



## Cape Breton Situation Recommendations

July 17, 2017

**These recommendations are provided to the Ministers of Education and Health for their consideration:**

- 1) In preparation for the upcoming academic year, enhance support for the CaperBase initiative, thus enhancing the capacity of existing community resources to support youth experiencing a variety of mental health problems and other life challenges. CaperBase provides resources, mentoring and programming focused on building resilience and adaptive capacity. It works collaboratively with schools and child and youth mental health services in CB and addresses the needs of youth who require support but do not require treatment for a mental disorder. CaperBase also can provide additional support to youth who are being treated for a mental disorder if that is needed ( <http://www.caperbase.com/>).
- 2) Ensure that the crisis line has immediate on-demand access of the public 24/7.
- 3) Create a single structure for addressing all school mental health-related policies, plans, oversight and evaluation with direct reporting to the deputy ministers of health and education. Currently, there are a number of un-coordinated parallel activities and structures addressing multiple aspects of school mental health. Creation of a single structure would result in more rational development and effective application of evidence-based school mental health interventions than currently exists. Ongoing activities/structures include, but are not limited to: the School Mental Health Committee; School Based Youth Health Centers; mental health literacy interventions/training; evaluations of various mental health related resources/programs. The new structure should include expertise in school mental health and the IWK Health Authority, which is responsible for the delivery of youth mental health services.



## Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health

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IWK Health Centre - Maritime Outpatient Psychiatry  
5850 University Ave. P.O. Box 9700  
Halifax, NS CANADA B3K 6R8

Tel: (902) 470-6598  
Fax: (902) 492-0383  
[www.teenmentalhealth.org](http://www.teenmentalhealth.org)

- 4) As the current provincial suicide prevention framework is outdated and does not reflect best available evidence, use nationally-recognized expert input to update and revise the provincial suicide prevention framework so that the province's suicide prevention policy and funding of suicide prevention activities is based on best available evidence.
- 5) Revise the "School Code of Conduct Policy" to clarify the use of evidence-based interventions related to student conflict, bullying and cyber-bullying.
- 6) Working with mental health experts, use current best evidence to create an approved list of social-emotional learning programs and mental health-related programs and interventions spanning primary to grade 12. Based on their needs and circumstances, schools in NS would be expected to preferentially select programs from this list.
- 7) Develop a provincial policy that addresses the responsible use of students' personal communication devices on school grounds.

Submitted by: Dr. Stan Kutcher ONS; MD; FRCPC; FCAHS