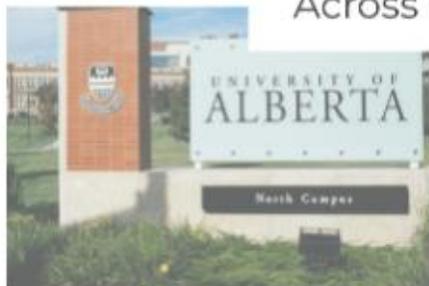




## BIG NEWS

A whole journal issue all about ACCESS Open Minds:

ACCESS Open Minds:  
Transforming Youth Mental Health Services Across Canada



We are pleased to announce the recent release of a ground-breaking publication from the ACCESS Open Minds (ACCESS OM) network: [a special issue in the journal, \*Early Intervention in Psychiatry\*.](#)

This special issue is the collective work of hundreds of youth, families/carers, community members, service providers, and researchers from across the country and chronicles the transformation of youth mental health services in 7 real-world settings:

- Edmonton, Alberta (led by Alberta Health Services)
- Montréal Homeless Youth Network/Réseau d'intervention de proximité auprès des jeunes de la rue, Montréal, Québec (composed of community partner organizations including Dans la Rue, la Clinique des Jeunes de la rue of the CIUSSS Centre-Sud and the Centre de recherche du Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal, CRCHUM)
- Acadian Peninsula, New Brunswick (led by partners at l'Université de Moncton)
- Chatham-Kent, Ontario (led by CMHA Lambton-Kent)
- Eskasoni First Nation, Nova Scotia (led by Eskasoni Mental Health Services)
- University of Alberta (led by the Dean of Students)
- Ulukhaktok, Northwest Territories (led by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation)

It also includes commentaries from experts in the field (Christopher Mushquash, Nina Schooler, Howard Goldman, and David Goldbloom), as well as the ACCESS OM National Youth Council, Family and Carers Council, and Indigenous Council.

### Why should I read this?

ACCESS Open Minds is the largest pan-canadian youth mental health initiative focused on improving services and generating new knowledge about youth mental health across the country. This supplement is for anyone interested in improving youth mental health services in real-world, Canadian settings.



The sites included in this special publication represent culturally, linguistically, and geographically distinct communities reflective of Canada's diversity. Each commentary and site article provides compelling perspectives on how the framework was adapted to address local realities and to improve service delivery for youth aged 11-25, and their families/carers, in each context.

### TL;DR

Don't have time to check out the supplement? Want to learn more while seeing what transformation really looks like with a more visual experience?

These summaries provide the important points from the supplement along with photos and quotes from the communities.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the summaries!



"These articles are based on the excellent work our clinicians, peer-support workers, youth, families and researchers are doing across our pan-Canadian network. The supplement contains significant contributions from the youth, family and carers, and Indigenous councils, as well as from clinician-researchers and external experts. I am proud of the network for this unique accomplishment, the first of its kind in the field of Youth Mental Health." - Dr. Ashok Malla, Nominated Principal Investigator for ACCESS Open Minds

**THE PAPERS: OVERVIEW & LINKS TO EACH ARTICLE**



## Chatham-Kent, ON

- **Location:** Southwestern Ontario
- **Population:** 101,647 with 11,595 youth aged 15-24
- **Mental health context:** emergency department visits continued to increase despite collaborative efforts between hospital and community organizations
- **Keys to transformation:** effective youth engagement and community mapping of services in order to identify gaps and come up with solutions
- **Keywords:** semi-urban, youth mental health, Ontario

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and [click here to download the summary!](#)

**"The ACCESS OM model has demonstrated flexibility and adaptability in a wide range of settings. The next critical question is whether it makes a difference in mental health and other outcomes for the youth who are being served."**

Nina R. Schooler

[Read more from Nina Schooler here!](#)

The ACCESS Open Minds Family and Carers Council's invitation to provide commentary on the Supplement "ACCESS Open Minds: Transforming Youth Mental Health Services across Canada" is an excellent example of patient-caregiver collaboration in health care research while reaffirming the integral and essential role families and carers are playing in the nationwide transformation of youth mental health services spearheaded by ACCESS Open Minds.

“

ACCESS Open  
Minds Family  
and Carers  
Council

(From left to right:  
Mary Anne L., Laura  
T., Norma O., Karen P.,  
Mays K., Yvonne F.,  
Laurie R., Kathy S.,  
Laurie S.)



[Click here to read the Family and Carers Council commentary](#)



## Eskasoni First Nation, NS

- **Location:** a rural Mi'kmaq community located on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia
- **Population:** 4,556 with more than 50% of the population under the age of 25

- **Mental health context:** after a suicide crisis in the community in the fall of 2008 and winter of 2009, the community has rallied to develop youth-friendly mental health services that incorporate local knowledge, traditions, and values.
- **Keys to transformation:** Eskasoni Mental Health Services uniting formerly siloed community mental health services, crisis services, and the case management teams. These services would now work together and follow the 'Fish Net Model' to provide coordinated, streamlined, barrier-free, and user-friendly mental health and addiction services. They joined the ACCESS OM network and adapted the project's framework to their community.
- **Keywords:** First Nations, Indigenous community, youth mental health, Nova Scotia

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and [click here to download the summary!](#)

”

Having the opportunity to participate on this unique collaborative edition provided me with an insightful window into the various ways that ACCESS was being interpreted, structured and implemented in different environments (urban, remote and rural) to suit the diverse client needs. ACCESS is truly a collaborative project from its conception to its implementation and now publications. This demonstrates that there is strength and value in capturing multiple perspectives especially in the field of healthcare.

Dr. Maria Gordon, Counsellor  
Santuan Adult Education Services,  
Mississauga, ON



[Click here to read the Indigenous Council commentary](#)

**"The commitment to a single data set and to incorporating it into care, in a way that cuts across traditional provincial boundaries for capturing health information, is another important aspect of ACCESS OM"**

David S. Goldbloom

[Read more from David Goldbloom here!](#)



- **Location:** hamlet in Canada's western arctic, part of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region in the Northwest Territories
- **Population:** 396 with 105 youth aged 10-24
- **Mental health context:** located on an island, services are limited but centralized (located in the school, Health Centre, Kayutak Centre, and the Hamlet Office). Despite the services available in the community, older youth (ages 18-25) often did not engage in the existing services and due to the community's geographic remoteness, youth are often sent south for treatment.
- **Keys to transformation:** The first step to transformation was to understand current service delivery in the community. The team identified a lack of mental health knowledge and culturally appropriate resources. This is why they chose an innovative alternate model of care, the Lay Health Worker model.
- **Keywords:** Inuit, Indigenous community, youth mental health, Northwest Territories

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and [click here to download the visual summary!](#)



**Having the chance to give a youth perspective on the ACCESS OM Supplement exemplified the dedication ACCESS has to providing youth an opportunity to share their voice and be viewed as the professionals we are.**

VICTORIA FEHR -  
NATIONAL YOUTH  
ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEMBER

[Click here to read the National Youth Council commentary](#)



## University of Alberta, AB

- **Location:** Edmonton, Alberta, a large city in Western Canada
- **Population:** Approx 38,000 students of which about 81% are undergraduate students

- **Mental health context:** The University of Alberta is the only ACCESS OM site at a post-secondary institution, with a focus on first-year students. In 2012, the Dean of Students was asked by the University to lead a reorganization of campus mental health services. Demands for services continued to increase, and students with mild and moderate concerns were less likely to access services. There was also no way to establish a follow-up with students who were referred to external resources or services.
- **Keys to transformation:** ACCESS Open Minds proposed a framework to improve early intervention and enhance rapid access to appropriate care.
- **Keywords:** university, post-secondary, student, youth mental health, Alberta

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and [click here to download the summary!](#)



Jimmy Tan -  
National Youth  
Council Member

Jimmy Tan (left),  
Pat McGorry (right)

It was a glorious effort co-writing the youth council supplement in the international journal, *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*. Our youth council, in partnership with our Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator, Chantelle, conveyed the message that with authentic youth partnership, young people can be co-authors of an academic publication. These publications are crucial to sustainability because it convinces supporters that we are indeed transforming the lives of young people across Canada. I had a chance to chat with Pat McGorry (Editor-in-Chief of the journal) in Australia this summer and he was super impressed with our youth council. Looking forward to co-writing more articles!

[Click here to read the National Youth Council commentary](#)



- **Location:** Bill Rees YMCA - Northwest Edmonton, Alberta
- **Population:** 1.32 million with 31% of people 25 or under; the city centre has 17,000 youth aged 10-24
- **Mental health context:** Alberta Health Services provides many mental health and addictions services across Alberta. The Edmonton Zone Addiction and Mental Health Program provided many different care options, but despite many efforts, youth remained at risk of poor outcomes and confusing modes of entry.
- **Keys to transformation:** Gaps in service were an important reason for AHS to collaborate with ACCESS OM. An ACCESS OM committee made up of representatives from child, youth, adult, and family services came together to decide on which parts of the service delivery system ACCESS OM Edmonton should focus on.
- **Keywords:** urban, YMCA, youth mental health, Alberta

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and [click here to download the summary!](#)

**"Getting the right balance between standardization and local adaptation may hold the key to the ultimate success of the demonstration."**

Howard H. Goldman

[Read more from Howard Goldman here!](#)

Alyssa Frampton, a young woman with glasses and a black blazer, stands in front of a conference booth. The booth has a sign that says "pared studies" and "ated Resu".

“  
As a recent university graduate, I've been no stranger to academic papers. While my years of reading and highlighting were helpful in preparing me to contribute to this publication, to actually get to participate in sharing something out in the academic world was a thrilling and unique experience that I'm very grateful for. I am also very grateful to be a part of a network like ACCESS OM that allows for young people to actively contribute in this way – it's so important that the comments of youth on the work of the sites they live in have been able to be captured in this way.

ALYSSA FRAMPTON,  
NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL  
MEMBER

[Click here to read the National Youth Council commentary](#)



- **Location:** Acadian Peninsula in northern New Brunswick in eastern Canada. The Acadian Peninsula is rural, with fishing and agriculture as the dominant industries.
- **Population:** approx 50,000 with 4,000 youth ages 10 to 24

- **Mental health context:** Acadian youth are a linguistic and cultural minority, which can make accessing appropriate care even more challenging. Prior to ACCESS Open Minds, some existing programming in the area touched on mental health, though the focus was primarily on preventing criminality and building life skills for younger youth. As a result, the majority of youth who participated in these programs were living with undiagnosed or untreated mental health issues.
- **Keys to transformation:** The province of New Brunswick made youth mental health care a top priority in 2015, which provided the foundations for the implementation of the ACCESS OM program in 2017. Community mapping was conducted through youth focus groups to get their perspectives on the existing mental health system and what needed changing.
- **Keywords:** rural, francophone, Acadian, youth mental health, New Brunswick

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and [click here to download the summary!](#)



The experience of writing a commentary on the supplement was both seriously challenging and absolutely rewarding. Each contribution by the authors offered significant insights into the local circumstances and unique needs of the various AOM sites. Many lessons learned. It was a pleasure and a privilege to be asked to help out. Hope we have another opportunity in the near future!

**GREGORY BRASS,**  
PLANNING,  
PROGRAMMING &  
RESEARCH OFFICER -  
PIMUHTEHU  
REGIONAL PUBLIC  
HEALTH OFFICE



[Click here to read the Indigenous Council commentary](#)

**"These collaborative examples of *the gift of multiple perspectives* have the potential to inform the transformation of systems of service in other Indigenous communities."**

Christopher Mushquash

[Read more from Christopher Musquash here!](#)



Being able to contribute to such a rich and impactful publication was undoubtedly one of the highlights of my year. Not only was it rewarding to work with my fellow Youth Council members to find a way to make all our individual voices heard as one, but it was also deeply fulfilling that ACCESS OM genuinely values youth perspectives and trusts them with such a significant contribution. This choice reflects a strong interrelationship between users, stakeholders, and administrators that is very difficult to find elsewhere.

**Feodor Poukhovski-Sheremetiev -  
National Youth Council Member**

[Click here to read the National Youth Council commentary](#)



- **Location:** RIPAJ (Montréal Homeless Youth Network/Réseau d'intervention de proximité auprès des jeunes de la rue) is located in Montréal, Canada's second-largest urban area, and is a collaboration of around 20 community organizations
- **Population:** It has been estimated that 3016 people, of whom 19% are under the age of 30, are homeless in Montréal.
- **Mental health context:** Homelessness is both a consequence of and a contributing factor to mental health problems experienced by youth. A Canadian survey found that 84% of homeless youth with mental illnesses reported needing services to which they did not have access.
- **Transformation of services:** Due to the urgent need for integrated service models that address mental health, social support, and the prevention of homelessness, a group of community and health care organizations that serve homeless youth in downtown Montréal came together in the 2000s. They formed RIPAJ (Réseau d'intervention de proximité auprès des jeunes de la rue, or the Montréal Homeless Youth Network). RIPAJ partnered with ACCESS OM in 2014 to further improve access to mental health services. The philosophy behind RIPAJ is that there "is no wrong door or bad timing for seeking care."
- **Keywords:** homeless youth, urban, network, youth mental health, Québec

[Click here to read the full paper](#) and summary coming soon!