

Uncovering what mental health and recovery means to youth ages 12-15: A Deliberative Dialogue



Contact information
Cassia Warren
cwarren@foundrybc.ca

Cassia Warren,¹ Taite Beggs,¹ Sonya Tsou,¹ Roryann Woodburne,¹ Kirsten Marchand,^{1,2,3} Skye Barbic^{1,2,3}

1. Foundry, 915-1045 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 2A9, Canada

2. Centre for Health Evaluation & Outcome Sciences, Providence Health Care, St. Paul's Hospital, 575-1081 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 1Y6, Canada

3. Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, 317-2194 Health Sciences Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z3, Canada

Introduction

Mental illness affects approximately **1 in 4 Canadian youth**, with young people ages 12-24 experiencing the highest incidence of mental disorders of any age group (1).

While significant progress has been made to understand the illness and self-management needs of youth ages 16-24 years (2), **little attention** has been focused **on the needs of youth ages 12-15**.

To provide meaningful and impactful care to youth, we must **understand what matters to these youth** in their health and recovery, an evidence base that, to date, is underdeveloped.

Furthermore, we need to **listen to youth at all stages of research** to facilitate impact back to the youth this project is trying to serve (3).

Objectives

This study aims to understand:

The care needs and priorities of youth ages 12-15 accessing mental health and substance use services

The extent to which the health and wellness needs of this population differ based on demographic and clinical factors and community type (rural, suburban, urban)

The service innovations required to align the diverse needs and priorities of this population



Methods

Youth as partners in research

PHASE 1: DESIGN

Youth Advisory Committee

5 youth ages 12-15 from communities across British Columbia

Creation

- Community agreement
- Check-in questions
- Breakout rooms

Responsibilities

1. Interview guide development
 - Youth-friendly questions and ways of exploring
2. Recruitment poster creation
 - Understanding youth imagery and terminology
 - Capturing youth attention
3. Analysis review and knowledge translation
 - Understanding value to youth
 - Impactful next steps and knowledge translation to communities

Foundry Central Office marketing team worked alongside the Youth Advisory Committee to bring the youth vision to life



Sample

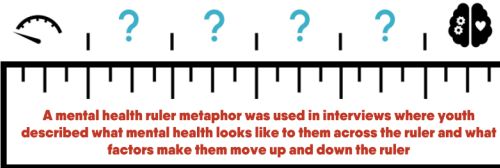
- Youth ages 12-15 (n=19) in British Columbia
- Quota sampling across ages and five health authorities (regions)

Procedure

- Youth participated in a 1 hour interview over Zoom that was audio-recorded

Youth Facilitating and Co-Facilitating Interviews

Training and support provided



A mental health ruler metaphor was used in interviews where youth described what mental health looks like to them across the ruler and what factors make them move up and down the ruler

Guided by Canada's Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research for evidence informed patient care (4)

Transcription

- Audio recordings were transcribed using Zoom's transcription feature
- Transcriptions were reviewed and edited by Youth Research Assistants (YRAs)

Analysis

- Inductive analysis was undertaken
- Conducted by two coders including a YRA

PHASE 3: KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION (In Progress)

- Validating findings with Youth Advisory Committee to inform research conclusions
- Co-designing knowledge translation strategies
- Advocating for youth-driven priorities

We acknowledge with gratitude and respect that this work took place on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded lands of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and sel̓ilwítulh (Tsleil-waututh) Nations

Thank you to our funders, partners, youth researchers, YAC & participants!



Foundry is hosted by Providence Health Care and supported by the Province of BC and donors to St. Paul's Foundation



foundrybc.ca/frayme2023

1. Statistics Canada. Census of Canada. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm> [Accessed Sept 1, 2022]

2. Barbic, et al. Int J Ment Health Syst. 2019 Jan 31;13:6. doi: 10.1186/s13033-019-0264-0

3. MacArthur, et al. Res Involv Engagem. 2021 May 10;7(1):27. doi: 10.1186/s40900-021-00276-z

4. Canadian Institutes of Health Research. About SPOR. <https://cchr-irsc.gc.ca/e/51036.html> [Accessed Sept 1, 2022]

Uncovering what mental health and recovery means to youth ages 12-15: A Deliberative Dialogue



Contact information
Cassia Warren
cwarren@foundrybc.ca

Cassia Warren,¹ Taite Beggs,¹ Sonya Tsou,¹ Roryann Woodburne,¹ Kirsten Marchand,^{1,2,3} Skye Barbic^{1,2,3}

1. Foundry, 915-1045 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 2A9, Canada

2. Centre for Health Evaluation & Outcome Sciences, Providence Health Care, St. Paul's Hospital, 575-1081 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 1Y6, Canada

3. Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, 317-2194 Health Sciences Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z3, Canada

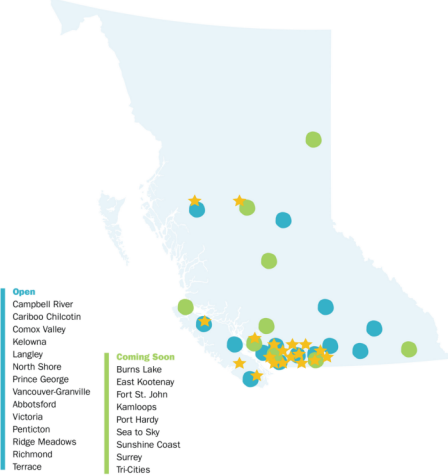
Results

Table 1: Demographics		
N=19		
Age	n	%
12	4	21.1%
13	4	21.1%
14	4	21.1%
15	7	36.8%
Gender	n	%
Girl/Woman	6	31.6%
Man/Boy	8	42.1%
Non-Binary, Trans, Questioning, Other	4	21.1%
No Response	1	5.3%

The majority of participants were white (68.4%) with the next highest identifying as BIPOC (31.6%).

*Participants were able to select multiple ethnicities

Figure 1: Locations of Participants



What matters to youth in their mental health journey?

Theme 1: Acceptance

- Be yourself
- Acceptance by others

"It's easier to feel good about yourself when other people like feel good about you or think you look good, I don't know just getting compliments and having people be nice to you just feels good, and kind of keeps you craving that feeling of like not wanting to kill yourself, um yeah."

-They/Them, 15 years old

"Like learning how to like themselves and their place in the world."
- She/Her, 13 years old

"Um, I wouldn't really be interacting with people, at that stage I would kind of, find a way to avoid as much interaction as possible, but if I would, just kind of getting things over quickly like going about conversations really fast, just getting them over with, and not really talking to anyone."
- They/Them, 15 years old

"You get cheered up um by somebody, maybe somebody else comes to play with you. Um somebody get something for you to make you happier. Um somebody gives you like a hug. Somebody apologizes for what they did."
- He/Him, 12 years old

Theme 3: Autonomy over Life

- Control over life
- Ability to follow passions and do the things they enjoy

Theme 2: Process Emotions and Stressors

- Not the end, hope
- Expression of unprocessed emotions
- Bottling it up
- Taking time for recovery, building resilience

"Um for me I put emotional I put like, having control over your emotions to like if you feel generally very happy you don't start jumping instantly off a roof thinking "I'm so happy." And then, if you're really angry you don't take it to the next level and start punching things and breaking things and if you're really sad you don't you know go and start then affecting your mental health."

- She/Her, 13 years old

"Just feeling really down in the dumps, and just not really seeing anything as a- not taking things in and seeing them positively, as you would if you weren't feeling depressed, and seeing the negative of things, of situations and just life in general."
- He/Him 14 years

"[Distractions] puts me in a better place and I'm able to rethink what happened and see what went wrong, and if it's a huge deal then well I'll talk to my mom about it. But if it's a small deal I'll be like that's an easy fix I'll go fix that right now, or maybe I'm just overreacting which is usually the case."
- She/They, 12 years old

"Being forced into anything, I have a bad experience with that, and that just annoys me very badly and then I get reminded of what happened before, and then I go into it, I go down the ruler. If I'm looking forward to something and it doesn't happen that can lower it down a tiny bit, but not very much. Um yeah, that's what I can think of right now."
- She/They, 12 years old

"Like stresses from your parents like, too many chores to do like 'cause I know with my depression. Sometimes doing really simple chores can just lead to self-destructive habits."
- He/Him, 15 years old

"Or, something that often helps me move up is finding something that I'm passionate about, and that I can spend a lot of time doing, and it makes me happy to do it, and that helps me move up the ruler."
- He/They, 15 years old

What do youth need to support their mental health journey?

How youth want to be supported

- Youth want to feel **in control of their life**. When youth feel **powerless**, they move down the mental health ruler and are more greatly impacted by other negative factors. A big part of having control is the ability to do the things they want to do with their life (see friends, follow passions, do things they enjoy).
- Youth noted broken trust in the systems that are meant to support them including school, counselling and health care. This included broken confidentiality and providers not being on the side of the youth.
- Youth want their care providers and teachers to be unjudgmental and feel like they are truly being listened to.

What supports youth need

- Access to quiet, safe spaces when overwhelmed in school, accommodations of ability and needs.
- Accessible care and promotion of supports so they know what is available.
- Learning: communication with one another.
- Supports in achieving goals.
- Opportunities for socialization: Connecting with others is a **protective factor** and youth recognize that they need to find people who they get along with and trust, this can be hard for some youth and they noted needing opportunities for socialization to meet like-minded people.
- Reducing stigma, have mental health talked about more and not just the negatives.

Where youth want to receive supports

- Supports in school: Better and more resources in school counsellors, supports for bullying/harassment.
- Supports from peers: Youth talk about the barrier in talking to adults about their problems where they are disconnected. They would prefer to talk to other youth who have gone through similar experiences.
- Supports from friends and family: Having people they know check in on them in a positive way, notice when they are not doing as well and do things to help bring them up.
- Group community programs.
- Online supports.
- Therapy and counselling.



This document and the learnings from the workshop will be uploaded here

"Whenever I think of it, I think of like the bad things about it, like depression and stuff because, like this the schools whenever they, they mentioned that they say all this stuff instead of like a good mindset, at least my school doesn't really."
- She/Her, 12 years old

"Like I said, opening up to adults is difficult so maybe having more support that involves people closer to your age would definitely give you probably more results for kids because then you're opening up to people who probably are more likely to understand how you feel, because they're your age."
- She/They, 15 years old