



Watch our 101 video ▶

jack.org

Young leaders revolutionizing mental health.

Mission

Our mission is to train and empower a national network of young leaders to revolutionize mental health and advocate for systems-level change.

Vision

We don't take the word "revolution" lightly. We envision a Canada where all young people understand how to take care of their own mental health and look out for each other: a Canada without shame, where all those who need support get the help they deserve.

Tactics

1. Increase mental health literacy in young people.
2. Strengthen youth leadership capacity.
3. Reduce youth-identified barriers to help-seeking.
4. Connect and support a national movement to advocate for local and systems-level change.

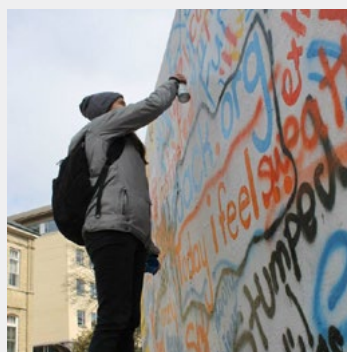
To ensure we meet our goals, our programs are youth-led, evidence-based, and rigorously evaluated.

Our story

In 2010, at age 18, Jack Windeler died by suicide while in his first year of university. This tragedy completely shocked his family and friends who had no idea he was struggling. But in hindsight, Jack did show some warning signs, including social isolation and behavioural changes, particularly at school. Sadly, his family and those around him weren't educated enough about mental health to recognize the signs of distress.

Jack's parents, Eric Windeler and Sandra Hanington, started Jack.org to ensure that young people get the help they need. They knew that peers are in the best position to observe changes in behaviour and recognize that someone is struggling. This is especially true when students attend postsecondary school. So, when they started Jack.org, they made sure to put Canada's youth front and centre.

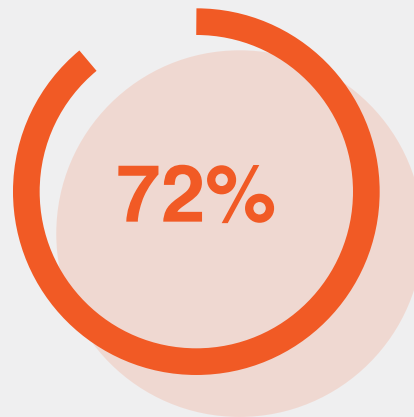
Now, over 2,800 young leaders volunteer with Jack.org across Canada. They work to ensure that young people are comfortable talking about their mental health and know how to support one another. That's how we make sure that those who need help get the support they deserve.



Talks

The Jack Talks program uses contact-based education and peer-to-peer outreach to teach students about mental health. In short, they're mental health presentations delivered to young people by young people.

Trained speakers weave their own experiences with mental health into a presentation that teaches young people that we all have mental health, how to recognize signs and symptoms of struggle in themselves and their peers, and where to find resources when they need them.



of Jack Talks audience members said they gained useful mental health knowledge and awareness of where to access support.

Last school year, **123** trained speakers delivered **446** talks to over **73,408** young people.

This school year, **165** trained speakers will deliver **550** talks to over **82,000** young people.

Chapters

The Jack Chapters program is a network of youth-led groups working to identify and dismantle barriers to positive mental health in their schools and communities.

The Jack Chapters program is a way for young leaders to have a consistent presence in their community and to address the issues most relevant to them.



of Jack Chapter leaders are confident they promoted mental health in their community through their Chapter work.

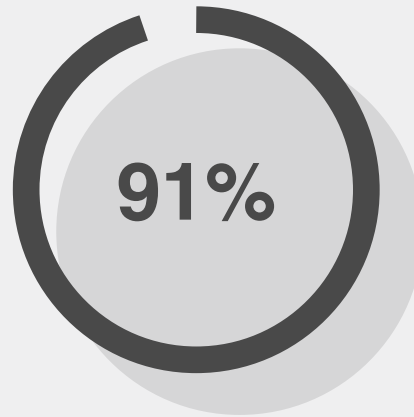
Last school year, **219** Jack Chapters across Canada held **992** initiatives and reached over **98,836** young people.

This school year, **285** Jack Chapters will hold over **1,185** initiatives and reach over **129,825** young people.

Summits

Through both large- and small-scale events held across Canada, we bring young leaders together to learn from each other and build the skills needed to elevate their impact on mental health in their community.

For older youth, we host one powerful National Jack Summit each year. We also help young leaders organize Regional Summits across the country so that they can learn from their peers and amplify their impact.



of National Summit delegates reported they will use what they learned to make mental health change in their communities.

Last school year, **1** National Summit brought together **257** young leaders from every province and territory in Canada, and **28** Regional and Local Summits activated communities across the country.

This school year, we're planning **38** Jack Summits across Canada.

Do Something

We all have a role to play in improving mental health across the country. Do Something is a collection of evidence-based mental health initiatives, which make mental health advocacy accessible for anyone who wants to get involved. By staging mental health initiatives in communities across the country, we spark conversations about better mental health practices, accessing support, and advocating for system-change — all steps that help make sure young people get the support they need.

And by giving people a blueprint on mental health advocacy, we make sure that everyone knows how they can make positive change. Whether that's talking to a local politician about mental health, posting about positive content on social media, or supporting someone in your life, every gesture of support makes a difference.

15,000
people have been reached by
Do Something initiatives to date

2,217
people have signed up for
Do Something initiatives

Theory of change

Jack.org operates according to a two-tiered theory of change. In the first tier, Jack.org provides young people with mental health education, leadership training, and a platform for action. In the second tier, these trained leaders work through Jack Talks, Jack Chapters, and Jack Summits to educate their peers, improve mental health attitudes and awareness, and advocate for systems change. Over time, their actions will create a country where all young people are comfortable talking about their mental health and are able to access professional mental health support when they need it.

Evaluation

Evaluation is at the core of everything we do. We've spent the last three years developing safe and effective programs that empower young people to lead mental health promotion initiatives and advocate for change in their communities. Through surveys, focus groups, and interviews with our young leaders, their peers, and their teachers, we gather qualitative and quantitative data to ensure our programs are having a positive effect on mental health outcomes. We regularly evaluate our programs to ensure we stay nimble and responsive to what young people need. That's how we know we're having an impact.



Be There

Young people struggling with their mental health are encouraged to reach out and ask for help, but too often their friends and families don't know how to respond. Just talking about mental health isn't enough; we need the knowledge, skills, and confidence to step up and be there for one another. That's why Jack.org created Be There, the most comprehensive and engaging online resource for young people to learn how to support each other through mental health struggle.

Being there for someone can be really hard, but it doesn't have to be complicated. Be There's 5 Golden Rules teach you how to recognize when someone is struggling, to lean into tough conversations, and maintain your own mental health while showing you care. The resource exists, and now it's our responsibility to educate ourselves. Together, we can make sure that no one struggles with their mental health alone.



When we surveyed **1,200** young people **83%** said they had supported someone struggling with their mental health.

Only **39%** of them felt they were prepared to offer the support that was needed.

Since it launched in May 2019, Be There has seen over **170,000** unique visitors and counting, showing us that there is a real need for this resource to exist.

User Survey Results

- Users scored an average of **88%** on the seven-question knowledge quiz
- **83%** of users self-reported as “Very Confident” or “Moderately Confident” when asked, “How confident are you that you can recognize when changes in someone’s thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are beyond the regular ups and downs of life?”
- **90%** of users self-reported as “Very Confident” or “Moderately Confident” when asked, “Overall, how confident are you that you could be there for a friend struggling with their mental health?”
- **95%** of users responded “Extremely likely” or “Very likely” to the question, “How likely are you to recommend Be There to a friend?”
- **83%** of users responded “Extremely useful” or “Very useful” to the question, “How would you rate the usefulness of Be There as a mental health support?”

Meet the network reps

These thirteen young leaders were chosen through a competitive application process to represent Jack.org's network of 3,000 young leaders across Canada.

They receive special training, work with staff, talk to media, attend and speak at conferences, plan our National Summit, sit on specialized committees, and guide the progress of Jack.org.



Meet the staff



Eric Windeler
Founder &
Executive Director



Jesse Hayman
Vice-President



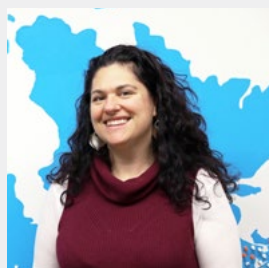
Aimée Israel
Director,
Special Projects



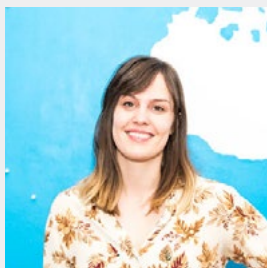
Adrienne Weber
Director,
Operations



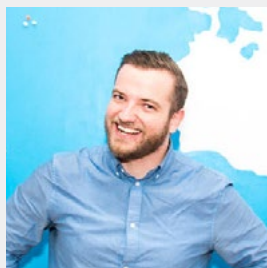
Brock Warner
Director of
Development



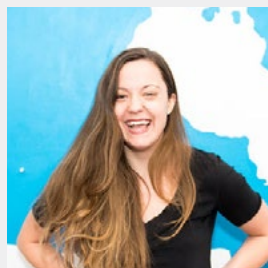
Ellie Avishai
Director of Programs



Alex Lepinski
Program Manager



Jason Frittaion
Information Systems
Manager



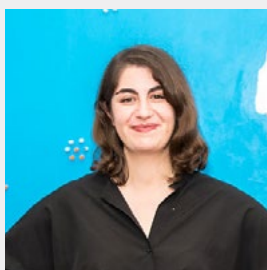
Holly Stanczak
Manager,
Major Gifts



Hillary Poste
Manager,
Major Events



Sonia Sakamoto-Jog
Manager,
Major Events



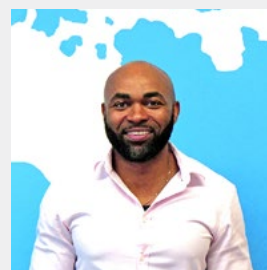
Alex Johnson
Manager,
Content &
Communications



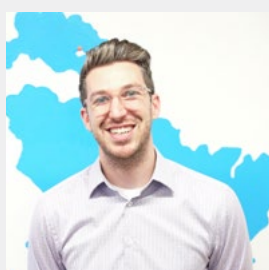
Michelle Downing
Program Manager,
Be There



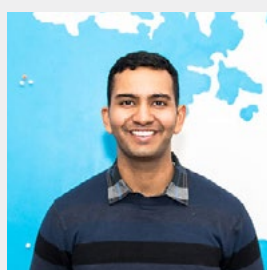
Catelyn Brett
Community Giving
Manager



David Anyanwu
Program Manager



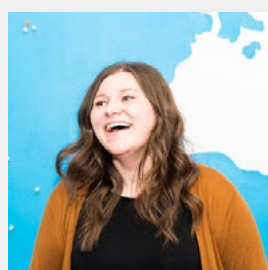
Kevin McGregor
Program Manager



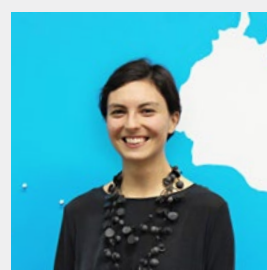
Pratik Nair
Knowledge Translation
& Evaluation Lead



Ryan Martin
Sponsorship Lead



Taylor Montgomery
Program Lead



Emilia Patiño Anaya
Program Lead

Meet the staff



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Grant Writer



Margaret Shaw
Administrative
Coordinator



Kaylah Krajnc
Regional Summits
Coordinator



Carla Sutton
Program Coordinator,
Manitoba &
Saskatchewan



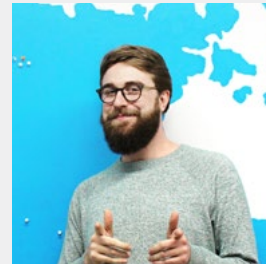
Alex Hill
Program Coordinator,
Atlantic Canada



Safa Khan
Program Coordinator,
Alberta



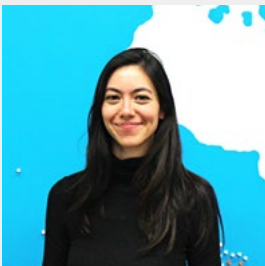
Mohammad Hussain
Program Coordinator,
Northern, Central,
Eastern Ontario



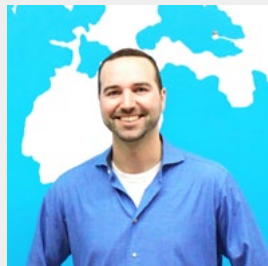
Lee Wilson
Program Coordinator,
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Garry Buchan
Major Events Coordinator



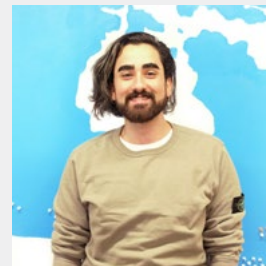
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Shayan Yazdanpanah
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Southwestern,
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Program Coordinator,
Quebec & New
Brunswick



Amy Wang
Program Coordinator,
Toronto



Eleanor Buxton
Development Coordinator



Danielle Kinahan
Copywriter

Board of directors

Dr. Paul Kurdyak

Board Chair

Paul is clinical director of emergency crisis services and head of research in the Centralized Assessment, Triage and Support Program at CAMH. Paul holds a CIHR New Investigator Award and a PhD in clinical epidemiology.

Gillian Evans

Board Member

Gill is a Toronto-based philanthropist. She and her husband David Toyne are founding supporters of Jack.org. Gill has been involved in Jack.org since 2010 and was the Founding Chair of Jack Ride.

William Morris

Board Vice-Chair

William is the recently retired Senior Managing Director and Canada President for Accenture. He is on the Board of Enablis and is also Vice-Chair of the Energy Policy Institute of Canada. William and his wife Sally are founding supporters of Jack.org.

Sandra Hanington

Co-Founder and Board Member

Sandra is Jack's mom, co-founder of Jack.org, and former President and CEO of the Royal Canadian Mint. She currently sits on the board of Extendicare Inc. Sandra is the recipient of the Meritorious Service Cross (Civil Division) from the office of the Governor General for her work with Jack.org.

D'arci McFadden

Board Member

D'arci is a Director at McMillan Vantage, a full-service public affairs firm that partners with one of Canada's leading business law firms, McMillan LLP. Previously, she spent eight years at NATIONAL Public Relations, most recently as Director of Public Affairs, where her work helped to establish best practices in engagement, reputation management, and community collaboration.

Blair Cowan

Board Member

Blair is the Senior Vice-President, Corporate Finance at CIBC. He is a past Board member of Hincks-Dellcrest Centre and the Gail Appel Institute.

Khush Amaria

Board Member

Dr. Amaria is a Clinical and Health Psychologist, a Certified Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, and a Senior Clinical Director at CBT Associates. She has previously played a lead role in the mental health program development at SickKids with an emphasis on healthcare transitions and currently leads a team of clinicians to provide effective and evidence-based mental health treatment.

Suzie Cho

Board Member

Previously a VP of Marketing and Communications for a leading North American manufacturer, Suzie now leads WATSON Advisors' Academy and Learning practice bringing governance education to Canadian boardrooms. She curates meaningful content on practical governance matters and equips directors with the tools to meet the changing needs of boards.

Barbara Grantham

Board Member

Barbara is the current President and CEO of the Vancouver General Hospital Foundation and a proud member of the Board of Directors of YMCA of Greater Vancouver. She has held previous executive positions with the Vancouver Foundation, Streettohome Foundation, BC Children's Hospital Foundation, and CMHA.

Michel Bergeron

Board Member

A lawyer and economist by trade, Michel is the current Chief Strategy Officer at the Business Development Bank of Canada. He sits on the Board of Directors for Futurpreneur Canada, a national non-profit that provides financing, mentoring, and support tools to aspiring young business owners. He also holds the Corporate Director (ICD.D) designation from the Institute of Corporate Directors.

Eric Windeler

*Founder & Executive Director
(Reports to Board)*

Eric started Jack.org with his wife Sandra Hanington and their closest friends in May 2010 after losing their son Jack to suicide. Since then, Eric has put aside his business interests and leads Jack.org full-time. Eric works tirelessly to inspire discussion about mental health, especially among young people. In 2013, Eric received the Champion of Mental Health award from CAMIHI and the QE Diamond Jubilee Medal. In 2015, Eric was honoured by Queen's University, receiving an honorary degree (LLD) recognizing his work in the field of mental health. In 2017, Eric and Sandra Hanington received the Meritorious Service Cross (Civil Division) from the office of the Governor General. Most recently, Eric was selected as one of the 150 CAMH Difference Makers for mental health in Canada. Eric is also the recipient of the 2018 Queen's Alumni Humanitarian of the Year Award. Eric sits on the board of FRAYME, a global youth mental health best practices non-profit.