



Annualized Funding

to support mindyourmind's youth engagement in mental health

LONDON: Tuesday June 25, 2013 – The Government of Ontario has announced annualized funding to support **mindyourmind's** mental health & youth engagement program. In a press conference led by youth who've been involved with **mindyourmind**, Minister of Health and Long Term Care, The Honourable Deb Matthews highlighted the importance of de-stigmatizing mental illness, an issue facing almost one in five young adults in Canada.

"We need to talk about it," Matthews said. "A lot of people are afraid of standing up and saying 'this is happening to me, this is happening to my child, to my friend.'"

"We've seen tremendous progress over the past few years," the Minister added. "**mindyourmind** has had tremendous success in establishing itself as a go-to program and website for youth wanting more information and assistance with mental health issues."

Maria Luisa Contursi, program director and co-founder, says: "We look forward to working in partnership with the government to empower young people to manage their mental health and to bring their voices forward."

Thanks to the new funding, **mindyourmind** will receive \$360,000 base funding annually. The program continues to generate support through other funding sources, including partnerships with community organizations and the private sector. Since its inception in 2004, **mindyourmind** has reached young Canadians (exceeding a million online interactions annually) to empower them with information and motivate them to reach out, get help and give help. This funding will support **mindyourmind's** operations as well as its work with partnerships throughout the mental health care field. The program also provides expertise to mental health providers on reaching out to youth through social media and other youth engagement techniques.

Alicia Raimundo, youth mental health advocate and a longtime youth partner with **mindyourmind**, stressed the need for young people dealing with mental health issues to know that there is help out there. Raimundo described the impact of the program on her life:

"Even in your darkest moments, you are not alone," says Alicia Raimundo, who acted as emcee of the event. "There are a lot of amazing people who have gone through the same thing ... who are really with you on this fight, and really want to help you succeed."

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mindyourmind is a non-profit mental health engagement program that works with youth, emerging adults and the professionals who serve them to develop reliable and relevant resources and communication platforms

mindyourmind, **mindyourmind.ca** and **mindyourmindpro.ca** are programs of Family Service Thames Valley