



EDUCATION ON SUBSTANCE USE AND ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Legal References:	Education Act Policy/Program Memorandum 169 – Student Mental Health
Related References:	Board Policy 6000 – Safe Schools; Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan
Effective Date:	January 22, 2018
Revisions:	February 10, 2020, November 10, 2025
Reviewed:	

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) believes that education is a critical strategy that can help prevent students from developing problematic addictions to substances and behaviours.
- 1.2 Recognizing that, despite education, students may find themselves struggling with addictions to substances and behaviours, the WRDSB collaborates with community service providers to ensure students have access to a mental health system of care.

2. Application

- 2.1 The WRDSB teaches elementary and secondary students about substance use and addictive behaviours in accordance with The Ontario Curriculum, Health and Physical Education.
- 2.2 In partnership with Region of Waterloo Public Health, educators receive professional development about substance use, addiction and wellness.
- 2.3 In alignment with the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan, educators receive professional development to implement Tier 1 supports and to refer students to Tier 2 supports, such as Social Workers and Psychology staff members in schools. With increased awareness, educators may refer students, families and caregivers to Tier 3 supports, which involve appropriate and identity-affirming community resources and supports.
- 2.4 The WRDSB collaborates with a number of community partner agencies and service providers to deliver education programs and services in alignment with the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan.
- 2.5 The WRDSB will regularly and publicly communicate the goals and key actions of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan.