*The Students Commission of Canada*

*March 2022*

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**MULTI-MEDIA ASSETS on SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND HARM REDUCTION**

Dissemination Plan

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The Multi-Media Assets on Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction in Canadian Youth Grades 6-12: A Positive Youth Development Approach is a project that was initiated by the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health, aiming to provide the most current evidence and knowledge on substance use prevention of harms in young people and positive youth development as a set of communication and actionable pieces. The final deliverables of this initiative were developed by the Students Commission of Canada and are in the form of multi-media assets specifically for youth grades 6-8 and 9-12, educators, and adult allies (assets include short videos, a resource list and a discussion guide).

Based on the evidence gathered, it was decided to use the video format as the main tool for these assets with accompanying documents. Indeed, recent evidence on cognitive processing and memory (Yadav et al., 2011) suggests that people tend to retain information better through a video or a mix of text and video than through text only. For instance, images tend to lead to more emotional responses than words (Clark & Paivio, 1991). Videos allow for a dual processing of visual and verbal cues, which also help with processing and memory (Mayer et al., 2001).

Furthermore, youth and adult allies that were consulted in the initial phases of this project agreed that they tend to feel more connected to the speaker and therefore more receptive to the message. They also mentioned that they preferred short videos (under 3 minutes, or a series of 30–50 sec videos), especially when it regards information they were not actively looking for, as it requires less attention. All key audiences also provided input on music and sound effect.

The overarching goal of this initiative is to provide educational tools regarding youth substance use and its potential harms. These assets can be used in a few different ways and are targeting very different audiences. Thus, it is important to think about the best way to disseminate this information. This document suggests a plan of action to effectively share the various products to the specific audiences.

# Products & End-Users

Products 1 and 2: Think-Ahead video & Discussion Guide

Targeted audience Youth Grades 6-8, facilitated by adult allies

Purpose of the products It may be difficult be to decide boundaries “in the moment” when there’s pressure coming in from peers, which is why thinking of personal boundaries ahead of time is important. The purpose of the video is to invite youth to start thinking about what they want and don’t want to do regarding substance use in advance, consideration the ineffectiveness of “just say no” campaigns. The Discussion Guide is a complementary tool that allows adult allies to establish a safe space and open the dialogue on the topic. These two products are intended to be used together. Although they can be stand-alone tools, they complete each other and ensure that youth feel empowered by diving deeper in the topic. The content was developed for youth, but with the intention of being facilitated by adult allies.

Description The 45-second video introduces the topic in a quick and effective way. It ends with a call to action that aims to make youth reflect on what they want. It clarifies what are considered like “substances” and why it is important to think about our own limits ahead of time. This video was developed in partnership with a group of 7 graders who wanted a short, punchy video with no music considering the seriousness of the topic.

The Discussion Guide aims to provide follow-up questions and activities to adult allies in order to engage in a meaningful conversation with the youth group. This is not a rigid protocol; depending on the time available and the specific realities of the youth, one may skip some parts to focus on only a few themes. Although the content of this guide was designed with youth from grades 6-8 in mind, it can easily be adapted for older youth.

## Products 3 and 4: Eight Cups of Coffee video & Resources list

Targeted audience Youth Grades 9-12

Purpose of the products There are still a lot of taboo around substance use, especially among young people, which makes it difficult to reach out for help when necessary. Furthermore, consultations with young people highlighted that self-directed messaging may be ineffective as youth may feel like it does not apply to do but will more easily recognize it in others. As peer influence and peer support may be a critical asset in preventing and reducing substance-related harms, it is important to consider critical factors of youth engagement such as autonomy, relatedness and competence. Hence, this video aims to help youth develop their active listening skills and provide them with a list of resources they can use to support their friends. These two products can be used independently and separately, but the Resource list is a useful complement to the video.

Description Through youth consultation, it appears that when hearing about substance use, individual defences may come up automatically. Hence, this 3-minute video aims to address the topic of substance use without talking about substance by using the metaphor of coffee consumption. Through a mix of narration and role-playing, viewers are able to learn about practical skills to improve active listening, fostering a safe space for difficult conversations to happen. The Resource list provides trustworthy organizations and sources of information around substance use and mental health that they can reach out for themselves or for their peers.

## Product 5: River Parable video

Targeted audience Educators and Adult allies

Purpose of the product A Blueprint for Action: Preventing Substance-Related Harms Among Youth Through a Comprehensive School health Approach is an intervention model developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Regrouping the most recent evidence and best practices in the field of substance use, this model offers a holistic approach to develop strategies adapted to one’s specific context. There are already some dissemination strategies put in place regarding the Blueprint for Action, but none are videos. The purpose of this project is to summarize this intervention model and allow more adult allies to access and understand it.

Description This 3-minute video presents an adaptation of the river parable, often used to illustrate upstream prevention concepts, to explore the four intervention approaches and their relation to the Comprehensive School Health framework. Recent evidence suggests that storytelling can support learning as it is social and collaborative, enhances retention, meaning and relevance, and increases learner engagement (Davis, 2014; Green, 2004; Lawrence & Paige, 2016; Phillips, 2013). Hence, viewers are able to have a quick understanding of this model, offering an alternative to written products of the Blueprint for Action.

# Communication Plan

The following table details a few suggested strategies to effectively disseminate each product to its specific audience. A list of potential dissemination partners can be found in the appendix, as well as an example of social media post to announce the launch of the products.

Primarily, the two videos for the youth audiences (especially for youth grades 6-8) should be shared in classrooms, in youth groups, anywhere adult allies may feel it is relevant. This dissemination strategy does not appear in the table below as it will depend on the adult allies themselves. Efforts to share these educational tools with as many adult allies, educators, youth workers, school staff, addiction counsellors, etc. should be a priority in the dissemination of the videos Think Ahead and Eight Cups of Coffee. JCSH Task Group’s networks will be an important dissemination stream.

| **Product** | **Audience** | **Activity** | **Timeline** | **Note** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Product 1 (Think Ahead video) | Youth | Viewing during youth programming (with youth from grades 6-8) | May-June  September-October | By the Students Commission of Canada (youth programming: Be the Program, Youth Leadership Team, youth group) |
| Adult allies | JCSH Launch meeting | May 10th |  |
| Follow up email to Blueprint for Action Workshop attendees | May-June | To be sent by the Students Commission of Canada |
| Announcement in SCC’s weekly meeting, inviting all staff to reach out to their partners and network | May |  |
| JCSH News Bundle | May-July  September-November |  |
| Product 2 (Discussion Guide) | Adult allies | JCSH Launch meeting | May 10th |  |
| Follow up email to Blueprint for Action Workshop attendees | May-June | To be sent by the Students Commission of Canada |
| Announcement in SCC’s weekly meeting, inviting all staff to reach out to their partners and network | May |  |
| JCSH News Bundle | May-July  September-November |  |
| Product 3 (Eight Cups of Coffee video) | Youth | Viewing during youth programming (with youth from grades 9-12) | May-June  September-October (and ongoing) | By the Students Commission of Canada (youth programming: Be the Program, Youth Leadership Team, youth group) |
| Adult allies | JCSH Launch meeting | May 10th |  |
| Follow up email to Blueprint for Action Workshop attendees | May-June | To be sent by the Students Commission of Canada |
| Announcement in SCC’s weekly meeting, inviting all staff to reach out to their partners and network | May |  |
| JCSH News Bundle | May-July  September-November |  |
| Product 4 (Resources list) | Youth | Distributed during youth programming (with youth from grades 9-12) | May-June  September-October (and ongoing) | By the Students Commission of Canada (youth programming: Be the Program, Youth Leadership Team, youth group) |
| Through the video itself (link in the description box) | On-going |  |
| Through social media post | September-October | On both SCC and JCSH social media, reposted by partners |
| Adult allies | JCSH Launch meeting | May 10th |  |
| Follow up email to Blueprint for Action Workshop attendees | May-June | To be sent by the Students Commission of Canada |
| Announcement in SCC’s weekly meeting, inviting all staff to reach out to their partners and network | May |  |
| JCSH News Bundle | May-July  September-November |  |
| Product 5 (River Parable video) | Adult allies | JCSH Launch meeting | May 10th |  |
| Follow up email to Blueprint for Action Workshop attendees | May-June | To be sent by the Students Commission of Canada |
| Announcement in SCC’s weekly meeting, inviting all staff to reach out to their partners and network | May |  |
| JCSH News Bundle | May-July  September-November |  |
| All products | All audiences | Social media post to announce launch of all products | May | On both JCSH and SCC social media platforms |

Notes that the dissemination activities listed above are only suggestions. Any other relevant activities for sharing the products can be added.

# Suggested Evaluation of Dissemination

Considering the nature of the products, it might be difficult to evaluate the success of the various dissemination strategies as these assets will be shared through networks and presented in contexts that might be less accessible. Nonetheless, we suggest reviewing the following indicators for six months after the official launch to monitor the outreach of the strategies outlined in the table.

* Number of views, likes and shares of the videos on YouTube;
* Numbers of downloads of the Resources List and the Discussion Guide on both SCC and JCSH websites;
* Numbers of accounts reached and content interactions (likes, shares, saves) on social media posts;
* Numbers of clicks on the hyperlinks included in the email blast and the newsletters;
* Numbers of follow-ups after JCSH Launch Meeting in May.

Although these will not evaluate the success of the content of the products, they will give insights on the success of the outreach strategies. In order to evaluate the success of the content, we would suggest having follow-up surveys or conversations with dissemination partners as an avenue for further insights. We acknowledge that this may not be feasible or might not give a global portrait of the impact.

# Appendix

## List of potential dissemination partners

Below is a list of a few partners of the Students Commission of Canada that could be prioritize in the dissemination of this project.

* Planet Youth
* Mental Health Ontario
* Apathy is Boring
* Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada
* Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française
* Jack.org
* Sénat Des Jeunes
* Student Commission- #CanadaWeWant facilitator roster
* OceanWise
* YMCA Canada
* Big Brothers, Big Sisters Canada
* Girl Guides of Canada
* Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique
* Conseil jeunesse francophone de la colombie-Britannique
* La Ronge -Saskatchewan Prevention Institute
* Pathways to Education
* The Multicultural Association of Fredericton
* Centre scolaire communautaire la Fontaine
* GenXX
* BYTE Empowering Youth

## Example of social media post

Graphical user interface, text

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Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message

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