

Social connectedness and mental well-being in transitional aged youth: A comparison between Canada and London-Middlesex region.

**Issue/Problem:** As outlined by Mental Health Commission of Canada, one in five Canadians experience a mental illness or addiction problem at some point in their lifetime. In Canada, 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence. Additionally, transitional aged youth (ages 15-24) are more likely to experience mental illness and substance use disorders than any other age group. Furthermore, adolescence and young adulthood is a time where there is an increased risk for the development of psychiatric disorders, many of which are associated with social dysfunction. Previous studies on social support and sense of belonging have shown that the structure of transitional aged youth's relationships can have strong impacts on health and development. In order to approach this epidemic in a more holistic manner, the concept of mental well-being is gaining increasing recognition as an important health indicator.

**Objectives/Methods:** In this proposed study, the relationship between social connectedness and mental well-being among Canadian transitional aged youth will be examined using cross-sectional data from the 2011, 2012 Annual Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) and also the 2012 CCHS Mental Health (MH) edition.

**Results:** The expected completion date of the data analysis is March 2019. We expect to report on the findings related to the relationship analyzed between social connectedness and the impact it has on mental well-being.

**Potential impact:** A better understanding of social connectedness and its association with mental well-being in transitional aged youth may allow for implementation of programs and policies that can address lack of social connectedness in London-Middlesex and across the country.