



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Sault Ste. Marie
Mental health for all



SAULT
COLLEGE

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release:

Unique mental health program launched for Sault Ste. Marie college athletes

(Sept. 21, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.) – A one of a kind partnership will see 180 varsity athletes, coaches, trainers and athletic staff at Sault College receive mental health and suicide awareness training this season.

All Sault College Cougars are taking part in *Talk Today*, one of the most comprehensive mental health programs for athletes in Canada, courtesy of Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Sault Ste. Marie.

This is the first time *Talk Today*, which began in 2014, has been used in a post-secondary school environment.

“Thanks to *Talk Today* and our strong partnership with CMHA, our student athletes are better prepared to support their teammates and other peers,” said Matt Trainor, Director of Student Services, Sault College. “They are now trained to ask the right questions when they witness signs of suicidal thoughts. Our students have a great support network across the campus where they can access help in a number of different ways to suit their needs.”

Student athletes and those in their support network at the college are receiving training in safeTALK, a three-hour accredited session that teaches individuals the importance of mental health and how to recognize persons with thoughts of suicide. ASIST, a two-day program that teaches participants how to identify those at risk and how to intervene, is being offered in October.

This training is provided by CMHA Sault Ste. Marie, which has extensive experience working with the Ontario Hockey League’s Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds and four teams in the Northern Ontario Junior Hockey League.

“I’m thrilled the entire Sault College Athletics Department has joined the *Talk Today* family,” said Lisa Carricato, Mental Health Coach, CMHA Sault Ste. Marie. “Sault College has a longstanding partnership with CMHA Sault Ste. Marie and this is a great example of the importance that they put on the mental health needs of students. I’m looking forward to a great season working with the Sault College Cougars.”

Sault College has also identified Michelle Morley, Athletics Officer in the Athletics Department as the Mental Health Champion. Michelle will serve as the main contact for the CMHA Mental Health Coach and who athletes can turn to help navigate the local mental health system if they’re struggling.

About Sault College – #yestothebest

The vision of Sault College is to provide a transformative life experience through empowering those who study with us to think and learn in progressive, innovative ways, including those we have not yet imagined. Sault College grants Ontario College certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, graduate certificates, and degrees to its graduates. The College is the largest deliverer of apprenticeship training in all of Northern Ontario. Educating over 2,300 full-time and 4,000 part-time students each year, Sault College has a significant economic impact on the community, with spin-offs in excess of \$158 million. Over \$1.8 million dollars in scholarships, bursaries and awards are distributed annually to students at the College. Located on the border to the United States and situated in the middle of three of the largest Great Lakes on the planet, Sault College is one of 24 publicly-funded colleges in the province of Ontario.

About CMHA Sault Ste. Marie

CMHA Sault Ste. Marie offers a number of services and supports to the community that empower individuals, groups and communities to define, achieve and maintain a mental, physical, emotional and spiritual balance. Whether individuals are experiencing a mental illness, have a family member or friend with mental illness, are a health care provider, an employer, or are seeking information, CMHA Sault Ste. Marie is available to help. CMHA Sault Ste. Marie is incorporated and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Funding for the programs and services is from many services is from many services, including the Northeast LHIN, the United Way, grants and donations.

For further information or to arrange an interview, contact:

Rachel MacDonald, Human Resources and Corporate Communications Coordinator
Sault College
705-759-2554 ext. 2699
rachel.macdonald@saultcollege.ca

Lisa Carricato, Mental Health Coach
Canadian Mental Health Association, Sault Ste. Marie
705-759-0458 ext. 231, cell 705-542-3991
lisa@cmhassm.com