# Event Brief

## Webinar: New knowledge development opportunities within the MHP-IF

July 22, 2020

## Purpose

The purpose of this webinar was twofold. The first was to share details and upcoming plans for two Hub studies that are currently underway: one focused on pandemic adaptations and one on the emerging MHP-IF project community. The second purpose was to explore use of storytelling within the MHP-IF, including for new knowledge development.

## Participants

The webinar was hosted by the KDE Hub Secretariat, with participants from 13 MHP-IF projects. Two members of the Hub Resource Collaborative with relevant expertise joined for part of the webinar and contributed to the discussion related to storytelling: Dr. Andrea LaMarre and Dr. Trish Van Katwyk.

## Meeting structure

- After introductory remarks and webinar overview, Dr. Barb Riley, Hub Scientific Director, shared current plans and next steps for the Pandemic Adaptations Study, and introduced a new study that will explore connections within the MHP-IF project community; a question and answer period followed
- The webinar then focused on experiences using Storytelling as part of project delivery and research; two projects ('Authentic Social Identity and Mental Health Project' and 'Celebrating Culture, Celebrating Life') kicked off this discussion by sharing their own experiences using Storytelling methods, followed by an open discussion
- A poll was launched at the end of the webinar to inform potential topics for the August 2020 webinar
- 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

## What did we learn?

The first part of the webinar provided information about two Hub studies underway:

- The Pandemic Adaptations study will help understand the ways that the changing conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic are impacting child and youth mental health promotion; most projects have expressed interest in being part of this study and the Hub has shared potential wording for projects to use as part of their extension year (2021-22) work plans; next steps include collaborative protocol design (with use of storytelling methodology) and seeking ethics approval

- A second study will begin to describe and understand the emerging MHP-IF project community; this study will primarily inform Hub plans and MHP-IF Phase 2 planning; next steps include inviting project leads to share names of project team members that will be active MHP-IF community members and who might be willing to participate in a short online survey and a focus group

During the second part of the webinar, projects shared their experiences using storytelling methodology:

- Team members of the Authentic Social Identity and Mental Health Project (The Students Commission of Canada) described the use of storytelling as part of their evaluation and research platform, including a new approach to gathering data through social media and text message (an useful adaptation to the COVID-19 context); youth are engaged as part of the full storytelling cycle, from sharing their own experiences to interpreting the data;  stories are then used to inform program development and delivery
- A member of the Celebrating Culture, Celebrating Life project team (Multicultural Health Brokers Collaborative) then shared their team's approach to participatory research through storytelling; approaches to fostering trust and cultural safety include offering an option for stories to be shared as part of a larger group or one-on-one setting, ensuring that participants are aware that sharing is optional, being very deliberate about how and why stories are used, and making sure that youth who are trained to collect information come from the same communities as those who are asked to share their stories
- Throughout the open discussion that followed, themes of building trust, allowing enough  time, understanding individual contexts, and developing relationships, all related to creating safe spaces for sharing, were identified as integral to storytelling. Various approaches for capturing stories were also shared, including use of virtual platforms (e.g., WhatsApp), digital storytelling (e.g., videos), and arts-based approaches (e.g., dance, theatre, sculpture, comic books)
- Dialogue also touched on different purposes for storytelling, including as a method of inquiry (for new knowledge development) and an approach for personal insight and growth

At the end of the webinar, a poll was delivered where participants were asked about topics they might be interested in discussing in break-out groups during our August webinar.

## How will learnings from this event be used?

➢ Learnings from this webinar (e.g., how to create a safe space) will inform the development of the Pandemic Adaptations study protocol.

➢ Project interest in the topics captured in the end poll will inform discussions for future webinars and beyond.