



Converge Education Project: Student Mental Wellness

Status- November 2025

Across Alberta, how schools identify and respond to student mental health concerns can look very different. Recognizing the need for standardization and confidence among educators, the Converge Mental Health Education Working Group set out to explore how to strengthen school-based supports for student mental health.

Following an in-depth literature review, the team, led by Dr. Jennifer Turner and Dr. Paul Arnold, began developing a program to define the foundational skills for student support services. In fall 2024, a pilot Learning Series was launched to equip senior high teachers with practical tools for recognizing, responding to, and guiding students through mental health challenges.

The program's development was made possible through a City of Calgary grant, with additional in-kind support from Converge, the Calgary Board of Education, the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research and Education, and the Werklund School of Education, both at the University of Calgary.

Feedback from the 25 Calgary Board of Education teachers who participated in the pilot was overwhelmingly positive, and several other Alberta school boards have since expressed interest in exploring the same resources.

Building on this momentum, two of the project's lead researchers presented their process and findings at the Converge Mental Health Summit on May 1, 2025. This fall, the project was shared with more than 80 organizations at the City of Calgary's Mental Health & Addictions Strategy Community of Practice event on September 16, 2025.

Looking ahead, the research team is recommending the development of a school-based mental health screening process for middle school students, a bold next step toward transforming youth mental health in Alberta.

The proposed program aims to shift the system from a reactive, crisis-driven model to a proactive, preventative one, introducing standardized screening tools across schools and community settings. This approach represents a critical step forward in ensuring that young people receive the right support at the right time and in the right setting.

Funding is now being sought to advance this next phase of work—an exciting opportunity to build a more coordinated, evidence-based approach to youth mental health that starts where it matters most: in schools.