
NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 24, 2012

CANUCKS ENCOURAGE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS TO ADD THEIR VOICE TO PROVINCIAL MENTAL HEALTH WEB SITE - mindcheck.ca

SURREY, BC - Fraser Health and the Provincial Health Services Authority are encouraging British Columbians to visit mindcheck.ca, a web site for youth and young adults that offers tools to check mental wellbeing and support for mental health challenges. The Canucks for Kids Fund in conjunction with BC Children's Hospital Foundation are proud to support the promotion of mindcheck.ca.

To broaden the reach and increase public awareness and support for mental health issues, the Vancouver Canucks are calling on BC residents to add their video to the "In One Voice" campaign within the site. Vancouver Canuck defenceman Kevin Bieksa shares his voice in a video about close friend and teammate, Rick Rypien, who suffered from depression. Visitors to mindcheck.ca will see the "37RYP" logo that links to the page where Bieksa shares his [video pledge](#) and encourages others to pledge their support for those they care about who have experienced mental health challenges.

Mental health and substance use disorders are the primary health issues experienced by young people in their teen years and early 20s. Identifying the signs early and getting connected to tools and support is the most important way to prevent mental health problems—what mindcheck.ca aims to do. In BC, over half of youth who need support have not accessed the appropriate resources or services.

It is important to recognize when emotions, feelings and thoughts are becoming too much to handle. At mindcheck.ca youth and young adults can test how they're feeling through confidential screening tools (quizzes). They can find education materials and where to go to for support if they are experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, substance use, and psychosis. Content for two additional conditions, social anxiety and disordered eating, will be added in the future.

Friends and family play an important role in providing support to youth experiencing mental health challenges. A section is under development within the site for families and friends, as well as an area for professionals who work with teens and young adults.

Mindcheck.ca was initially launched in spring 2010 as part of a Fraser Health early intervention pilot project for Youth and Young Adult Mental Health and Substance Use. The expansion of this web site as a provincial resource is thanks to the Provincial Health Service Authority's BC Mental Health and Addiction Services; the Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre - BC's Information Source for Children, Youth and Families; the Canucks for Kids Fund through BC Children's Hospital Foundation; and the RBC Children's Mental Health Project.

The Province's 10 Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in B.C. – Healthy Minds, Healthy People – is a road map to further improve mental health for all British Columbians. In 2010-11, just over \$1.3 billion was spent to support services and programs for people with mental health and/or substance use problems.

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Quotes

Lois Dixon, Executive Director, Mental Health and Substance Use, Fraser Health

“It’s very rewarding to see this web site become a resource for the province to better support our youth and young adults in overcoming mental health and substance use problems. It’s so important for youth and their friends/family to recognize when emotions, feelings, and thoughts are becoming too much to handle early on so it can be treated and prevented from worsening or having detrimental affects.”

Dr. Connie Coniglio, Director of Health Literacy, BC Mental Health and Addictions Services, PHSA

“The mind check site is interactive and provides a central point for information on identifying signs of concern, where and how to get help, and how to provide support for others—critical elements in preventing mental health problems in youth and young adults from becoming worse.

With the generous support from the Canucks for Kids Fund and the Vancouver Canucks we are able to reach out to youth through this web site and help reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues. We encourage British Columbians to join us and show their support with a pledge for the ‘In One Voice’ campaign at mindcheck.ca.”

Jessica Bruhn, F.O.R.C.E. * Society for Kids Mental Health Youth in Residence Peer Support Worker at Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, Co-Chair of BC Provincial Family Council

“When I was a kid and first struggling with symptoms of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and depression I was on the internet quite a bit to seek some kind of community. Had mindcheck.ca been around back then I would have not only known I was not alone, but that experiencing anxiety and low mood is common, treatable and that I could talk to other people facing the same challenges.”

Brent Seal, F.O.R.C.E. * Society for Kids Mental Health Youth in Residence Peer Support Worker at Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre

“In my first year of college I suffered from a lot of stress which led to psychosis – losing track of reality. A site like mindcheck.ca would have been a great resource for my friends to direct me to so I could have gotten help earlier and suffered less. This site is a great confidential way to help a friend; sharing it with someone who may need support lets them know that you care and could be just what they need to regain their mental wellbeing.”

* Families Organized for Recognition and Care Equality

Quick Facts

- Nearly half of the population (46%) will experience a mental health challenge at some time in their life.
- 75% of all mental health conditions begin by age 24.
- One in five youth and young adults in BC are experiencing intense feelings and thoughts that cause significant distress and problems with school, work, family and friendships.
- Often early symptoms or behaviours are mislabeled as being just a phase or part of an individual’s personality.
- In BC, over half of youth (56%) with a mental or emotional health issue have *not* accessed the resources or services they need.
- Youth go to their friends for mental and emotional support, more than anywhere else.

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Interview opportunities available. For media inquiries, please contact:

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