



## The SEAK Journey: Learning from the Implementation of PATHS

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Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Presenters:**

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### CMHA NS & The SEAK Project

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- CMHA the oldest mental health non-profit organization
- PHAC IS funded proven school-based social and emotional learning implementation initiative (SEAK), 2011-2015
- Formative and summative evaluation
- Understand short & long term outcomes of the intervention on self-control



## Phase II Partners

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- Dalhousie University
- 5 Regional School Boards in the Provinces of Nova Scotia, Manitoba, & Alberta
- Hull Services
- Atlantic SEL Advisory Committee & Core Working Group

### *Consulting Partners:*

- Nishka Smith Consulting – Project Evaluation
- The Quaich – Partnership Development & Scale Up



## Phase II Objectives

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- ***Action Area 1: Mental Health Promotion***
- ***Action Area 2: Partnership Development***
- ***Action Area 3: Evaluation***
- ***Action Area 4: Communication and Knowledge Mobilization***
- ***Action Area 5: Leadership***



## Presentation Objectives

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By the end of the presentation you will understand:

- The interventions' purpose
- Our research design and early findings
- The lessons learned and recommendations



## Quantitative Findings: SEAKing Answers About PATHS

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**In collaboration with:**

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## Self-Control

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- **“Executive” *cognitive* skills required to control ones’**
  - Thoughts
  - Actions/Behaviours
  - Emotions
- **Determinants of Self-Control?**
  - Cognitive
  - Linguistic
  - Social
- **Consequences of Good Self-Control**
  - What are they?
  - Are they important?
  - If so, can self-control be improved?



## SEAK: Socially and Emotionally Aware Kids

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### Correlation versus causation

Need intervention studies designed to improve self-control  
Examine short and long-term outcome variables

### SEAK initiative designed to do just that

Implement + evaluate evidence-based intervention program to improve mental health of Canadians with social inequities

PATHS program: universal school curriculum

Rooted in developmental neuroscience / developed by developmental psychologists (Kusche & Greenberg, 1994)



## Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

### Assumes

Young children experience emotions but only later develop skills to verbalize and control emotions

### Using developmentally appropriate lessons, children are taught

- To label emotions
- To recognize relations between different emotions
- To associate feelings with particular events
- All emotions are ok, but some behaviours not ok



## Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

### Two 20-30 minute lessons per week

### Lessons include

- Story models
- Discussions
- Skits
- Art activities
- Educational games
- Step-by-step problem-solving simulations



## Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

### Classroom activities foster

Feelings of self-esteem (give compliments to self/others)

**Self-control** (children learn to stop and think before acting)

### PATHS focuses on

1. Self-control
2. Emotional understanding
3. Self-esteem
4. Peer relations
5. Interpersonal problem solving skills



**STOP  
THINK  
ACT**



## Assessing Proximal & Distal Effects of PATHS Intervention

Behaviours/  
Skills  
Targeted by  
PATHS



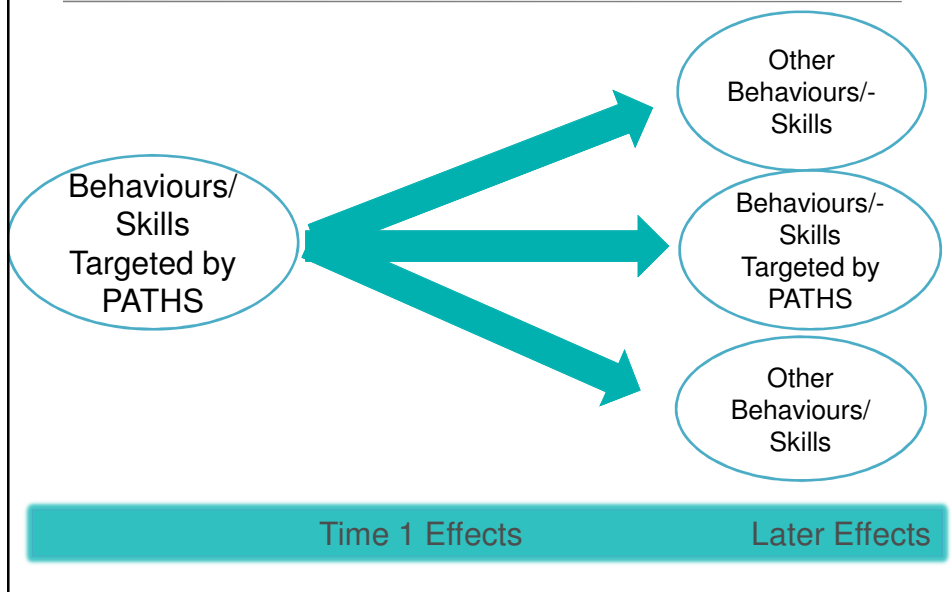
## Past Proximal Effects of PATHS

### PATHS children

- Understand, recognize, and control emotions better
- Are more fluent and articulate about emotional experiences
- Have less externalizing problems (aggression, hyperactive, disruptive)
- Have less internalizing problems too (anxiety, sadness)
- Are more prosocial, have better peer relations
- Have improved self-esteem



## Assessing Proximal & Distal Effects of PATHS Intervention



## Past Distal Effects of PATHS

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### PATHS children

- Have better “executive function” skills
- Do better in school
- Make better dietary choices and have better exercise habits
- Use general health, pediatric, and ER services less

### Early studies

- Smaller scale
- Most only briefly evaluated effects of PATHS (1- to 2-year follow ups)
- Often relied on teacher reports



## SEAK Study

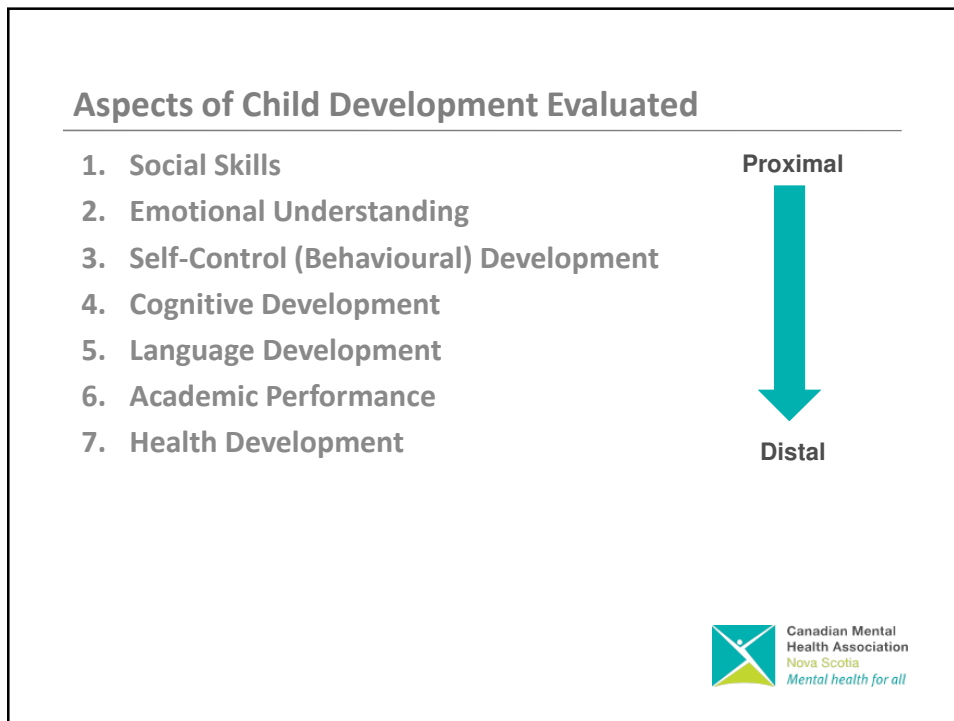
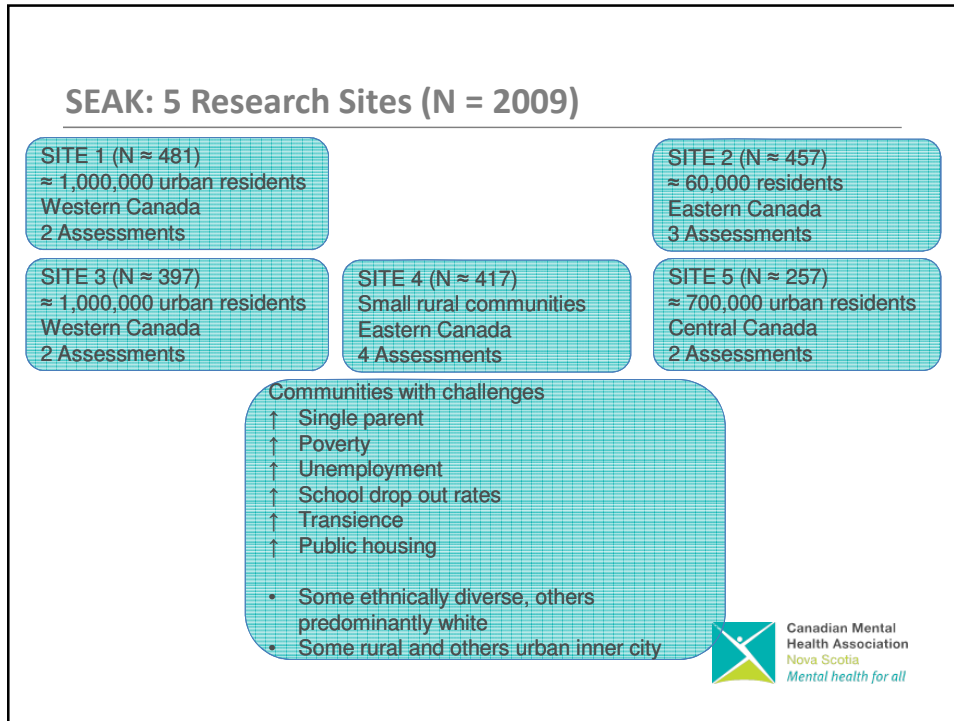
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### Need:

- For larger-scale studies
- To assess long-term impact
- To assess impact in “real-world” settings
- To obtain information from several respondents
  - Parents
  - Children
  - Teachers
  - Principals
  - Other stakeholders
- To assess both proximal and distal outcomes







### Aspects of Child Development Evaluated

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**1. Social Skills**

Teacher/Parent reported social competence  
Child perspective-taking performance

**2. Emotional Understanding**

Child recognizing emotions/emotional words  
Child emotion understanding

**3. Self-Control (Behavioural) Development**

Teacher/parent reported disruption/aggression/attention  
Child inhibitory control performance



### Aspects of Child Development Evaluated

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**4. Cognitive Development**

Teacher/parent reported attention  
Child processing speed  
Child flexible thinking performance  
Child working memory

**5. Language Development**

Child PPVT performance  
Child recognizing emotions/emotional words

**6. Academic Performance**

Child reading performance (WJ-III; 2 subscales)  
Child math performance (WJ-III; 2 subscales)



## Aspects of Child Development Evaluated

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### 7. Health Development

Weight/Height – BMI  
Health Service Use  
Mental Wellbeing (parents and youth)



## Evaluation

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### Parental Questionnaire

Child Behaviour  
Parental Mental Wellbeing  
Demographic Information  
Child Health/Health Service Use Information

### School Information

Teacher Evaluation of Child Behaviour  
Teacher Time Dealing With Disruption  
Principal School Climate Information



## Evaluation

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### Child Measures

#### Individual Assessments (Paper and Pencil)

Standardized Language/Academic Measures  
Memory Forward/Backward Digit Span  
Height / Weight

#### Group Assessments (6 Computerized Measures)

Instructions presented over headphones  
Demonstration + Practice included  
Useable from 3 years to adulthood  
Touchscreen/key responses  
Accuracy and reaction time recorded



## Child Computerized Measures

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### Socio-Emotional Reasoning

Hostile Attribution Bias Task  
Emotion Understanding + Display Rule Understanding  
Facial Expressions/Emotional Words Recognition Task

### Cognitive Abilities

Inhibitory Control/Processing Speed

- Go/No Go Task
- Flanker Task

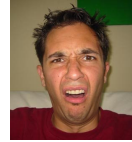
Flexible Thinking (Flexible Item Selection Task)



### Emotion Identification: Facial Expressions/Emotional Words Recognition Task

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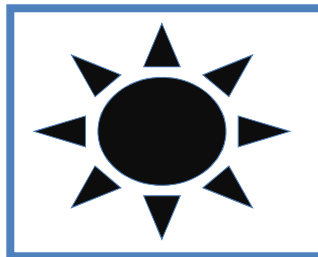
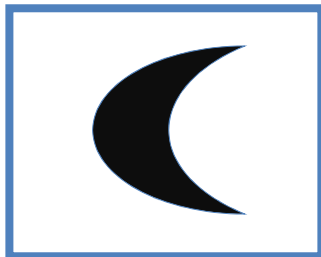
- Children shown 4 pictures depicting different facial expressions
- Words presented over earphones
- ***“Show me furious.”***
- Children touched appropriate face
- 4 sets 8 emotions:
  - easy pictures/easy words
  - easy pictures/difficult words
  - difficult words/easy pictures
  - difficult words/difficult pictures



### Go-No-Go

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- Measures Inhibitory/Impulse Control
  - Asked children to “catch the sun” (press a key when see sun, but not when see moon)
  - 75% suns
  - Accuracy (impulsive key presses to the moon)



## Evaluation

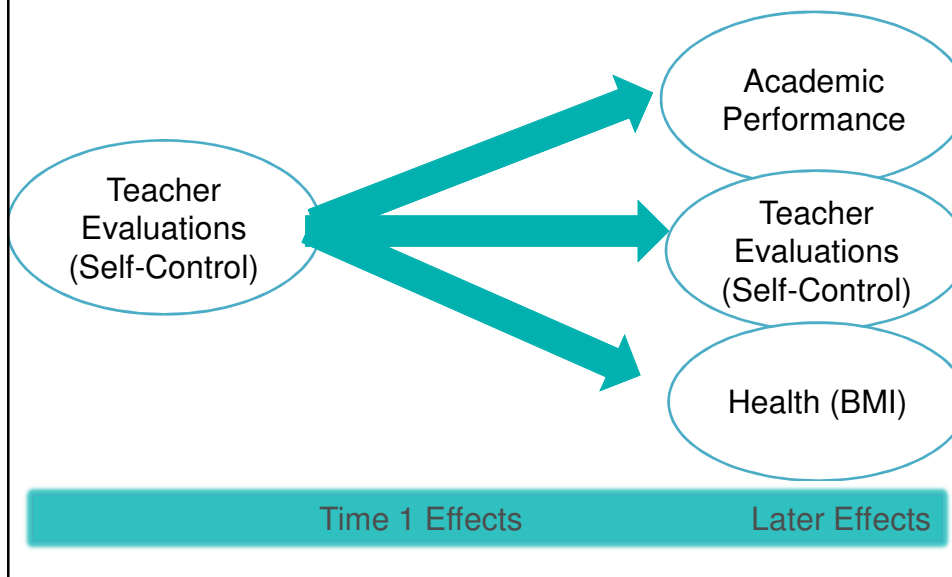
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### Other Evaluations

- Health service use (health card numbers)
- Economic cost-benefit analysis
- Focus groups with various stakeholders
- Youth follow-up



## Assessing *Proximal & Distal* Effects of PATHS Intervention



## Teacher Evaluations

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- **Beginning and End of School Year, Teachers Reported On:**

- Children's Disruption/Aggression
- Children's Attention
- Children's Social Competencies

Self-Control  
Score

- Amount of Time Spent Dealing With Children's Disruptive Behaviours



## Teacher Evaluations: Individual Behaviours

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- ✓ Improvements reported by teachers in children's **social competencies**
- ✓ Improvements reported by teachers in children's **attention**
- No systematic changes reported by teachers for children's **disruptive/aggressive behaviours**
- ✓ Significant **reduction in time spent** dealing with individual children's **disruptive behaviours** as reported by teachers



## Future Research Questions to Be Addressed

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**Examine proximal and distal effects more closely, and across respondents**

**Longitudinal and experimental study design permits**

**examining:**

- Dosage effects
- Age at PATHS onset effects
- Sleeper effects
- Contagion effects



## Future Research Questions to Be Addressed

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**Longitudinal and experimental study design permits:**

Assessing rate of developmental change over time

Ask questions about cause and effects

- e.g. Do improvements in self-control precede improvements in academics or do improvements in academics lead to improvements in self-control?

Identifying variables that might impact effectiveness of PATHS (initial risk, sex of child, etc.).

Do effects last? How profound and broad are changes?

Persist beyond PATHS training?

Are they context specific? Do effects of PATHS transfer to other contexts (e.g., home and health care use)?





## Conclusions

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Early findings suggest PATHS-related improvements in **self-control** as a function of PATHS dose.

Reading & Math & Language abilities also seem affected, at least in a subsample, but effects seem to emerge in different grades

BMI may also be affected by PATHS



## Qualitative Findings:

### A S.W.O.T. Analysis of the PATHS Program in Canada

Jean Hughes, RN, PhD Lead Researcher  
Rachel Harvey, RN, MSc - Research Assistant

Funded by the Public  
Health Agency of Canada

## A SWOT Analysis of the PATHS Program in Canada

**Question:**

*So what works, is challenging, needs enhancement, or is  
threatening the program?*

**Focus Groups/Interviews:** 20 (3 provinces )

- Training Hub, Trainers
- Coaches
- School Board
- School Administration
- Teachers
- Parents

▶ **Thematic Analysis**



## STRENGTHS

**Themes:**

**PATHS – A Language of Caring**  
**PATHS – Provides the Road to Change**



## Theme I PATHS: A Language of Caring

- ▶ *Creates a culture shift*
  - *Safe to talk about feelings – all ages, both genders*
  
- ▶ *Builds person skills ...for every context...including the 'can of worms'*
  
- ▶ *Builds on inner strengths of students and teachers*



## PATHS: A Language of Caring

### ***Culture Shift***

*We are all speaking the same language & that's the language of caring. They begin to know that we are all thinking the same – when you know someone cares, then even if you don't agree with the other person, you can respect them (Principal - 59 p. 9)*



## PATHS: A Language of Caring

### ***Culture Shift***

*And even the knowledge of like okay, it is okay for me to talk about emotions. Some of the kids and even maybe my son is hesitant to do that. But just to have that knowledge that it is okay to talk about feelings is a big thing. They could be bad emotions or good emotions, whatever. But just having to speak about them is you know that you can do that, that's the big thing. (Parent - 139)*



## Theme II

### PATHS Provides the Road to Change

**Curriculum: Teaches *what to do* and *why***

**Program engages critical builders/facilitators**

- PATHS Trainers, PATHS Coaches, Principal, Teachers

**Program uses an integrated delivery process**

- Whole-school approach, links to school values
- Concepts mobilized throughout school
- Families & community buy-in



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## PATHS Provides the Road to Change

### **Curriculum**

*Critical! - the program came ready-made; very easy to follow & with good resources (pictures/activities), uses a whole school approach, is flexible, and easily linked to other curriculum concepts (common language of emotions & culture & is consistent with other programs) (Principal – p. 4-5 p.1, p. 5-7, p. 9)*



## PATHS Provides the Road to Change

### **Families Adopt Tools**

*Parents are being called to school less frequently... Turtle is used a lot at home ...& with other family members... Kids helping kids outside school ... Lots of families now feel it is ok to talk about feelings... (Parents – p. 5, 6, 7, 8)*



## PATHS Provides the Road to Change

### **Engages Critical Builders**

*She [PATHS coach] was very flexible. Always working with us.... She could sit back and then add to the conversation which just made it deeper for the students. And then [students] saw that we were talking the same language. We were sharing our feelings of things that happened, and then they felt comfortable sharing theirs. **I have never had so many kids admit to doing something wrong as I did this year. "I did do it. I did." ...And I'm just like, "Oh! Well, it wasn't a good choice but do I look angry? And they're going, "No." "So you did a good thing telling the truth." So it was really positive.** (Teachers – STE 34 –176)*



## PATHS Provides the Road to Change

### **Concepts Mobilized into Sports**

*[Teacher also soccer coach] As the soccer coach... And so grades 5 and 6 were on the team, and something happened that made me think - this is pure PATHS probably. And they were playing against a team that was cheating, like really obviously and terribly, and swearing at them and giving them the finger, and being just generally completely inappropriate. And so the kids pointed that out, and then we talked explicitly and said, like yeah, they are being disrespectful. But we have a choice - to be like them or to take the higher road. **And they chose - so like 18 kids in the middle of the game – chose to take the higher road. And I think the only reason why they could get there that fast was that they have so much experience with knowing how to stop and think about a problem, not just reacting.** And so I think that's a credit to PATHS.... They won the [Respect] award in this huge tournament because of that, the way they handled the problem. (Teachers, 28, 31)*



## Challenges

### Theme: Program Uptake Can Waffle



## Theme

### Program Uptake Can Waffle

- Timing not right for school buy-in
- Implementation challenges
  - Poor teacher buy-in
  - PATHS dominates health curriculum
- Need for on-going training
  - Staff turnover, substitutes
- Talking about emotions: A betrayal of family/cultural norms



## Program Uptake Can Waffle

### *Teacher Turnover*

*We had another new teacher come in. And of course that teacher didn't have PATHS experience...And so in the settling ...period of him developing relationships with students, I talked to the students about whether the teacher has done PATHS with the students. And they said not yet. And I said well that's not a surprise because your teacher has probably never heard of it. I said **'what do you think would be a really good way to help him understand what you know about PATHS'**. So the students talked about **initially sitting in a sharing circle with him and talking about what they perceived in terms of how PATHS has helped them develop their social and emotional maturity levels** ...And he [Teacher] raced around the rest of the day finding the binder and took it home for the weekend.*

*(School Administrator – 5-7)*



## Program Uptake can Waffle

### *Talking about emotions*

- *...emotional expression is highly guarded in some immigrant families – [is PATHS ok]? (Parent, p 3)*





## Opportunities

**Theme:**  
**Need to think outside the box**



## Theme Need to Think Outside the Box

### **Need**

- SEL Training in B.Ed. Programs
- Affordable PATHS training methods
- PATHS for others – e.g., teachers, parents, youth
- Curriculum innovations – e.g., address social media
- French curriculum
- PATHS outreach into community



## Think Outside the Box

### *Need PATHS for Others*

- *Pre-service training (B.Ed. program) is the most effective way to make SEL a fabric of the teacher's classroom. (Trainer, 83)*
- *PATHS for teachers – focus on teacher wellness (Trainers, 395-404)*



## Think Outside the Box

### *Need PATHS for Others*

*Communication with home is vital ...Need tools for parents to ensure consistent messages are given to child ...Parents need a PATHS program... (Parents, p. 4, 11, 13, 5, 12)*



## Think Outside the Box

### **Community Outreach**

- *In one of the school sites there is an after school program. And so now we have put in place the PATHS concepts, and the PATHS lessons for them, after school. So not only do they get it in their classroom, but they also get it in their **after school care**. ...We are also going to be putting **PATHS into daycare**. (Trainer P 4 – 250, 260).*
- *Need to include [PATHS] in **community EAL programs** (Principal, p. 17)*



## Threats

### **Theme:**

**Sustainability: It really does take a village  
to raise a child**



## Sustainability: It Really Does Take A Village to Raise a Child

- Curriculum
  - Needs formal integration into provincial curriculum
- Focus
  - Positive, strengths-based, skills
- Multi-Sector Financial collaborations
  - Government, corporate, NGO
- Scale UP



## It Really Does Take A Village to Raise a Child

### ***Sustainability***

- *It's about trying to change [culture]... let's stop talking about bullying. It's not bullying, for goodness sake. Let's make sure people don't think that SEL is just a little package of skills that we teach and then you're done that content and you move on. ... So it's about all the pieces that we have to embed in it, right.... we can talk about them as **social and emotional competencies versus a skill**, and that's the place where they will land in something like a **curriculum redesign**. (Training Hub, 159, 161, 163, 169)*



## **PATHS Continuum: Moving from merely 'doing it' to actually 'living it'**

Doing it.....*Living it*



### **Doing It**

*It's just there's a little bit of, you know, well, "is this going to be one more thing, and how am I going to fit it in? I'll do bits and bits and bits but I won't ever do anything that well..."*  
*(School Administrators, 47)*



## Living It...

*[School response to a student killed in a car accident]  
So what happened was we met as a staff on Sunday.  
And because all our classroom children were used to  
meeting together and sharing, [we] put together a  
script. We wanted the teachers to be comfortable  
reading this script. We also took it upon ourselves and  
we called every single family member in our school in  
advance, about 100 families, to give the parent the  
news.*

*Most of them had heard through the grapevine. But  
my biggest thing was I didn't want a child coming to  
the bus stop and hearing about it, or coming to the  
school and just being lambasted with it. So we called  
every single family and let them know.*

*And so then the next day...*



## Living It...

*...the kids were familiar with ...coming together and  
sharing their feelings. ...But we talked [openly] using  
the same PATHS language – Some of you might be sad  
because you were a friend of [child]. Some of you might  
be wanting to laugh. And people laugh sometimes  
because they are nervous. And that's okay. Some of  
you might want to be sad because you're seeing your  
best friend very sad, and that's okay as well. And we  
used direct words. We didn't say she's gone to sleep or  
she's gone to heaven. We just said "a tragic accident  
and she is dead". ...And we gave them permission in  
that message to have different emotions and to  
acknowledge that other people have different  
emotions.*



## Living It...

*...And we sent home a copy of the script with every parent, with every family just so that there was that link between home and school for them to know the language we were using and how we were dealing with it. And again, the phone calls and the support were tremendous....I think too, it gave the teachers the ability too. PATHS has given the teachers the ability to share feelings that they didn't know they could talk about before with students. And that it's okay to talk about death when tragedy happens. (School Administration and teachers – STE 34 – 43-50, 56-61)*



## Conclusions

- Participant responses reflect varied examples of the positive effects of PATHS:
  - In the classroom, on the sports field, at home, etc.
- Challenges are real but opportunities suggest relevant solutions
- Schools support PATHS sustainability – but need official policy affirmation and funding.





## Cost-Benefit Analysis of the PATHS Program in Canada

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Jean Hughes, RN, PhD Lead Researcher  
Sophie Jacques, PhD Associate Lead Researcher  
Ian Munroe, Ma, MA, Economist & Public Policy

Funded by the Public  
Health Agency of Canada

## Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)

### Goal:

- To find ways to sustain PATHS

### Rationale:

- All SEAK sites are committed to PATHS
- 3 sites have already scaled up PATHS to additional schools
- But sustainability raises critical questions around cost.





## Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)

- Provides information for decision-makers to evaluate a program for **adoption ...or sustainability**
- Provides an economic tool to assess whether the use of resources yields a net benefit:
  - Within a Program: Helps determine whether the economic value of the **identified benefits** exceed the economic value of the **costs of implementation** within a program
  - Across Programs: Helps compare the relative values with other programs purporting to produce similar benefits



## The SEAK Approach to CBA of PATHS

### Assumptions

- PATHS is implemented using most recent curriculum, & with the hope and intention of altering the life-course of participants, not simply as a means to improve classroom behaviour in the short-term
- Most of the potential benefits (e.g., lower levels of adult crime, improved adult health outcomes, etc.) will not be directly observable for many years to come
- Other research (Moffitt et al, 2011) has identified a key component in the transmission mechanism to these anticipated benefits - **children's self-control** – which is promoted in PATHS.



## Self Control

The capacity to regulate one's thoughts, feelings, and actions and it is the element that helps people to resolve motivational conflicts between concrete, proximal goals and abstract, distal goals" (Miller, Yu, Chen, & Brody, 2015)

### Good self-control enables one to

- resist temptations
- initiate and sustain actions toward their goals

### How Self-Control Develops

- Begins in infancy (3 months) & continues through early and middle adolescence



## Cost-Benefit Analysis: Our Approach

- A cost-benefit analysis was conducted for our SEAK trial of PATHS in 5 sites across 3 provinces (NS, Man, Alta)

### Anticipated Benefits of PATHS

- Anticipated benefits of PATHS were measured through childhood acquisition of *self-control*
  - Short-term gains
    - improved classroom behavior
  - Long-term gains
    - lifetime increase in income
    - reductions in obesity, criminality, and tobacco & illicit drug dependence



## Cost-Benefit Analysis: Our Approach

### Costs of PATHS

- Curriculum
- Training & On-Going Mentoring
  - Coach
  - Classroom teachers & school staff
- Sub fees for Professional Development



## SEAK CBA: Our Approach

### *Prospective Approach*

- The base case included a prospective approach with 250 students, a discount rate of 3%, and a timeframe of 20 years.



## Results

The results showed a positive net benefit of just under \$1.2 million (2014 dollars), or just under \$5,000 per participant.

***The benefit-cost ratio was 17.96 – meaning every dollar spent on PATHS will generate \$17.96 in benefits.***

And while the net benefits are not realized immediately

- they ***turn positive after 13 years***
- ***continue to rise*** 20 and 30 years following PATHS
- the benefits cross ***multiple sectors*** of society.



## Conclusion

- This suggests that PATHS constitutes an economically efficient use of resources.



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## Project Evaluation

Nishka Smith

## Project Evaluation

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The project evaluation was designed to:

- Ensure accountability
- Determine project strengths and weaknesses
- Determine level of satisfaction with the project process and outcomes
- Determine if the project was successful in achieving what was intended



## Data Collection

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Data was collected yearly from multiple sources, including:

- CMHA-NS Project Staff
- Dalhousie University Research Team
- School Coaches
- PATHS Trainers
- School Administrators/Board Representatives
- Scale Up/Partnership Consultant
- Other key stakeholders



## Evaluation Reporting

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- Each year, the evaluation findings were analyzed and a summary was provided to CMHA-NS Project Staff
- At the end of the project, a final report summarizing the findings from each year was created
- As part of the interim reports and final report, recommendations to improve and strengthen the project work were provided



## Evaluation Findings

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The evaluation findings showed, in general:

- Satisfaction with the number of children engaged in PATHS programming - 2883 children across the 5 sites
- Satisfaction with how school site partnerships unfolded and the extent to which school sites engaged in the project and incorporated PATHS programming into their schools
- Satisfaction with how the program unfolded in the schools



## Evaluation Findings

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- Satisfaction with the level of communication between SEAK project team members and school sites – this continually improved as the project unfolded
- Satisfaction with the promotional materials provided through the SEAK project to promote PATHS and social and emotional learning
- Satisfaction with schools' abilities to promote the PATHS program and increase awareness and understanding amongst parents



## Evaluation Findings

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- Increased acceptance and up-take of the program in schools over time
- A different “feel” in schools that fully embraced the program – a sense of calm and positive energy
- A sense that most children who received PATHS are better able to:
  - Express their feelings
  - Calm themselves down
  - Problem-solve
  - Support each other





## Evaluation Findings

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- Satisfaction with the level of external communication that took place to increase awareness of the project and social and emotional learning – over 19,000 people were reached
- Satisfaction with the research process:
  - The data collection process was well planned and organized
  - Research staff were professional, organized, flexible and respectful
  - There was good communication between the research team and schools



## Evaluation Findings

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- Satisfaction with the Scaling Up work, which resulted in the development of a collaborative strategy and funding proposal to scale up social and emotional learning across the Atlantic provinces
- Satisfaction with the support provided by the SEAK project to explore sustainability options
- Satisfaction with the sustainability plans created by each school site



## Evaluation Findings

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Some of the key factors that contributed to the success of the project were:

- Having CMHA-NS SEAK Project Staff that were professional, open and responsive to school sites
- Having Dalhousie University Research Team members who were flexible, and respectful of the needs of school sites
- Conducting monthly meetings with Coaches, Trainers, CMHA-NS SEAK Project Staff and Dalhousie University Research Team members



## Evaluation Findings

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- Having CMHA-NS SEAK Project Staff take an open-door approach to communications which encouraged partners to call upon them as needed
- Providing school staff with professional PATHS training each year
- Having dedicated Coaches in each site to provide school staff with additional support and guidance
- Providing Coaches with regular opportunities to connect with PATHS Trainers for ongoing support and guidance



## Evaluation Findings

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- Having some flexibility in delivering the PATHS programming
- Having access to a wide range of SEAK and PATHS promotional materials that were used to increase awareness of the SEAK project, PATHS programming, and social and emotional learning
- Providing each school site with support and funding to create individualized sustainability plans to help expand and sustain the PATHS programming beyond the SEAK project



## Evaluation Findings

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- Conducting the scaling up work in Atlantic Canada to increase awareness of social and emotional learning and engage each province in a joint venture to incorporate social and emotional learning into school curriculums



## Evaluation Findings

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Some of the challenges identified were:

- The cost of PATHS materials and training
- School staff turnover
- Managing combined classes in smaller schools –  
i.e. joint grades 2 and 3 classes
- Integrating PATHS programming into higher grade  
levels – classes that did not previously receive  
PATHS programming
- Not having access to the PATHS  
materials in French



## Evaluation Findings

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- Turnover of CMHA-NS SEAK Project Staff
- Not regularly up-dated the project timeline as the  
project process/work unfolded and changed over time
- Overlap in communications – would sometimes be  
sent the same information or get the same request  
from different SEAK project staff
- Lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities  
of SEAK project staff and how their work connected



## Evaluation Findings

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- Scheduling issues - schools were not always given enough advance notice of when research staff were coming to collect the research data or data was collected too late
- The complexity of teacher evaluation forms and amount of time it took to complete them
- The amount of time it took to collect the research data in each school
- Not having access to preliminary research findings as outlined in the project work plan



## Evaluation Findings

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Some of the key lessons learned were:

- The amount of time and effort it takes to develop and continually nurture partnerships
- The importance of taking an individualized approach when working with and supporting different school sites – no two sites are the same – they all moved forward in different ways
- The importance of building sustainability into the project work early on and taking advantage of sustainability opportunities as they arise



## Evaluation Findings

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- How challenging it can be to move the work forward in an effective and timely way when there is repeated changeover in SEAK project staff
- The importance of having a strong management structure in place to guide the project work – management was an ongoing struggle throughout the course of the project which resulted in lots of confusion, miscommunications, overlap in work, decision-making challenges, strained relationships, misunderstandings, and leadership struggles



## Evaluation Findings

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Some recommendations put forth in the final report to guide the next phase of the work were:

- Create a comprehensive management structure that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of all partners and staff involved in the work; decision-making processes; internal and external communication guidelines and methods; and deliverable timelines.
- Ensure all involved in the work are aware of the management structure and comfortable working within it prior to developing working relationship.



## Evaluation Findings

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- Provide regular meeting opportunities where key partners can come together to discuss the project work, plan next steps and share their experiences and ideas. This will help create stronger relationships between partners as well as ensure all voices are heard.
- Disseminate the SEAK research findings to partners, key stakeholders and the broader community. In order to share the findings in a meaningful way with multiple audiences, different mediums and methods should be used – i.e. fact sheets, presentation, report, newsletter, etc.



## Evaluation Findings

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- Explore new funding opportunities to build on the project work and expand its reach.

