



## Topic

A preventative online mental health program for youth

## Key question

How can a co-designed preventative online mental health program support youth mental wellbeing following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?

## Project aims

COVID-19 introduced and intensified many mental health challenges faced by youth. In response, this project aims to engage Ontario youth and stakeholders to co-develop, implement, and evaluate a preventative online mental health program that aligns with youths' mental health needs and programming preferences, during and beyond the pandemic.

The program, A Preventative Online Mental Health Program for Youth (POMHPY), is a free, 6-week online mental wellness program for youth between the ages 12 to 25 living in Ontario. Each week, participants engage in evidence-based and interactive activities to improve their mental wellbeing and resilience, physical wellness, and social connectedness. POMHPY is designed with youth, for youth, and program sessions are facilitated by youth.

## Activities

- Co-designing POMHPY with youth and stakeholders.
- Piloting POMHPY in Simcoe County (Summer 2023).
- Conducting focus groups and surveying youth. Refining the program based on youth feedback and providing an updated version POMHPY to the broader population in Ontario (Fall 2023).
- Developing partnerships across Ontario to support the sustainability and scaling of POMHPY.

## Helpful terms

- **Co-design:** A collaborative approach to design that involves working with participants to create participant-centered solutions.
- **Preventative:** An approach that aims to prevent or reduce the worsening of.

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