-socialpolicy@ola.org

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Bill 116. An integrated comprehensive strategy for mental health and addictions is strongly supported by the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health. The Coalition, which is based on an integrated multi-sectoral model, would be pleased to consult with the government and to provide support and expertise to assist with this initiative, especially as it relates to children and youth mental health.

The Coalition has been very supportive of and has worked collaboratively with the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health. The successes of this organization should be leveraged as the government moves to build a new Centre of Excellence within Ontario Health to support mental health and addictions. The importance of attending to child and youth mental health needs across all developmental age ranges is imperative. It is critical to ensure that the youngest Ontarians remain a focus and that the voices of children and youth do not get diluted as a result of this structural change. Having a specific focus on children and youth mental health is essential, as is ensuring seamless transitions and timely supports and services for youth as they age in the Ontario health system.

The Coalition comprises organizations from health, children's services, child welfare and education sectors along with parents and youth who share a passion to radically transform the life chances of children and youth and their families who are experiencing the challenges of mental health issues. Attached is a full membership listing and an overview of our vision.

Our commitment as a Coalition is long-term and we are proud of our success over the past 9 years in bringing together, at a common table, the many voices that speak for the well-being of children and youth across the diverse linguistic and cultural context of Ontario society. Ministry staff from Education, Health, Children, Community and Social Services and Training, Colleges and Universities meet with us at least annually or contact us as needed to provide policy input and feedback and to access our provincial communication networks, expertise and advocacy to maximize resources and exemplary practice across the province.

Through our collective efforts we seek to: promote mental health literacy and wellness; advocate for integration in the provision of sufficient supports and services; support integrated public policy; model effective partnerships; support school based mental health, and ensure that the voices of children, youth and families are integrated in the development of mental health initiatives.

We are confident that the expert voices we have drawn together in a common cause continues to position the Ontario Coalition to be an effective arms-length advisory body to the government to support the implementation of a Mental Health and Addictions Strategy.

As Coalition Coordinator I would be pleased to facilitate any opportunities for the Coalition to support and consult on this initiative.

Sincerely,

Coordinator
Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health