

Achieving Well-being Together

Student Counselling, Health and Well-being
Annual Report 2021-2022

YORK 



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INTRODUCTION

Message from Executive Director

As September 2022 unfolded and York was once again filled with the energy of students returning to campus, Student Counselling, Health & Well-being (SCHW) was also undergoing transformation. Staff were returning in a new hybrid work arrangement that would support students with both in-person and virtual service, and the Glendon counselling centre was merged with Keele to bring equity of service across the two campuses.

It was wonderful to have staff and students back on campus, although there was still a feeling of uncertainty about what the year would hold. The leadership team at SCHW decided to scale back on new initiatives for the 2022/2023 school year and focus on re-establishing relationships with staff, students and campus partners that had been under strain because of the pandemic. We are hoping that our campus outreach and team building efforts have helped to build back the sense of community that York was known for pre-pandemic and that this momentum will continue into the coming months and years.

We are immensely proud of the work that is delivered by SCHW, and we are excited to share this past year's overview with the York community. However, SCHW continues to be committed to ongoing evaluation practices, so stay tuned for future changes as we respond to the feedback and needs of our community and as we welcome the opening of the Markham campus in 2024.

Sincerely,



Lori Walls, PhD C. Psych
Executive Director, Student Counselling, Health & Well-being



Our Mission

Student Counselling, Health & Well-being (SCHW) is a student service department within the Division of Students at York University. SCHW strives to provide a range of health and well-being services that foster academic success, student development and an engaged community.

Our primary aim is to support and empower students to realize, develop and achieve their full potential in their academic experience and communal life at York University.

Contact information

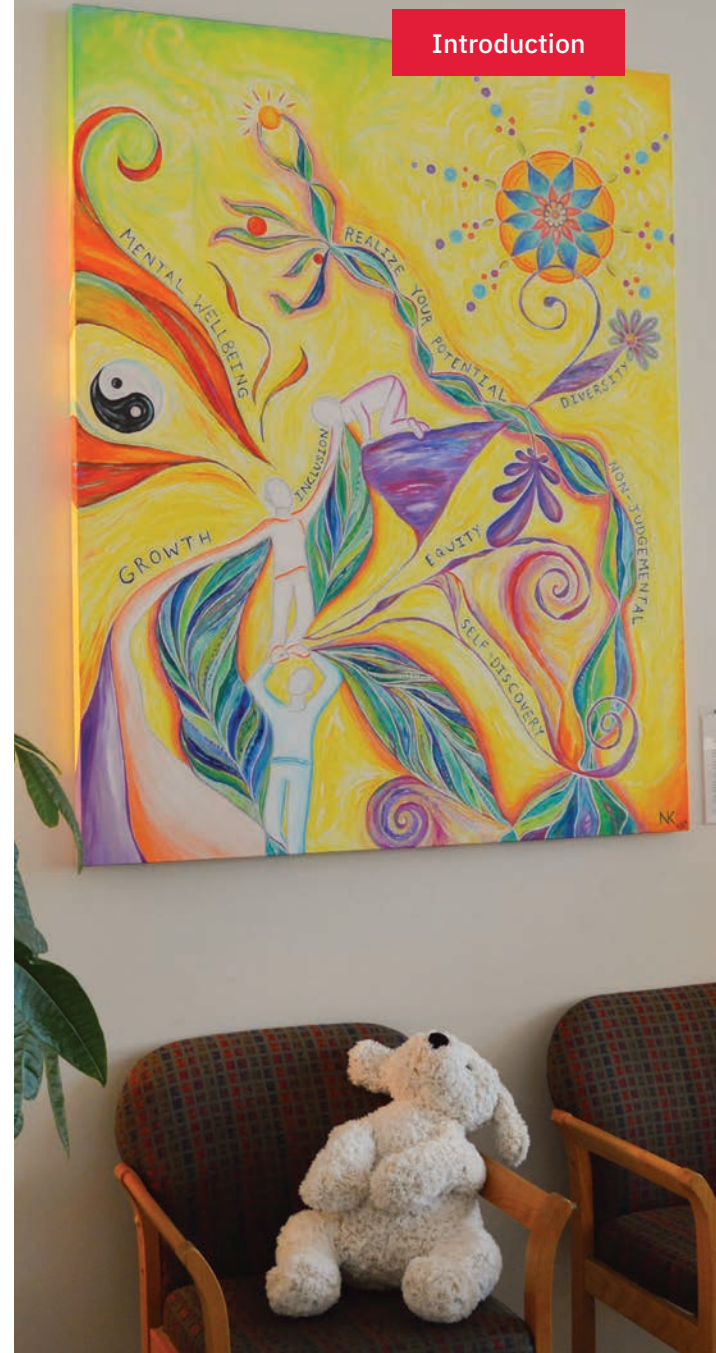
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Introduction



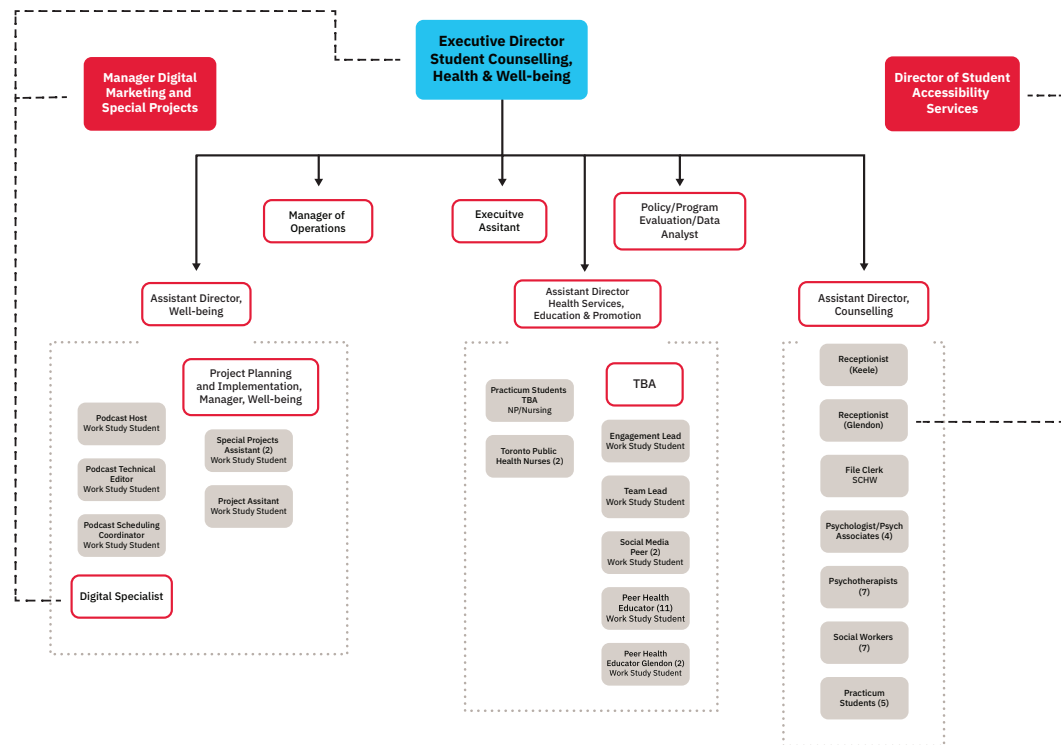
Organizational Structure

Introduction

Student Counselling, Health & Well-being is comprised of clinical and non-clinical staff, work study students and peer health educators who work together to support students' success and well-being.

SCHW continues to evolve and grow in response to the needs of the York University student community. In addition to the creation of new positions such as the Assistant Director of Counselling, Well-being Project Planning & Implementation Manager, Well-being Project Assistant and Executive Assistant, SCHW now oversees the counselling service delivery at Glendon campus.

In September 2022, responsibility for Accessibility Well-being & Counselling services at the Glendon campus was moved under the leadership of Student Accessibility Services and Student Counselling Health & Well-being. The move was initiated to support a more equitable service distribution across the two campuses. As a result of the changes, students at the Glendon campus now have access to 17 counsellors (2 of which are bilingual), support groups, peer educator workshops, counselling process groups, and more.





Alignment with the UAP:

- Living Well Together

Alignment with the DOS Strategic Plan:

- Invest in our People
- Reinforce our Foundation

The Sanctuary Model represents a trauma-informed practice that considers the impact of individual and organizational trauma and recommends strategies to inspire transformation within an organization.

In May 2022, a Needs Assessment was conducted by an evaluator from the Sanctuary Institute. The assessment evaluates the organization along the dimensions of the Four Pillars of Sanctuary. During the visit the evaluator had the opportunity to spend time at the main office of SCHW, meet with practicum students, peer educators, counsellors, group facilitators and students, and conduct interviews. Based on the information gathered by the evaluator, a report was formed which highlighted the functioning of SCHW, its strengths and challenges observed.

In July 2022, SCHW staff participated in a Sanctuary Five Day Training to learn about the Sanctuary Model and move toward creating a trauma-informed community for students and staff.

This multi-year implementation process is rooted in four pillars:

- 1** A theoretical basis in trauma theory that provides a lens for understanding behavior
- 2** A philosophy for creating safe environments through community adherence to Seven Commitments
- 3** The trauma-responsive problem-solving framework represented by the acronym S.E.L.F., which stands for the four categories Safety, Emotions, Loss, and Future
- 4** A set of practical tools, known as the Sanctuary ToolKit

SCHW has made a commitment to implement Sanctuary, train staff in the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings, embrace the language of S.E.L.F., and utilize the Sanctuary tools provided. In the coming year the primary focus will be to form a Steering Committee and Core team that will act as champions of the model and engage SCHW staff in creating a trauma-informed environment together.



SCHW Departmental Team Building

Introduction

Team building events provide a great opportunity for SCHW staff to connect in-person outside of a virtual setting, build teamwork and inspire creativity. A recap of the team building events is captured below:

Pumpkin Carving

October 2022

Staff participated in a friendly competition of themed pumpkin carving and each individual casted their votes for their favourite pumpkins. The SCHW team was very creative and did not shy away from getting their hands messy!



Team Building Activities & Craft

December 2022

In celebration of 2022 coming to an end, this day was dedicated to building teamwork through exciting activities and expressing our appreciation to one another by creating an ornament for a fellow colleague. A day filled with laughter, cheer, games, treats, songs and craft!



Creating Safe & Welcoming Spaces

Introduction

Visual Indicators— Hallway Mural and Overhead Signage

As students returned to campus in fall 2022, SCHW prioritized creating spaces that promote safety and inclusivity. SCHW is committed to enhancing the physical space by incorporating live plants, art pieces, murals, puzzles for students to do and books. The images on this page highlight some of the ways we promote a safe, welcoming and inclusive space.



New “Student Counselling, Health & Well-being” overhead signages were installed at the foyer of the Bennett Centre for Students Services and in the hallway outside the centre.



Patrick Lightheart, a Toronto artist was commissioned to create a second mural for SCHW. In 2021, Patrick's mural brought new life into the reception area while this year the mural depicting the diversity of York's student population and the Division of Students' values of courage, connection, and empathy is displayed in the hallway outside the office.

Alignment with the UAP:

- From Access to Success
- Working in Partnership
- Living Well Together

Alignment with the DOS Strategic Plan:

- Invest in our People
- Reinforce our Foundation
- Impact the Student Journey
- Create our Future



WELL-BEING



The Well-being Strategy is an approach that fosters holistic health and well-being among members of the York community. Creating environments where members can thrive is key to the overall success of our York community. Through a variety of education, training and support programs, the Well-being Strategy strives to promote a more holistic and integrated approach to campus health that supports academic excellence, and staff satisfaction and productivity.

Once the Senate approved Phase 1 of the Well-being Strategy Proposal in January 2022, the Well-being team completed well-being assessments on York's campuses, implemented the [Canadian Campus Well-being Survey](#) (CCWS), and hosted community engagement sessions.

In the coming year, the focus will be to create a Well-being Strategy that is guided by the [Okanagan Charter](#), the National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students and the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Phase 1 goals will also include hosting an Okanagan Charter signing event to signal York's deep commitment to supporting a more holistic approach to well-being on York's campuses.

Well-being Strategy

Well-being

Well-being Strategy Engagement Sessions

These sessions provided the opportunity for students, staff, faculty and instructors to share their feedback and vision for well-being on campus. Listening to the voices of members in our community is the first step to identifying and prioritizing our needs and working toward a positive environment for all. Feedback was used to inform direction for the future Well-being Strategy. Student and staff, faculty and instructor engagement sessions were held throughout November 2022 - January 2023.

Winter 2022 Student Engagement Sessions:

16 student engagement sessions hosted across York's campuses.

620 students provided feedback through in-person, virtual and survey engagement.



Canadian Campus Well-being Survey (CCWS)

Well-being



The Canadian Campus Well-being Survey by the University of British Columbia (UBC) is an assessment tool developed for Canadian post-secondary institutions to assess health and well-being on campuses, identify priorities for intervention and increase capacity to link research with policy and practice.

Survey was issued in 2022 to all York students with a completion rate of **8.9%**.

- * Feedback collected supported the Well-being Strategy development for student needs and provided critical information for service delivery.
- * **68** presentations on CCWS data were given to partners across campus (e.g., Division of Students, faculties, etc.) by the primary researcher.
- * CCWS will be repeated in Winter term 2025.

Bell Let's Talk

Well-being

SCHW is committed to supporting the annual Bell Let's Talk Week. From January 17 to 27, there were 16 events hosted for the York community by campus partners to foster conversations about mental health and promote awareness and understanding. SCHW counsellors and Peer Health Educators played an instrumental role in delivering workshops and support groups throughout the event.



HEALTH, EDUCATION & PROMOTION

Alignment with the UAP:

- From Access to Success
- Knowledge for the Future
- Working in Partnership
- Living Well Together
- Advancing Global Engagement

Alignment with the DOS Strategic Plan:

- Invest in our People
- Reinforce our Foundation
- Impact the Student Journey
- Create our Future



In-person & Virtual Services

Health, Education
& Promotion

Health Education & Promotion plays a vital role in supporting students in their journey of creating healthy lifestyles and maintaining healthy behaviours. Led by Peer Health Educators, the unit offers a range of services focused on health education and promotion including workshops, tabling events, peer-to-peer consulting and training programs. The goal is to provide students with access to education, knowledge and resources to make proactive decisions for their health and well-being.

Fall 2022 Analytics:

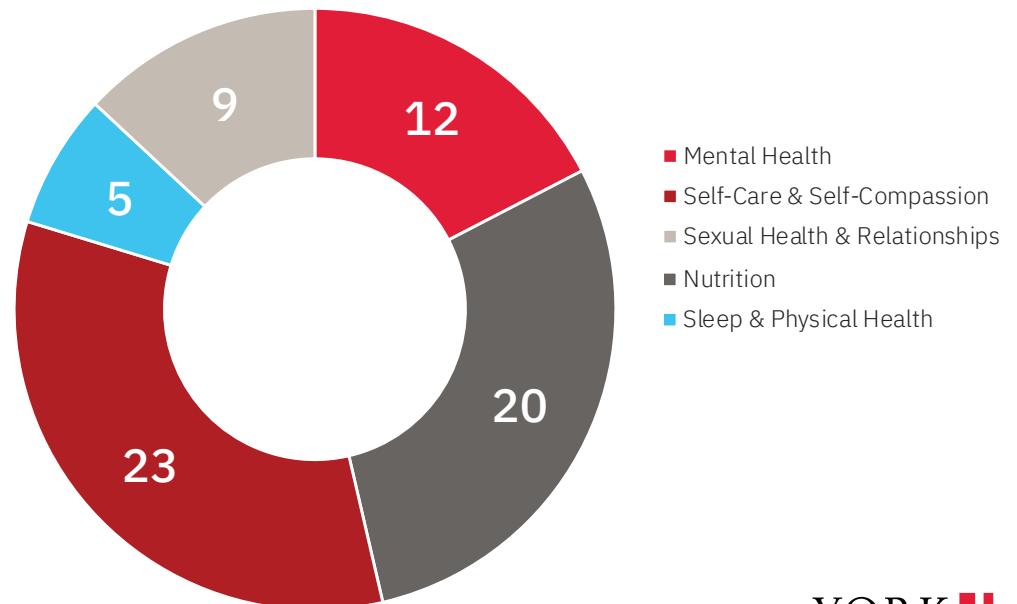
27 Virtual Workshops offered by
Peer Health Educator Team

Registered workshop topics

- Mental Health
- Nutrition
- Self-Care & Self-Compassion
- Sleep & Physical Health
- Sexual Health & Relationships
- Substance Usage

Number of Registrants For Each Workshop Topic

*Substance usage data omitted



In-person & Virtual Services

Health, Education
& Promotion

1 External workshop offered for Student Organization Conference

Takes place bi-annually hosted by Student Community, Leadership and Development.

Audience: York University Student Organization Members and Executives.

Purpose: Provide sessions to student organization members and executives on various on and off-campus available mental & physical health resources and services in order to increase awareness on how to support themselves and their peers.

Reach: **51** Registrants and **39** Attendees



In-person & Virtual Services

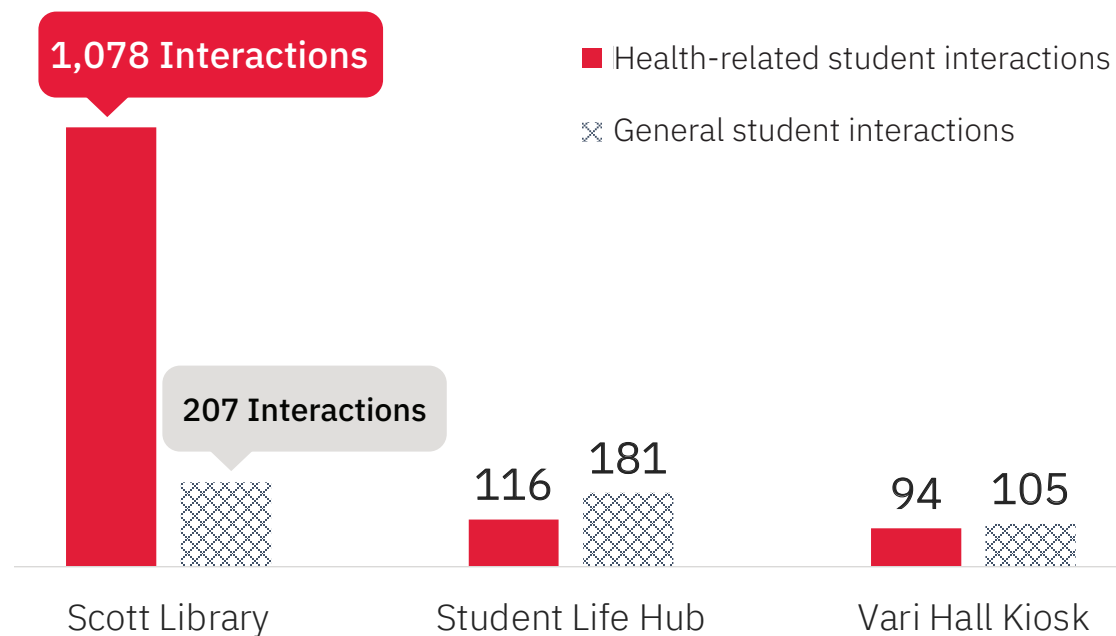
Health, Education
& Promotion

Ongoing in-person tabling on campus at Student Life Hub, Scott Library & Vari Hall Kiosk



Health Education & Promotion team tabling at Pride Event.

Number of Students Supported During In-person Programming in Fall 2022



In-person & Virtual Services

Health, Education
& Promotion

Ongoing in-person tabling on campus at Student Life Hub, Scott Library & Vari Hall Kiosk

93% Of responders reported their knowledge on a **health topic, resource or support service increased** after interacting with a peer health educator.

93% Of responders reported their knowledge on **student counselling services increased** after interacting with a peer health educator.

“
I enjoyed learning, she was very kind in teaching us about health.
”

“
Great way to inform students!
”

“
I had a great chat with the PHEs, keep up the great informing work!!
”

“
The people at the booth were amazing and helpful.
”



Health Education & Promotion team tabling at the Scott Library.

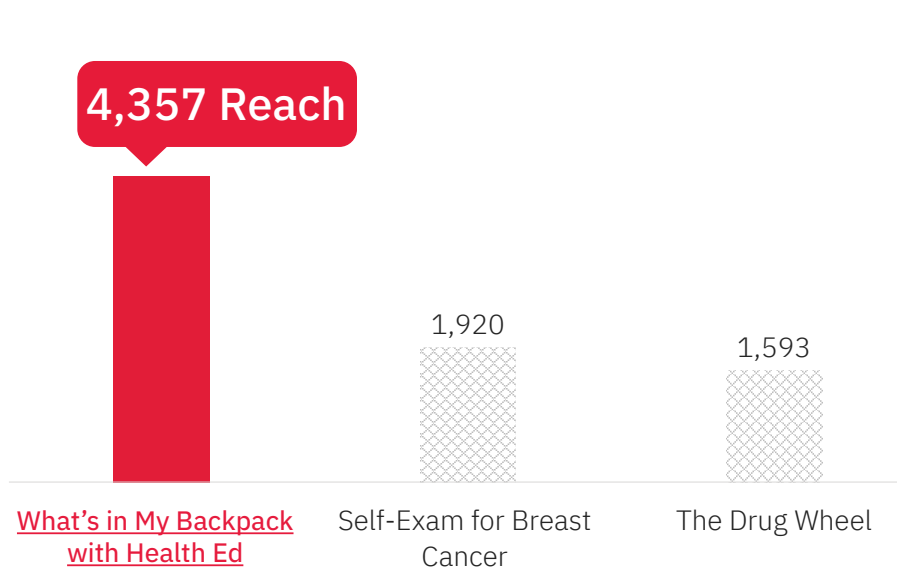
Social Media Engagement

Health, Education
& Promotion

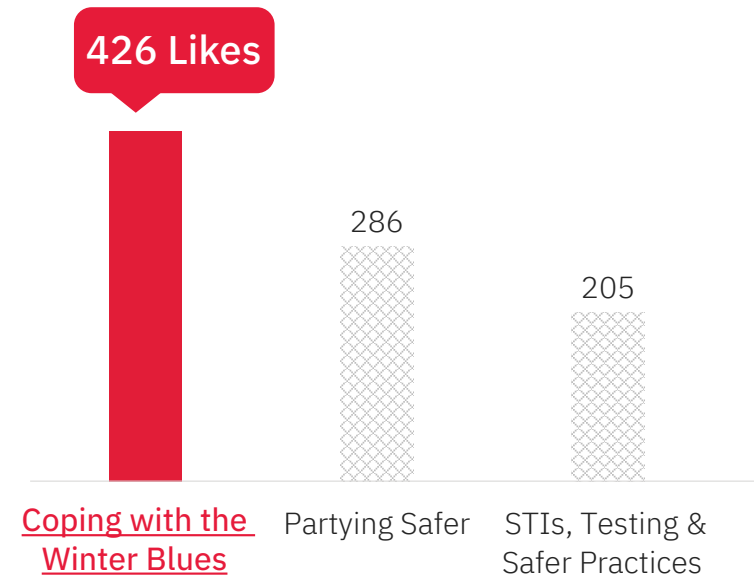
Health Education & Promotion utilizes social media platforms such as Instagram to reach a diverse audience, increase engagement with youth and share health messages online.

Fall 2022 Social Media Analytics

Health Education Stories with the Highest Reach in Fall 2022



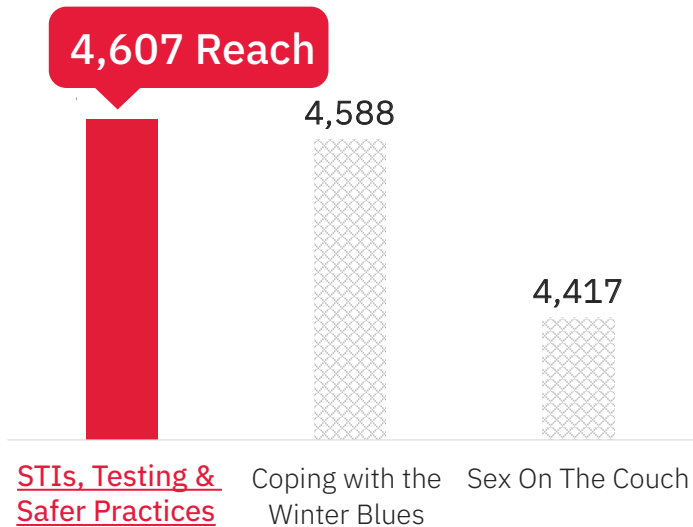
Top 3 Most Liked Posts



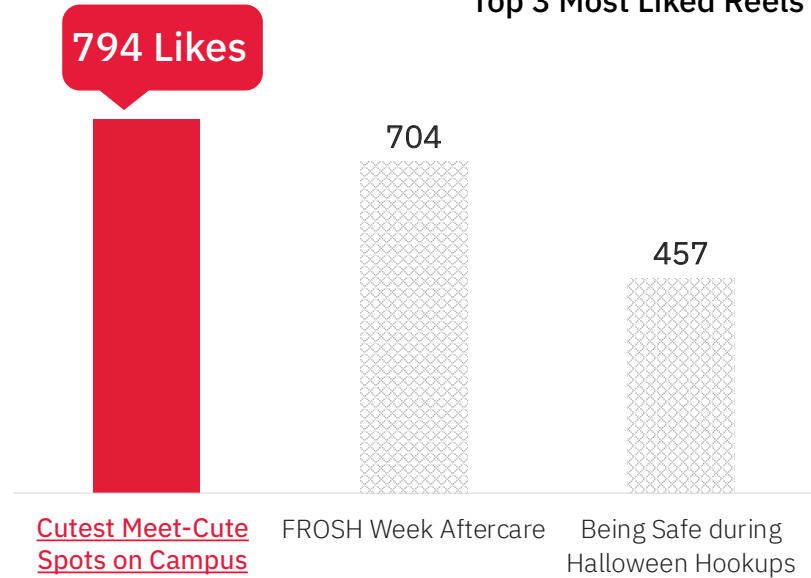
Social Media Engagement

Health, Education
& Promotion

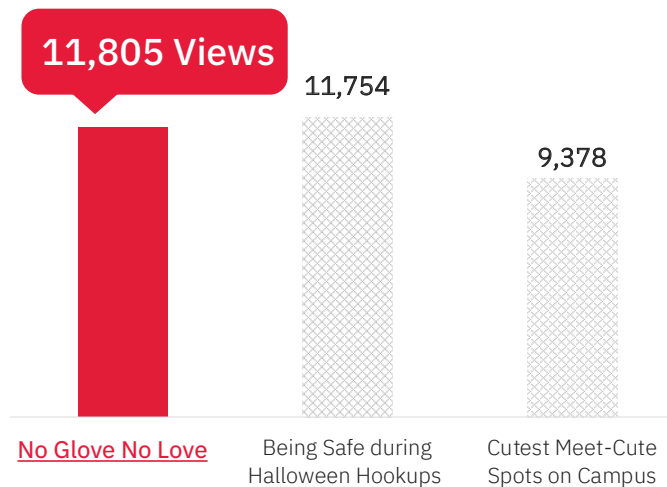
Top 3 Highest Reach Posts



Top 3 Most Liked Reels



Top 3 Most Viewed Reel



Certificate Training Program – LivingWorks Start

Health, Education
& Promotion



A core part of Health Education & Promotion’s work is to foster a deeper understanding and awareness across the campus in the areas of mental health and well-being. Health Education & Promotion is proud to offer [LivingWorks Start](#) by LivingWorks, a course teaching valuable skills to having life-saving conversations with people who may be thinking of suicide, to York students, staff and faculty. This training program prepares individuals with suicide prevention skills and is provided by Health Education & Promotion at no cost.

Year	Total # of Users Enrolled
2020	122
2021	351
2022	845

COUNSELLING



Alignment with the UAP:

- From Access to Success
- Working in Partnership
- Living Well Together

Alignment with the DOS Strategic Plan:

- Invest in our People
- Reinforce our Foundation
- Impact the Student Journey
- Create our Future

SCHW offers a variety of options for students seeking mental health clinical services. Individual counselling is available to York U students in a hybrid model of service delivery. The walk-in counselling service is intended to provide students timely access to professional clinicians. When students are in short-term counselling, the focus of counsellors is on what is achievable within the timeframe. In addition to individual counselling, SCHW also offers group counselling to support students working through personal challenges.

Counselling

Individual Counselling

Keele Campus Counselling Data (Collected Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2022)

3851
unique clients

937

of those 3851 individual clients were **newly registered clients** (students who had never used our services before Dec. 31)

6928
sessions

provided a range of services including in-person, online and ongoing counselling. There were **1566 continuing sessions**, **1172 in-person sessions** and **1141 virtual sessions**.

Glendon Campus Counselling Data (Collected Jan. 1 - Sept. 30, 2022)

508
counselling sessions

in total, either walk-in or ongoing, were held.

54

newly registered students made up **300** sessions out of the 508 total sessions.

* Glendon merged with Keele's OWL booking system in September



Process Groups

Process groups welcome wide-ranging discussions on topics driven by student needs. The unique benefits of group work is well-documented and the SCHW counselling team is proud to create these spaces to support the mental health and university journey of our York students. During this time students have the opportunity to process their thoughts and emotions with peers and the support of counsellors.

Counselling Practicum Program

SCHW has a long-standing practicum program that provides teaching and supervision to a diverse group of aspiring clinical practitioners. SCHW provides supervision and practical experience to several practicum students from multiple disciplines (i.e., social work, psychology, counselling psychology) and allows for theoretical learning to be applied in real life clinical settings. The practicum program begins in September and ends in April of each year. Practicum students are an integral part of the SCHW service provision as they help to provide York students with a wide range of services including walk-in sessions, short-term ongoing therapy, and groups. SCHW values and appreciates the work of our practicum students, and we look forward to each year of the practicum program.

Supporting BIPOC Students

Counselling

Racialized Students Support Group

Racialized Students Support Group aims to create a safe and healing space for students who identify as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Colour (BIPOC) to reflect on their identities, process racial trauma and build community. Facilitated by racialized counsellors at SCHW, the group is held once a month.

BIPOC Wellness Series

The first Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) Wellness Series hosted by SCHW was successfully held on October 4 - 5. This two-day virtual workshop series offered an array of topics of students' interests that were gathered from a consultation with BIPOC students in 2021.

Day 1: October 4, 2022

Workshop 1 — Bursaries and Scholarships for BIPOC Students

Presenter: Karen Warner

Description: This workshop offered students ways to access financial resources for York's BIPOC student population.

Workshop 2 — Imposter Syndrome and Self-Doubt

Presenter: Simone Donaldson

Description: This workshop deepened the understanding of imposter syndrome, self-doubt and the impacts of these experiences on students' mental health, as well as introduced coping methods for BIPOC students.

Day 2: October 5, 2022

Workshop 3 — Addressing Microaggressions and Racism on Campus

Presenters: Lisa Brown and Carol Ruiz

Description: In this workshop, students learned how to address microaggressions and racism at a university setting.

Workshop 4 — Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Microaggressions

Presenter: Melissa Taylor

Description: The workshop highlighted the importance of self-care when experiencing ongoing microaggressions.

Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Students

Counselling

2022 Support Groups

SCHW offers multiple support groups for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community at York University. Facilitated by 2SLGBTQIA+ identifying SCHW Counselling staff, the support groups focus on creating safe spaces, celebrating diversity and fostering community for our York & Glendon 2SLGBTQIA+ student communities.

2SLGBTQIA+ Support Group

This support group provides an opportunity for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and counsellors to connect virtually and share support and resources.

Trans & Non-Binary Support Group

Facilitated by Jay Jonah and SCHW counsellors, this group aims to support trans, gender non-conforming, non-binary and questioning folx to navigate gender in a relaxed and safe space.

Gay Men's Support Group

This weekly group provides a safe space where students can find support in the gay and/or queer men community.

Queer Women's Support Group

SCHW introduced the first Queer Women's Support Group in fall 2022 for women who identify as Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans, Non-Binary or Questioning. This virtual group is facilitated by SCHW Counsellors identifying as Queer.



Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Students

Counselling

2022 Workshops/Partnerships

Bell Let's Talk Week! & Bell Let's Talk Day!

January 2022

2SLGBTQIA+ Student Support Group and Trans and Non-Binary Support Group facilitated by Jay Jonah.

Developing a Queer Landing Page

May 2022

An initiative to create a “landing page” in which students can learn more about 2SLGBTQIA+ at York. Preliminary report completed in Spring 2022.

May 2022

**FINAL
REPORT**

on building a landing page for queer students

STUDENT COUNSELLING, HEALTH & WELL-BEING



Pride Month

June 2022

Several workshops were facilitated by SCHW counsellors during Pride Month. The “Self-Care Toolkit” invited the 2SLGBTQIA+ students to build a kit of self-care strategies to draw upon that promotes physical and emotional safety. Another workshop was the “Sex on the Couch” workshop in collaboration with Peer Educators that promoted safer conversations on sexuality and relations for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Trans Awareness Week

November 2022

In partnership with the “The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education”, and facilitated by Jay Jonah and SCHW counsellors, the “Creating Your Gender Journey” workshop explored gender through interactive art and writing-based activities.



COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

SCHW is proud of the collaborations with on-campus and off-campus partners to promote student mental health and well-being. Part of our vision is to build stronger connections and share resources with other partners.

On-Campus

Introduction to Services

SCHW staff offer virtual and in-person presentations throughout the year to faculty, staff and student groups. This presentation provides an overview of the services and resources available at SCHW. Requests can be made by completing the [“Collaboration with SCHW”](#) form found on the SCHW website.



Virtual Health Clinic

In partnership with Virtual Health Clinic, York students can now access free OHIP and UHIP-covered virtual healthcare services at a time and location that works best for them. Virtual appointments with a live healthcare professional for counselling, mental health support, prescriptions, COVID-19 supports, specialist referrals and many more can be made by visiting the [Virtual Health Clinic website](#).

Workshops

SCHW staff facilitate and offer support to a variety of mental health and well-being workshops throughout the year based on the need of the campus community. Workshops have been provided for new staff training, faculty orientation, student groups and to support events such as the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence by the Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education. To read more on workshops, please refer to page [26](#).

Keepme.SAFE

SCHW and York International offers students free, 24/7 access to counselling and mental health supports through KeepMeSafe, a mental wellness student support program. Students can access real-time and appointment-based support via chat and telephone in multiple languages.

The program is available online through the [keep.meSAFE](#) website and the My SSP mobile app.



Student Initiative Fund

SCHW offers the Mental Health and Wellness Student Initiative Fund to support student groups on campus with developing innovative and inclusive student-led initiatives that promote mental health and well-being. Through the fund, students can apply for up to \$1000 in project funding.

On-Campus

Survivors of Sexual Violence Support Groups

Together with The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education, SCHW continues to co-facilitate support groups for survivors of sexual violence. Students can express themselves and process trauma in a supportive and safe environment.

Campus Committees

SCHW counsellors identifying as queer participate in a number of campus committees including PRIDE and SexGen.

SexGen York Committee is the University-wide committee responsible for advising and advocating around issues and concerns of sexual and gender diversity. SCHW was represented on SexGen to ensure a voice informed by a trauma-informed lens was included in the work of this committee.

The PRIDE committee consists of members from several campus organizations and student clubs who work collaboratively to build an inclusive and vibrant PRIDE campus celebration. SCHW contributed several workshops, informed by the lens of mental health and self-care, to York's 2022 PRIDE celebrations. (Refer to page [26](#))

Meditations

Supporting the Atkinson Centre for Mature and Part-time Students (ACMAPS), York International and the Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education, meditation sessions facilitated by an experienced SCHW Registered Psychotherapist aim to help participants de-stress and focus on positivity through different meditation styles.

Student Accessibility Services

SCHW continues to partner with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to provide psychological assessments to students seeking diagnostic clarification in the areas of anxiety, depression, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders (ADHD). The goal of this partnership is to reduce barriers to student success, such as long wait times and high costs for assessment that students routinely encounter in the community. Students referred for service through this partnership are assessed by an SCHW Psychologist/Psychological Associate, who will discuss the results and recommendations of the assessment report. SCHW psychologists and SAS work closely together to guide the implementation of eligible academic accommodations and support for the students.

50+ Students served through this partnership to date.

Off-Campus

Contributions at Provincial Committees

For another year, SCHW has contributed to the Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC) by assisting in reviewing intimate partner homicides that occur in the province with the purpose of providing recommendations to help prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future. The information and recommendations from the DVDRC are shared with York community members to help identify risk, support survivors of intimate partner violence, and intervene with those who use abuse in their intimate relationships.

Collaboration
& Partnerships



