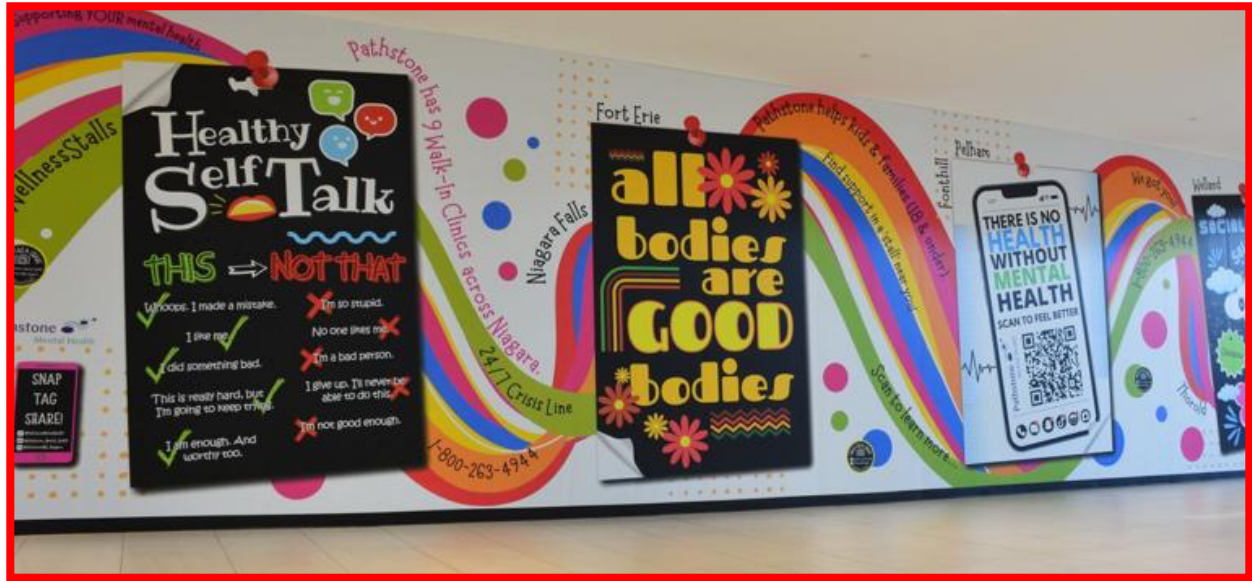


Pathstone Mental Health and Brock University

2023 PARTNERSHIP UPDATE



Pathstone Mental Health debuted Wellness Walls in Niagara shopping centres in 2023, building on their mission to improve children's mental health, and recognizing research conducted with Brock around anxiety in children.

In March 2019, Pathstone Mental Health and Brock University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize a shared commitment to improving mental health outcomes for youth and children in Niagara and beyond. The agreement represents the mutual advantage of working together through research, knowledge mobilization and experiential learning to better understand and address challenges and barriers to increasing mental health support for children. This collaborative partnership is a reflection of Brock's commitment to community engagement, knowledge mobilization, experiential learning, and the shared priority of research and increasing support for childhood mental health.

Projects and Initiatives in 2023

The MOU between Brock and Pathstone Mental Health supports research collaborations, experiential education opportunities, and service opportunities to benefit learning and impact on children's mental health in Niagara.

Research

Pathstone and Brock are continuing to work in partnership on many research opportunities and studies. In 2023, new or highlighted research endeavours includes:

Brock Developmental Neuroscience Lab (DNLab) in the Department of Child and Youth Studies & Neuroscience Program:

- Brain dynamics of attention control through development
 - Partnered with researchers: ▪ Ayda Tekok-Kilic, Associate Professor, Child and Youth Studies; Tricia Vause, Associate Professor, Child and Youth Studies; Erin Panda, Assistant Professor, Child and Youth Studies; Sid Segalowitz, Professor Emeritus, Psychology
- Sensory sensitivity, intolerance of uncertainty and sex differences predicting anxiety in emerging adults.
 - Partnered with researchers Dr. Ayda Tekok-Kilic and PhD(C) Veronica Panchyshyn.

Brock Luke Lab (Applied Disability Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences):

- Delivery of mental health services for Ontario youth using CBT in virtual reality
 - Partnered with researchers Dr. Nicole Luke (Primary Investigator), and 2 Brock Research Students)
 - Knowledge mobilization was provided through a CCMHCC conference in Vancouver, BC, in June 2023.

Graduate Research:

- One Master of Arts Thesis by Brock student Stephanie Hicks in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences

Service

Pathstone Mental Health and Brock University support each other through service initiatives to increase mental health support and research for children in Niagara and beyond.

In 2023, service initiatives included:

- Brock University's Vice-President, Administration Ken Chan serves on the Board of Directors for the Pathstone Foundation.

- Brock University's Dean of Graduate Studies Dr. Suzanne Curtin sits on the Board of Directors for Pathstone Mental Health.
- Brock University's Skills Translation Coordinator Laura Fyfe is the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors at Pathstone Mental Health.
- Brock hosted a Community Roundtable with University Chancellor Hilary Pearson, which was attended by Pathstone Mental Health.
- Brock President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Lesley Rigg, and Interim Vice-President External Meaghan Rusnell volunteered in the annual Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign, decorating cookies that would be sold to benefit Pathstone Mental Health and Hotel Dieu Shaver.
- Members of Brock University's Senior Leadership attended the 2023 Pathstone Hope Gala, the annual fundraising event, which broke records in support of children's mental health.
- Pathstone Mental Health participated in Brock's Volunteer Fair hosted by Student Life & Success, and Experience Expo hosted by Co-op, Career & Experiential Education.
- An inaugural meeting was held at Brock for a Forum of community partners dedicated to improving the health of Niagara, through collaborative research endeavours.

Student Experiential Learning

Student experiential learning provides unique opportunities for students at the university to gain real world experience as part of their studies.

In 2023, the partnership between Brock University and Pathstone Mental Health led to meaningful experiential opportunities for students including:

- Brock's Co-op Education department supported 2 Social Sciences students in Psychology to participate in 420-hour placements, focused on supporting children and youth experiencing mental health challenges.
- 1 Communication, Popular Culture & Film student completed a 120-hour placement with Pathstone Mental Health, to support their learning and the social media programming of Pathstone.
- Through the Law Plus program, Brock undergraduate student Madison Motyka participated in volunteer opportunities with Pathstone Mental Health, which helped her "establish her focus going forward" and re-affirmed her interest by heightening her awareness "that there are underlying issues that legal expertise can address when people can't do it on their own." (The Brock News, March 2023)

Next Steps

Brock University and Pathstone Mental Health have collaborated on a variety of student experience and service initiatives over the past five years, critically partnering through the global COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing shadow pandemic of mental health impacts. As a result of these collaborations, Brock and Pathstone look forward to discussing the opportunities ahead to continue their partnership and MOU Agreement in 2024.

2024 will be an exciting period of co-creating new opportunities that build on the shared history between these two organizations. The partnership's efforts in research and knowledge mobilization will grow, including through the collaborative forum with other community partners, and additional leadership, research, and work-integrated learning opportunities will be struck to best support student learning and youth mental health.