



Model of Care moving through the pandemic,

Presentation to





Simple facts...

- 1 in 5 children and youth will be affected by a mental health issue.
- 70% of mental health challenges have their onset in childhood or adolescence
- Canada's youth suicide rate is the third highest in the industrialized world **Everyday**, 10 people in Canada die by suicide * Suicide as a whole has increased by 400% globally through the pandemic.



Our Challenges

- 36% of Ontario parents sought help for their child, but only 4 in every 10 actually receive it, or are still waiting for treatment.
- Meantime, half of Ontario parents who did receive services, say it was a challenge, long wait times were cited 65% of the time.

The burden of mental illness and addiction in Ontario is more than 1.5 times the burden of all cancers and 7 times the burden of all infectious diseases



Who we are ...

- A mental health agency for children
- We service children, youth and families from birth until their 18th birthday
- We have 17 different programs that cover mental health needs from stress, anxiety and depression to self-harm, suicidal and homicidal thoughts and grief and trauma therapy.

Pathstone's reach is vast

- We are in schools and daycares across the Region.
- We house our own school for grades 1-8.
- We have a 10 bed Live-In Treatment program in Niagara Falls affectionately known as Rotary House.
- We operate 8 in-person walk-in clinics across the Niagara Region.



Our Goal & Mission

- ▶ To strengthen the quality of life for children, youth and families in Niagara who are dealing with mental health challenges.
- ▶ To ensure **NO CHILD** waits more than 30 days for mental health treatment, accomplished through increasing access to service.



Our Impact 2020- 2021 (April – March)

- We served **9,449** children (an increase of 35 % compared to the previous year)
- That equated to **53,171** of direct counselling hours
- Some of our one-on-one and family programs saw an increase of over **200%**.
- **Nearly 2,000** clients came to Pathstone through our Immediate Services program. (In-person or video Walk-in clinics, or Crisis & Support Line)
- Our Brief Services program has a wait list of **241** children, and it continues to grow.
- **pre-pandemic, we did NOT have a wait list for Brief Services, described as a child who needs up to 6 sessions of mental health counselling.*



Immediate Services Program

- ▶ Exactly how it sounds, where kids and families can access mental health support the moment they need us.
- ▶ You can do this by calling our Crisis & Support line at **1-800-263-4944. (24/7)**, connecting you directly to a Pathstone counsellor.

You can ALSO

Make a same day or advance appointment for an in-person walk-in clinic session, offered at 8 different locations across the region.

Or make a same day or advance appointment for a video counselling session with a Pathstone counsellor.

- ▶ Services are immediate, one-on-one and prevents a clients' concerns from worsening
- ▶ There is **NO** cost, **NO** referral, and **NO** OHIP card required, reducing barriers to service.




Where our Clinics are located

- **In-person walk-in clinics**, are already being hosted in Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Welland, Niagara Falls, Thorold, St. Catharines, Beamsville and Grimsby.
- **Video Counselling** is offered Monday-Friday from **anywhere in Niagara**.
- In all, **over 800 in-person and video counselling hours are available** each month by our team of Pathstone counsellors.
- **Since COVID-19**, we have implemented the need for an appointment to access in-person or video walk-in clinic services. **Important to note, same day or advance appointments are available.*
- **Service is free**, without the need for a referral, or health card.

Research has proven, **early intervention can make a dramatic difference in a child's quality of life!**



Immediate Services, is a care lifeline

- ▶ Many clients who sought help through any of these services may have been on our wait-list
 - ▶ Some, only needed one session
 - ▶ Many, never would have made an appointment
 - ▶ Many were first-timers, and were being affected by the pandemic in some way.
 - ▶ Issues around school closures, online learning and social isolation were some of the pandemic related issues. It also exacerbated eating disorder cases.
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The Crisis & Support Line, has never been busier

- ▶ Operating 365 days a year
- ▶ Call is toll free at 1-800-263-4944
- ▶ Offers one-on-one support from a Pathstone counsellor.
- ▶ Since the start of the pandemic, nearly 300 kids have called talking about wanting to end their life.
- ▶ In some cases, we have dispatched EMS/ 9-1-1 to respond.
- ▶ Over the past 12 months, we answered over 1,275 calls. *April 2020 - March 2021

What Kids are telling our Team

- ▶ They are citing COVID-19 as the centre of their mental health issue.
- ▶ COVID-19 has caused an increase in cases of **anxiety, depression and self-harm** among kids and **more recently** eating disorder cases, which are a serious mental illness. Those cases have more than doubled. **65 eating disorder cases were referred to us in just 30 days.*
 - ▶ Anxiety cases are related to fears of them or a loved one getting sick and **falling behind in school.**
 - ▶ Depression cases are related to loss or **lack of social connection**, for kids peers help them identify who they are and are often more important to them, than their parents.
 - ▶ Eating disorder cases are pointing to anxiety and depression as a primary mental health issue and can offer a form of control at times where there is none.



Our problem is growing.

- ▶ We have **241 kids on our wait list**. (as of July 19, 2021)
- ▶ They are waiting for **Brief Services**, which is described as mental health support in 6 sessions or less.
- ▶ **Before COVID-19** we did not have a wait list for this program.
- ▶ The issue with waiting is, that **the longer a child waits for treatment, the worse or more complex their issue can become**.
- ▶ **Our concern** is that by the time kids are called for Brief Services, their issues may have worsened and could require moderate therapy (up to 25 sessions).
- ▶ Kids are waiting, on average **10-12 weeks for Brief Services support**.

This is not ok

What we need to do next ...

- ▶ **Continue to support** in-person walk-in clinics which re-opened on July 5th.
- ▶ **Further support** immediate access to care through video counselling walk-in sessions, which reduce a barrier to care as sessions require no travel by the client or the clients family.
- ▶ **Strengthen** our Brief Services program with the addition of three to four full-time social workers for the next two years.
- ▶ **Keep care consistent**, and address the wait list now, which will mean that kids issues won't be exacerbated, and we will not add unnecessary pressure to other mental health programs and services.
- ▶ **We have a solution, and need the town of Pelham to meet us at the table.**

Our overall goal remains the same, to ensure no child waits more than 30 days for mental health therapy.



Questions, comments? Let's keep talking

- I am happy to spend more time with you to speak further and can be reached in the following ways:

- krossi@Pathstone.ca

Or

- **905.688.6850 x 167**