



MEDIA CONFERENCE

YOUTH WELLNESS HUB

JULY 29, 2022
10:00 AM
124 DENNIS ST.

AGENDA

Schedule of Events

10:00 am	Welcome & Photo <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Gather at Dennis St. Entrance
10:05 am	Proceed to Main Hall
10:15 am	Media Conference <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Land Acknowledgement○ Ali Juma, CEO Algoma Family Services○ Youth Representatives New Northern Mentality Group○ Mayor Provenzano○ Lisa Vezeau-Allen, Ward 2 Counsellor○ Indigenous Friendship Centre Representative○ Luke Dufour, Social Services Administration Board Chair○ Annette Katajamaki, Chief Executive Officer Canadian Mental Health Association Algoma○ Donna Hilsinger, City Counsellor○ Jackie Martin, Executive Director John Howard Society○ Connie Raynor-Elliot, Founder Saving Our Young Adults○ Donna DeSimon, Founder Addictions and Mental Health Advocates○ Mary Jean Chartrand, Interim Director of Service Children's Aid Society of Algoma○ Lisa Henderson, Chief Executive Officer, THRIVE Child Development Centre○ Bob Woolley, International Order of Odd Fellows○ Sonny Spina, Board President Algoma Family Services Foundation
11:00 am	Question Period
11:15 am	Building Tour

HOUSEKEEPING

Parking

Due to limited parking available on-site, please use the Two-Hour parking lot on Dennis St. across the street from the building.

CONTACT

Ali Juma, CEO | Algoma Family Services

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KEY INFORMATION

Hub Concept

- Algoma Youth Wellness Hub is one of 14 Youth Wellness Hubs first introduced in 2017, and one of six Youth Wellness Hubs announced as part of the Ontario Government's \$90 million investment in an Addictions Recovery Fund.
- Goal is to provide a one-stop shop for vulnerable and at-risk youth to access services, and to provide a culturally safe place for youth to connect with others, learn about services available, and create opportunities for a better tomorrow.
- Services to be provided include but not limited to:
 - Mental Health / Substance Use
 - Health Promotion
 - Employment Counselling
 - Food security
 - Housing and Income Support
 - Cultural and LGBTQ2+ Support
 - Anti-Human Trafficking
 - Child Protection

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- Algoma Family Services is the lead agency on the Youth Wellness Hub working with an unprecedented collaboration of partners, that include:
 - Algoma Public Health
 - Canadian Mental Health Association – Algoma
 - Children’s Aid Society of Algoma
 - Indian Friendship Centre
 - John Howard Society
 - Northern Youth Services
 - THRIVE Child Development Centre
 - SSM District Social Services Administration Board
 - SSM Housing Corporation
 - City of SSM
 - Other partners and community groups will join now that we have secured a site.
 - Youth Advisory Council will play a key role in the co-creation and design of the space and services. For youth by youth.
 - Hub to be open a minimum five days a week, goal is to have it open seven days a week.
 - Date of opening to be determined – hope to open by late fall or winter.
 - Extensive renovations and repair is required

Core Funding - Operations

- Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario will provide \$500,000 for two years or \$1 million total, with a view of this funding continuing past year two.
- Funding will support five key positions:
 - Coordinator
 - Mental Health and Addictions Counsellor
 - Intake Coordinator
 - Nurse Practitioner
 - Peer Support Worker/s
- Service is expected to be provided at a minimum five days a week.
- Community Partners will be augmenting these services with staffing, programs, and services, such as the Indian Friendship Centre.
- Model of Service will be similar in design to the NRC Model.

Location

- 124 Dennis Street – Former International Order of Odd Fellows Lodge
- Selected due to location and easy access to transportation
- Bus terminal is across the street
- In a high need area
- Minutes walk from the mall
- Approximately 7000 square feet between the two floors
- Building has a commercial kitchen

Cost of Purchase and Repair

- Purchase price \$180,000 - Title holder Sault Ste. Marie Housing Corporation
- Cost to repair and renovate = approx. \$350,000 that includes the \$150,000 cost to make the entrance and washrooms accessible

Financial Contributions to Date

- \$100,000 – Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario
- \$100,000 – City of Sault Ste. Marie
- \$52,000 – Algoma Family Services
- \$50,000 – Canadian Mental Health Association – Algoma
- \$5000 – Sault North Rotary Club

Capital and Operational Funds Campaign

- AFS Foundation will lead the fundraising campaign
 - Goal in year one is \$100,000
- AFS in collaboration with the Social Equity Coordinator Maggie McGoldrick is applying to a number of grants to cover the cost of making the building accessible and formation of a Youth Advisory Council
 - Goal of the funding grants is to secure \$150,000+

WORDS OF SUPPORT

Terry Sheehan, Member of Parliament for the Riding of Sault Ste. Marie

“Youth are the future of our community. They are the future leaders, front line workers, employees, employers, scientists, and more. So it is important for us to support them so they can succeed. I am pleased to see the development of a Youth Wellness Hub right here in Sault Ste. Marie. Having a central place for youth to come and access services, use the internet, have a meal, access clothing and other items is critical to their development and wellbeing. The offering of centralized care and services to enable youth to be their best self is of the utmost importance. Having a place where supports for mental health, physical health and addictions is readily available, employment counselling, housing, cultural and LGBTQ2IA+ supports, anti-human trafficking programming, and youth protection will be vital to their success. Supporting youth means sustainability, growth, and championing the present and future.

Ross Romano, MPP Sault Ste. Marie

Caring for our community's most vulnerable children and youth is incredibly important, especially as we continue to recover. I appreciate the hard work of Algoma Family Services in collaboration with the Youth Wellness Hub Ontario initiative to bring these services to Sault Ste. Marie.

This new partnership will complement the significant investments our government has already made to community wrap around services in the areas of mental health and addictions, employment, housing, food security and cultural and LGBTQ2+ inclusivity.

I am uplifted to know that our local youth will have access to services and crisis supports through utilization of walk-in and low-barrier services. Indeed, actively engaging youth and their families in programing that supports a broad base of wrap around services helps to build resiliency and belongingness in our community.

Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario

"Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario (YWHO) is grateful for the generous support of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, CMHA-Algoma, the AFS, and other community partners. Their support will provide a safe, inclusive space for young people to access the mental health, substance use and other various supports they need," says Dr. Jo Henderson, executive director of YWHO and director of the Margaret and Wallace McCain Centre of Child, Youth and Family Mental Health at CAMH. "For too long, transition aged-youth have been underserved and unable to access help when they need it. This youth wellness hub will help fill those service gaps by providing care that is rapid, equitable, low barrier, and easily accessible for youth and families across the Algoma Region."

Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre

We at the Sault Ste Marie Indian Friendship Centre recognize the need of a designated Youth Hub in our community. We support an Indigenous based approach to specialized services for Indigenous youth and their families. We encourage community centred design and a youth driven initiative; and commit to ensuring Indigenous youth have accessible culturally based services. We continue to be able to deliver wrap-around style services, including many significant cultural teachings and ways of the Anishinaabe people in this area.

Dr. John Tuinema, Acting Medical Officer of Health & CEO | Algoma Public Health

"Algoma Public Health looks forward to the opportunity to work with community partners and youth to promote the wellbeing of youth. Through meaningful youth engagement, empowerment, and a strength-based approach, youth in Algoma can be supported to achieve their full health potential."

Annette Katajamaki, Chief Executive Officer | Canadian Mental Health Association Algoma

“CMHA Algoma looks forward to partnering with our community to provide a safe space for youth to collaborate, socialize and develop within the community. The Youth Wellness Hub will help our young people discover new skills, learn about themselves and connect with new friends.”

Jackie Martin, Executive Director | John Howard Society of Sault Ste. Marie & District

JHS has partnered with the Youth Hub as working together strengthens our commitment to addressing addictions, mental health, homelessness and crime prevention amongst the at-risk youth in our community. Our Options Navigator (funded by United Way) will be available and was a key role at the former NRC connecting clients to local services, making referrals, discussing plans for returning to school/employment and providing social skills training based on clients' needs. We envision the Youth Hub will have a similar setup as the former adult NRC, increasing youth access to local services.

Algoma Family Services CEO – Remarks

Good Morning, my name is Ali Juma, CEO of Algoma Family Services. Thank you Ashlee for acknowledging the land we are on. We recognize this time with the Papal apology as a time for great healing and reconciliation, and we stand with our Indigenous peoples in this journey of Truth and Reconciliation. Welcome to the Youth joining us today, Mayor Provenzano, Ward 1 Councillors Luke Dufour and Lisa Vezeau-Allen, Councillor Donna Hillsinger, esteemed community partners and community members, AFS Board Members and staff. Today is a great day! A day in which we turn the corner on attending to the many issues plaguing our youth before the pandemic, and as we tragically witnessed, these issues of mental health, substance use, homelessness, and poverty to name a few were only amplified during the pandemic. I want to recognize the tremendous efforts of our community partners and grassroots groups like SOYA and the AAMHA that have been working tirelessly to attend to the needs of our most vulnerable and at-risk youth. Thank you Connie and Donna for joining us today. However, despite our best efforts the need for help continues to grow. The myriad and challenging maze of services often results in youth and their families abandoning efforts to find help because they are

already maxed out. Having one place to turn to for youth to receive the help when and where they need it, will make a big difference in youth experiencing a better tomorrow.

On behalf of the community partners that include: the Canadian Mental Health Association – Algoma, Algoma Public Health, John Howard Society, the Indian Friendship Centre, THRIVE Child Development Centre, the Children’s Aid Society of Algoma, Northern Youth Services, the City of Sault Ste. Marie, the Sault Ste. Marie District Social Services Administration Board, and Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario, I am pleased to announce the former International Order of Odd Fellows Lodge will be the site of our new Youth Wellness Hub. Since 1951, this Lodge through the community service of the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs has served our community. Thank you Bob Wolley one of the last four local Oddfellows for being here. We are so pleased this building will continue to serve the community for hopefully decades to come.

The Algoma Youth Wellness Hub is one of six new hubs approved this February and will join the network of the 14 established Youth Wellness Hubs across Ontario. Our Hub will initially be open five days a week and provide the following services:

- Mental Health / Substance Use Counselling
- Health Promotion
- Employment Counselling
- Food security
- Housing and Income Support
- Cultural and LGBTQ2+ Support
- Anti-Human Trafficking
- Child Protection

Our hope is to grow the services offered at the hub and to be open seven days a week. The partners acknowledge the challenge in pitching a hub concept to others, now that we have a site we extend an open invitation to community partners and community groups servicing youth to work with us at the Hub. You can do so by contacting me at AFS.

Our goal is to open the Hub this fall or winter. However, the building requires extensive repair and renovation. The purchase price of the building is \$180,000 and estimated repair and renovations is projected at \$350,000. Through an unprecedented level of collaboration between community partners to establish a Youth Wellness Hub, AFS will lease the building on behalf of our partners from the SSM Housing Corporation. To date, we have received contributions from the City of Sault Ste. Marie of \$100,000, \$100,000 from Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario, \$52,000

from Algoma Family Services, \$50,000 from CMHA-Algoma, and \$5000 from Sault North Rotary Club. Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario will provide operational funding of \$500,000 for each of the next two years. Community partners will be contributing in-kind staff, services, and financial resources where available to support the Hub. The model of service will be similar to the model provided at the Neighbourhood Resource Centre. The AFS Foundation has committed to fundraise to support the Hub, and a campaign will be launched soon. We welcome the investment of our business community in our youth, and seek your support in

launching this Hub. Donations can be directed to the AFS Foundation. I thank the representatives from the Downtown Association and the Sault Chamber of Commerce for being here today. With your help, we can do this!

Youth will play a central role through a Youth Advisory Council in the co-creation and design of the space here, as well as, the services and programs to be offered. Youth on this council will receive an honorarium for their time and commitment. Recruitment for the Council will commence in the fall. Information sessions for the neighbours and surrounding businesses will be provided later this month to ensure the hub we develop will add value to the immediate community and create a mechanism to address any concerns or issues that come up.

In closing, we envision a culturally safe place for youth ages 12-25 years of age to find the help they need, to connect with other youth, to learn about the services available to them, and to create a better tomorrow by getting the help they need in one place without the waits and confusion of figuring out where to get service. In this hub, youth will have the opportunity to obtain a hot meal, have a shower, do their laundry, access free internet, engage in leisure activities, and get the help they need. I want to acknowledge the work of the AFS Youth Addictions Team, AFS Anti-Human Trafficking team, our community partners, SOYA, AAMHA, and the SSM and Area Drug Strategy Committee for all your incredible work in supporting youth. Today is a great day in knowing we have secured an amazing resource in our efforts to help our youth, as well as, deliver big on one of the 12 recommendations from the Drug Strategy. A special recognition to the City of Sault Ste. Marie, specifically Tom Vair for his efforts in bringing our funding request to City Council, Counsellors Luke Dufour and Donna Hillsinger in their board capacity with the Sault Ste. Marie Housing Corporation for supporting the acquisition of this building, to the Mayor and City Council for being champions of our youth, and Dr. Joanna Henderson from Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario for believing in our vision, I would also like to recognize the youth from the AFS New Northern Mentality Group for their ideas and input on the Hub. Lastly, I honour the work of Don Robb who back in 1997 had a vision for a SSM Teen Centre, and to the many volunteers like Lisa Case who is now the SAH Clinical Director of Mental Health & Addictions and Stephanie Featherston, who is now the THRIVE Professional Services Director both who joined me 25 years ago in supporting the SSM Teen Centre for the time it existed at the former Collegiate Heights School. Today is a great day! We will do this again when we cut the ribbon to open the hub! I will now turn it over to Friend and Abby to share a few words.

Ali Juma



CEO, Algoma Family Services