

Event Brief

Bi-weekly Webinar:

Hub Website Updates and Project Pandemic Pivots

June 12, 2020

Purpose

This webinar served two purposes. The first was to share recent updates to the KDE Hub website. The website had been available to the MHP-IF projects for some time with additions and adaptations having been made in anticipation of the public launch of the projects and the Hub. The tour of the updated website gave an opportunity for project review and input before the site goes live for a broader audience.

The second purpose was to continue the sharing between projects regarding changes and adaptations that have been necessary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated stressors as well as restrictions on in-person interactions.

Participants

The webinar was hosted by the KDE Hub Secretariat, with participants from 15 MHP-IF projects. Team members from four projects were asked in advance to initiate the sharing time with regards to their own pandemic pivots.

Meeting structure

- After introductory remarks, Eric d’Avernas of the Hub Secretariat gave a brief tour of the website noting recent and anticipated changes
- The webinar then turned to a sharing time with regards to COVID-19; four projects began by each taking a few minutes to share the adaptations and changes they have made which was followed by an open sharing time and discussion
- The first part of the webinar was recorded so that the recording could be posted to the KDE Hub website for reference and to share with projects or team members unable to be on the call
- To promote a safe and open learning space the sharing time was not recorded

What did we learn?

Changes to the website are in service to providing supports for the projects to engage with the broader child and youth mental health promotion system by enhancing the visibility and credibility of the MHP-IF. The website tour highlighted:

- New content including a re-worked “About” section with orientation and more depth on the MHP-IF, quick links, and a preface of the full set of funded projects in the “Projects” section including an update on responses to the pandemic
- The Online Forum which was added in response to requests for a place for projects to connect with each other and discuss issues online; new topics will be coming soon
- No login will be required for website once it is public; sign-in will be for private functions only (e.g., online forums specific to projects)

The second part of the webinar included rich discussion about COVID-19 pivots with the exploration of many common challenges and adaptations. The challenges included:

- Increased stress in vulnerable populations and shifts in the priorities of partners
- The move from in-person groups to an online format requiring changes to the length and nature of sessions; creating meaningful interactions online
- Navigating technology both internally and with participants; making sure online interactions are safe and secure
- Adapting methods and re-submitting changes for ethics review

Despite the challenges many projects are moving forward and finding that there are many opportunities for learning and even benefits (e.g., increased reach) during this time. Some of the adaptations that were described:

- Online delivery of program components and training; maximizing the use of web conferencing tools including breakout rooms; Initiating outdoor meetings as public health guidelines allow
- Leaning into experiential and arts-based methods as means for continuing to reach people and allow them to be heard during physical distancing
- Initiating shorter learning cycles to test new approaches and adapt as needed
- Streamlining processes (e.g., combining groups) and focusing on positive online presence

How will learnings from this event be used?

- The Hub will consider ways to support new knowledge development around the adaptations and learnings happening in response to COVID-19 within and across projects
- There will be follow-up on the interest expressed in online forum topics: learnings about virtual engagement, continued discussion of pandemic pivots, navigating ethics review and developmental evaluation

