



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh



HPRC
Health Promotion Research Centre

***Embracing Innovative Approaches to Promoting Youth
Mental Health and Wellbeing: Are you ready for the
challenge?***

**Atlantic Summer Institute on Healthy and Safe Communities
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*Ollscoil na hÉireann Gaillimh***

Overview

- Reframing the challenge of improving youth mental health and wellbeing - the need for innovative policies and practice approaches
- Embracing upstream interventions - bringing a clear focus on strategies for youth mental health promotion and prevention
- Strengthening effective intersectoral action and new delivery platforms for implementing evidence-based strategies across whole-of-government and whole-of-society

Promoting youth mental health and wellbeing

Forever Young – Bob Dylan

May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung
May you stay
Forever young

**

May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift
May your heart always be joyful
May your song always be sung
And may you stay
Forever young

Promoting youth mental health and wellbeing

- Growing opportunities and challenges for young people in an increasingly complex and competitive world – social, cultural, economic and environmental
 - a broad range of cognitive, social and emotional skills are needed for positive development
- Youth poverty and unemployment, migration, rising levels of mental health problems and youth suicide (EU, 2015)
 - disadvantaged and minority youth are affected disproportionately with poorer social, academic, and mental health outcomes
- Promoting youth mental health is a critical strategy in improving population health and wellbeing, contributes to social and economic development and greater social cohesion

Innovation in mental health policy and practice

- Innovative approaches – new ways of addressing health priorities
 - new models of service provision, new technologies, new organisational models leading to improved access, quality, equity and resilience of health systems (EU Expert Panel on Effective Ways of Investing in Health, 2015)
- Disruptive innovation (Christensen et al., 2008)
 - new ways of doing things that lead to improved outcomes, more accessible and lower-cost services/products
 - paradigm-shift that leads to transformational change
- Innovations in health systems and approaches to improve population health
 - cardiovascular disease, cancers, infectious diseases -> addressing the 'causes of the causes' - shift towards prevention and promotion alongside improved and more accessible treatment and recovery

Innovation in mental health policy and practice

- Treatment approaches on their own are not sufficient to improve population mental health (WHO, 2002; 2004; 2013)
 - need a comprehensive approach embracing promotion and prevention alongside treatment and recovery
 - Paradigm change in thinking about mental health
 - A focus on mental health rather than solely on mental disorder
 - Strategies for creating the greatest mental health gain for the greatest number of young people
 - Shift from a deficit model of illness to the health potential of young people and their everyday settings for living
- *Reframing the challenge of improving youth mental health*

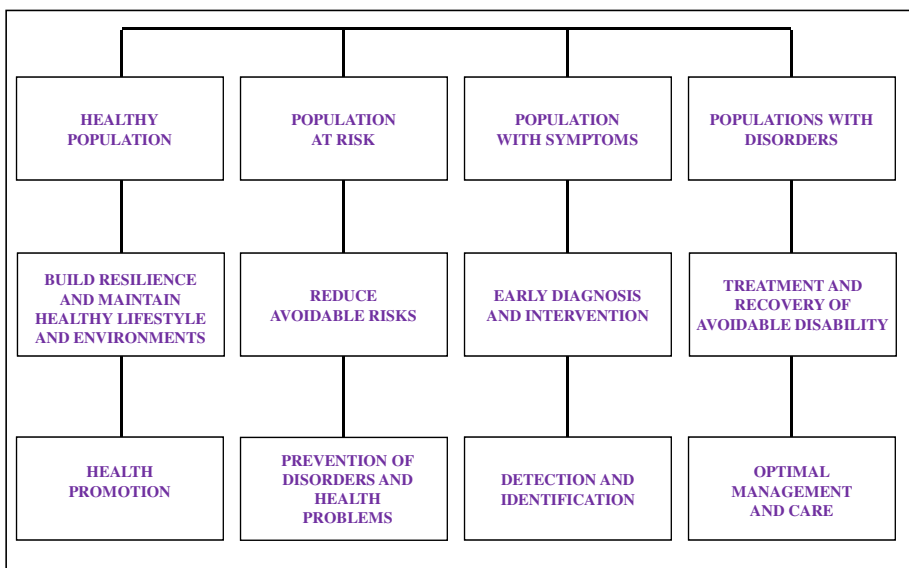
Innovation in mental health policy and practice

Adopting a Health Promotion Approach (WHO, 1986)

- social model of mental health – social determinants
- multidisciplinary perspectives
- new players and actors from the non-health sector
- places empowered people at the centre of their own health
- comprehensive multilevel interventions

➤ *shift from costly biomedical interventions to system-based approaches that can be implemented at a population wide level*

Spectrum of mental health services: A population health promotion perspective



Adapted from *Building Capacity to Promote the Mental Health of Australians*, 1996

Promoting youth mental health and wellbeing

- Challenge - creating environments for optimal development, good mental health and resilience
- Growing recognition of the importance of promoting positive mental health and enhancing social and emotional wellbeing across the lifespan (WHO, 2013)
 - social and emotional skills development is a key asset and resource for positive youth development (OECD, 2015 *Skills for Social Progress*)
- Early years lay the foundation for good mental health across the life cycle
- Mental health is created where people live their lives
 - *broadening our concept and understanding of what constitutes good mental health and how it can be promoted*

Positive concepts of mental health

Mental health may be defined as:

“a state of emotional and social well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can manage the normal stresses of life, can work effectively, and is able to play a role in his or her community “ (WHO, 1999)

- Concept of positive mental health (Keyes, 2002; Huppert, 2005; Ryff et al., 2006)
 - subjective wellbeing and life satisfaction
 - positive functioning, engagement and social wellbeing
- Keyes' concept of 'flourishing'
 - *abilities to develop psychologically, physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually*
 - *Indigenous wellness frameworks*



WHO & Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (2014) *Social Determinants of Mental Health*

“Mental health and many common mental disorders are shaped to a great extent by the social, economic, and physical environments in which people live”

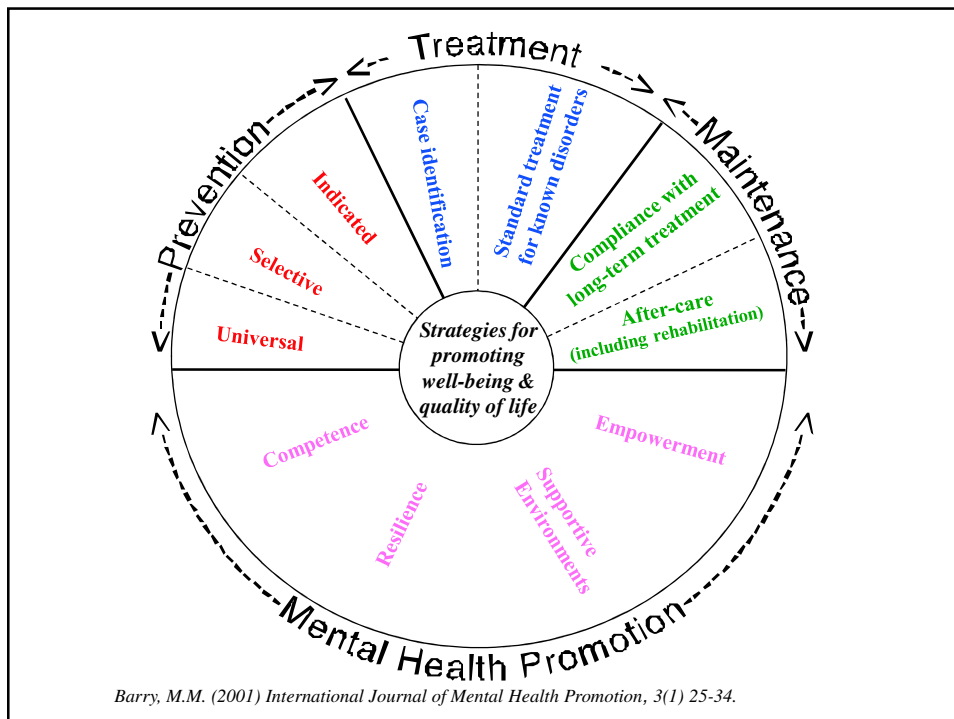
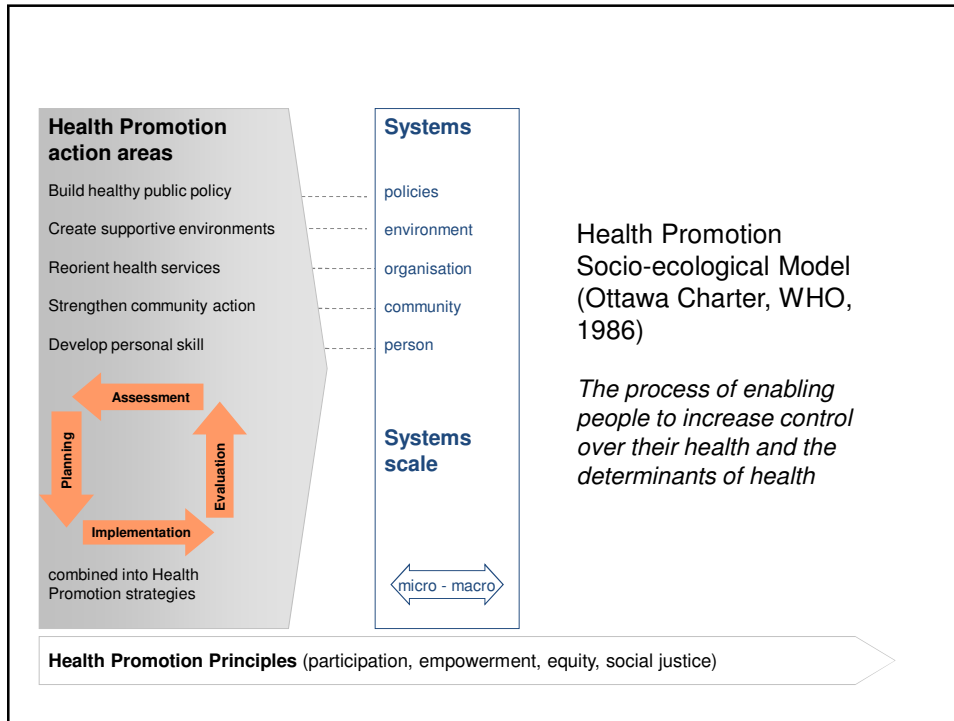
- calls for actions to improve the conditions of daily life
- whole of government and whole of society approach – comprehensive and universal actions across the life course, multiple sectors and levels

➤ ***policy making at all levels of governance and across sectors can make a positive difference to mental health outcomes***

Addressing the Social Determinants of Mental Health

- Strengthen individuals and families
 - promote social and emotional skills, resilience, coping
- Strengthen communities - social support, sense of connectedness and inclusion, social participation, citizenship
 - civil society engagement
- Reorient health services to mental health promotion and prevention as well as treatment and rehabilitation
 - mainstreaming universal interventions
- Remove structural barriers to mental health at a societal level – culture, economic and social policies
 - mental health in all policies approach

ASI 2017 Symposium on Promoting Child and Youth Mental Health



Evidence base for promoting youth mental health and wellbeing

- The promotion of youth mental health leads to lasting benefits for the improved health and wellbeing of young people, their families and society (WHO, 2013)
- Compelling evidence that mental health promotion and primary prevention interventions
 - reduce risk factors for mental and behavioural disorders
 - enhance protective factors for good mental health and wellbeing
 - lead to lasting positive effects on a range of social and economic outcomes → academic performance, employment, social functioning and health
- Convincing social and economic case for investing in the promotion of youth mental health and wellbeing

Policy Frameworks

Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020 (WHO, 2013)

“The essential role of mental health in achieving health for all”

- comprehensive strategies for promotion, prevention, treatment and recovery in a **whole-of-government** approach
- to protect and promote the **mental wellbeing** of all citizens
- responsibility extends across **all sectors** and all government departments

➤ *mainstreaming mental health into public health, poverty reduction, economic development and social policies*

Policy Frameworks

- **The Helsinki Statement on Health in All Policies (HiAP) & Framework for Country Action (WHO, 2013)**

“HiAP is an approach to public policies across sectors that systematically takes into account the health implications of decisions, seeks synergies, and avoids harmful health impacts in order to improve population health and health equity”

➤ *accountability of policymakers for health impacts at all levels of policy-making*

- **WHO Shanghai Declaration (2016) – health promotion actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015)**

- ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing across all ages is essential to the SDGs
- SDG3.4 – promote mental health and wellbeing

Policy Frameworks

- **A whole-of-government approach**

- Positioning of mental health and wellbeing in the political, economic and social sphere
- Governance for mental health and wellbeing – priority for more than the mental health sector
- Policy coherence - cross-sectoral responsibility for mental health equity and wellbeing
- Addressing the social determinants of mental health and tackling mental health inequities

➤ *intersectoral action, participatory policy processes, leadership*

Policy Frameworks

- **Whole-of-society approach**
 - Citizen empowerment - enabling control and agency
 - Engaging a wider set of actors for intersectoral action
 - child care, education, welfare, youth services, environment, housing, employment, justice
 - Focus on wellbeing – promotion of social inclusion and cohesion, reducing poverty and inequity, flourishing society
 - arts and culture, sports, urban design, local authorities, media, economic and social policy, local communities
- *participation of the wider community, including you people, in creating the conditions for wellbeing and positive mental health*

Implementing Mental Health Promotion

- Ensure access to resources and life opportunities
 - supportive relationships, education, employment, income, housing, social inclusion
 - addressing social inequity, injustice, poverty, stigma and discrimination that deny access to life opportunities
- Working across sectors to implement mental health promotion actions
- NCCs for Public Health (2017) *Population Mental Health Promotion for Children and Youth – collection of papers*
 - increase understanding of positive mental health as an essential focus for public health practice in Canada
 - integrating mental health promotion into public health practice

NCCs for Public Health (2017) Population Mental Health Promotion for Children and Youth



Population mental health promotion for children and youth - a collection for public health in Canada

The six National Collaborating Centres for Public Health (NCCPH) developed this collection to increase understanding of population mental health promotion for children and youth and start a discussion about how to better integrate and strengthen public health practice in this area. The documents give complementary perspectives across the priority focus areas of the Collaborating Centres to provide numerous entry points for the public health sector. Our hope is that this collection will inspire and guide public health practitioners and professionals to explore positive mental health for children and youth as an essential focus for public health practice.

What Works?

- Identify best evidence to guide priority actions
 - cost-effective, culturally sensitive and feasible interventions for mental health promotion
- Equity impact of interventions
 - interventions that are effective for diverse population groups of different ages, gender, ethnicity, culture, education and income status
- Implementation guidance – putting the intervention into practice
 - resources, training, technical assistance, materials, organizational capacity, systems change
- Context - external and ecological validity
 - effective implementation, under real life conditions, across diverse socio-cultural contexts and settings
 - bridge the science-to-practice gap

Evidence Syntheses

- WHO Evidence Brief on Implementation of Global Mental Health Action Plan in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.
Promotion of Mental Health and Primary Prevention of Mental Disorders: Priorities for Implementation
Barry, Clarke & Petersen (2015) *EMHJ* 21(6), 424-432
- Barry, Clarke, Jenkins & Patel, V. (2013) – A systematic review...
BMC Public Health, 13:835
- Barry, M. M. and Dowling, K. (2015) *A Review of the Evidence on Enhancing Psychosocial Skills Development in Children and Young People*. Report for the IUHPE & Picardie Regional Health Agency, France
- Barry, Clarke, Morreale, & Field (2017) Review of the evidence on the effects of community-based programs on young people's social and emotional skills. *Adolescent Research Review*
- Barry, M. M. and Jenkins, R. (2007) *Implementing Mental Health Promotion* (2nd edition in progress)



What works in enhancing social and emotional skills development during childhood and adolescence?

A review of the evidence on the effectiveness of school-based and out-of-school programmes in the UK
2015

Aleisha M. Clarke, Silvia Morreale, Catherine-Anne Field, Yonna Hussein, Margaret M. Barry

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February 2015

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Priority Actions for Promoting the Mental Health of Children and Young People

- High quality early-childhood interventions (0-3 years)
 - Home visiting; Parenting and family support programmes
 - integrating social and emotional development as part of routine antenatal and postnatal care and home visiting programmes
 - empowering parents and enhancing emotional wellbeing and resilience
- Pre-school education (3-6 years) and community-based parenting with a focus on social and emotional skill development
- School-based approaches (6-18 years)
 - Universal Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programmes adopting whole school approaches in primary and post-primary schools
 - Targeted interventions for vulnerable children

Nurse-Family Partnership programme (Olds, 1997; Olds et al., 1997, 1998; Racine, 2002)

- Home visiting programme for low-income, at-risk pregnant women bearing their first child – adopts a strengths-based focus
 - nurse home visitors, using a structured protocol, work with families during pregnancy and the first two years
 - prenatal health, child's and mother's health and development
- Findings from 3 main randomised controlled trials -15 years follow-up
 - 79% fewer verified reports of child abuse or neglect
 - 31% fewer subsequent births
 - 30 months less receipt of Aid to Families with Dependent Children
 - 44% fewer maternal behavioural problems due to alcohol and drug abuse
 - 69% fewer maternal arrests
 - 15-year old children less likely to run away, 56% fewer arrests and 56% reduction in alcohol consumption

Nurse-Family Partnership programme (Olds, 1997; Olds et al., 1997, 1998; Racine, 2002)

- Costs of the programme (\$3,200 per family) recovered by the child's 4th birthday; savings are four times the original investment by age 15
- Estimates of long-term benefits up to \$23,000 per participant (Lee et al., 2012)
- Replicated in over 200 sites in the US
- Delivered in England as the Family Nurse Partnership – targeted intervention for first time mothers aged 19 or under (<http://fnp.nhs.uk>)
- Delivery of home visiting and parenting programmes by non-professionals, e.g. Community Mothers (Johnson et al., 2000) in both high and low income countries (Ciliska et al., 1999; Elkan et al., 2000; Kendrick et al., 2007)
- See also, Triple P Positive Parenting; Incredible Years programmes

High/Scope Perry Preschool Programme (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1988; Schweinhart et al., 2005)

- Long term benefits of pre-school interventions for children - living in poverty (Nelson et al. 2003; Jané-Llopis et al., 2005; Sylva et al., 2007; Tennant et al., 2007; Burger, 2010)
- High Scope Perry Pre-school education intervention
 - intellectual and social development in 3-4 year olds from disadvantaged background
 - educational model - active learning, effective learning environment
 - home visiting component - parental involvement
- Positive long-lasting effects (40+ years follow-up)
 - school success - literacy, grades and completion rates
 - socioeconomic success - employment, earnings, home ownership
 - social responsibility - marriage and parenthood
 - reduced crime levels
 - cost-benefit analysis - return of \$17 for every dollar invested
- See also Head Start Reidi (US) and the Sure Start Centres (UK)

School-based mental health promotion programmes

- Focus on **social and emotional learning** and skills development within the educational system
 - promote academic, social and emotional competence
 - reducing school drop-out
 - reducing negative health and social outcomes
- Essential skills for social and emotional learning (CASEL, 2005):
 - **Self-awareness** - know yourself and others - identify feelings, be responsible, recognize strengths
 - **Self-management** - manage emotions, understand situations, set goals and plans, solve problems creatively
 - **Social awareness** - care for others - show empathy, appreciate diversity
 - **Relationships skills** - communicate effectively, build relationships, negotiate fairly, refuse provocations, seek help
 - **Responsible decision making** - act ethically, appropriate social norms, respect others

School-based mental health promotion programmes

- Substantive body of research demonstrating the positive impact of school-based programmes on health, social and educational outcomes
- Students' mental health and wellbeing (Durlak et al., 2011; Weare & Nind, 2011):
 - enhanced social and emotional skills
 - improved attitudes towards self, school and others
 - enhanced positive social behaviours
 - reduced conduct problems and aggression
 - reduced emotional distress – stress and depression
- Students' educational outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011):
 - improved ability to learn
 - to achieve academically (+ 11 percentile higher on standard tests)
 - skills that enhance capacity for positive development

Adopting a whole school approach

Context, content, capacity

- Context – school setting and whole school practices in effecting change; parental and community involvement
- Content- what is to be implemented, programme strategies
- Capacity – how it is to be implemented – skills & resources required



Barry, Clarke & Dowling (2017) Promoting social and emotional wellbeing in schools. *Health Education Vol 117 (5) 434-451*

➤ *Shift from discrete programmes to organizational and system-level practices*

Out-of-school settings

- Promising evidence from community-based interventions and after-school programmes in the US (Durlak et al., 2010; Kremer et al., 2015) – need for more rigorous evaluation
- Review of the evidence on the effects of UK community-based programs on young people's social and emotional skills
 - investment in youth development programmes and youth organizations in deprived communities

Barry, Clarke, Morreale, & Field (2017) *Adolescent Research Review DOI 10.1007/s40894-017-0055-2*

- innovative interventions - youth social action projects - volunteering, leadership development and community engagement; youth arts and sports, mentoring
- need for more comprehensive evaluations to support best practice

Harnessing the potential of online technologies

- Use of internet and social media -> tools and a 'virtual setting' for promoting young people's mental health and wellbeing
 - online interventions to support the development of life skills and competencies – emerging evidence base

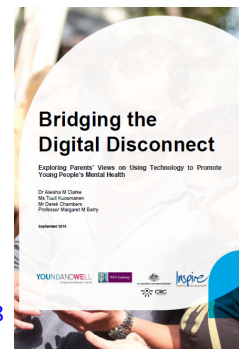
Clarke, Kuosmanen & Barry (2014) *Journal of Youth & Adolescence* - systematic review of online MHP interventions for young people (aged 12-25 yrs)

- online gaming; mobile phone interventions
- structured online modules; blogging & online support

Kuosmanen, Fleming, Newell & Barry (2017) - evaluation of the SPARX-R gaming intervention. *Internet Interventions*, 8, 40-47

- Mental health literacy and digital literacy

Clarke, Chambers & Barry (2017) *School Psychology Intl*, Special Issue on Int Approaches to School-based Mental Health, 1-18



Evidence-informed policy and practice

- High quality comprehensive interventions carried out in collaboration with parents, families, communities and services can produce **multiple and lasting positive benefits** for young people, their families and society
 - lead to improvements not only in mental health but also improved social functioning, academic and work performance and general health behaviour
 - effects are especially evident for the most vulnerable groups
 - cost-effective interventions - health, social and economic benefits
- Robust case for action- solid social investment
- Policy support – universal health care, family support, preschool and childcare support, educational and employment policies, welfare, social inclusion and poverty reduction
- **Wider public policy measures to reduce health and social inequities and poverty**

Innovative Frameworks for Action

- **Whole of government approach**
 - cross-sectoral responsibility for addressing the social determinants of mental health and tackling mental health inequities
 - priority for more than the mental health sector - policy coherence
 - **Whole of society approach**
 - multisectoral partnerships identifying and creating synergies to promote and enhance mental health - flourishing society
 - engaging new actors from across diverse sectors such as; youth sector, education, community, media, arts and culture, sports, urban design, local authorities, economic and social policy
- *participation of all of government and the wider community in creating the conditions for positive mental health and wellbeing*

Engaging Young People

- Empower and mobilise young people and communities to shape and initiate actions to promote wellbeing and advocate for change
 - Build greater understanding of positive mental health and its importance for health and social wellbeing
 - explicit focus on emotional and social wellbeing and how social values, culture and public policies impact on mental health and wellbeing
 - Promoting a broader concept of mental health literacy for young people, communities and organizations
 - in the context of individual, cultural, educational and social processes (WHO, 2013 Solid Facts)
 - mental health literate organizations - schools, youth sector, community, health care settings
- *mobilising a public demand for a mentally healthy society*

Innovative Approaches to Policy and Practice

- Investing in mental health promotion policies and practice that will deliver on improved mental health at a population level
- Scaling-up and integrating population level actions based on cross-sectoral planning and delivery
 - policy mandate for comprehensive and universal actions on a cross-sectoral basis
- Strengthening effective implementation of research and policy into practice
 - systems and support structures for multi-sectoral action
 - delivery mechanisms for embedding mental health promotion practices into mainstream support and service delivery in a sustainable manner

Innovative Approaches to Policy and Practice

- Invest in organizational capacity and human resources to achieve priority actions
- Workforce development – knowledge and skills mix
 - skills of intersectoral working, leadership, partnerships, advocacy
 - mobilising and engaging young people and other sectors
 - bridging the gap between public health and mental health specialists
- New research paradigms
 - innovative research approaches that can capture and measure systems change
 - support for transdisciplinary and translational research

Innovative & Sustainable Action

*ensuring that the conditions that create and promote youth mental health and
wellbeing are accessible to all*

