



CONNECT QUEST

STUDENTS

Student Leaders Guide



connectquest.ca



School
Mental Health
Ontario

Santé mentale
en milieu scolaire
Ontario

Student Leaders Guide

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Welcome to your Connect Quest Guide

Here you'll find ideas and tips to help you lead a Quest at your school and explore the power of connection with yourself, others and the environment.

As a Quest Leader, you'll share activities, challenges, and messages to help create a welcoming environment at school and strengthen connections.

When you build these connections, it can help you and other students feel supported, stronger and ready to face challenges and make informed choices about substances and device use.





Definitions

What do we mean by “substance use health” and “balanced device use”?

Before you jump in, it’s helpful to understand some of the key words we’ll use in Connect Quest. The definitions below provide a shared language, so the ideas and activities are clear and easy to follow. Take a minute to read them now—you’ll use these ideas in the activities.

- **Substance use health** is a way to understand how substances affect people along a spectrum: from no use to some use, to a lot of use that may need support. It helps us talk openly and kindly about how substances can affect our bodies and minds, without blame, shame or stigma.
- **Balanced device use** means using phones, tablets, games and other devices in ways that are mindful, meaningful, and manageable. When your device use is balanced, you’re aware of how your device use makes you feel (mindful), your screen time feels worth it (meaningful), and it doesn’t get in the way of other important things like sleep, school, friends, family, play, or time outside (manageable).
- **Stigma** means being treated unfairly or judged. Stigma can make people feel ashamed or afraid to ask for help, especially around substance use and mental health. We can reduce stigma by learning the facts, using kind language, listening with care and compassion, and supporting others when they need it.





Group warm-up activities

Consider starting with a quick warm-up to help everyone feel comfortable, spark conversation, and build excitement. You can also use these warm-ups as add-ons to other Connect Quest activities. Remember, you know your group best, and these ideas are just to get you started:

- **Well-being charades:** Brainstorm a list of self-care activities like journaling, listening to music, and playing sports with friends. Write them down on cards. Have each member in your group choose a card to act out. Have the rest of the group guess which activity it is.
- **Try not to laugh games:** Divide your group into pairs. Have one try to make the other laugh without touching them.
- **Dance moves:** Play Just Dance videos and have your group follow along to the dance moves.
- **Wellness freeze tag:** Lead a game of freeze tag. When the person who's "it" tags someone, the players must freeze into a wellness or self-care pose.
- **Musical conversation chairs:** Play upbeat music and have the group walk around the space. When the music stops, gather into groups of 4 (depending on your group size). Find one thing that you all have in common. Each time the music stops, group up with people you didn't join up with before.
- **Rock-paper-scissors tag:** Have the group walk around the space you're in. Have them find a partner to play rock-paper-scissors. The person who loses the round of rock-paper-scissors then has to stand behind the winner. They then follow the winner around the space and cheer them on. The winning player goes on to find another winner to play rock-paper-scissors with. This continues until there are only two people left playing the game. The last two will each have a line of players cheering them on.
- **This or that:** Brainstorm a "this or that" list with items like winter vs. summer, math vs. science, and books vs. movies. Read through the list and have each group member share which option they prefer. Ask them to explain their choice.





Connect Quest Planning Checklist

Choose your team.	
	Find other students and caring adults to join you on your Quest (e.g., classmates, student groups/clubs, teachers, support staff, coaches).
Think about a quest goal and theme.	
	What do students at your school need to know about building connections, and making informed choices about their substance use health and balanced device use?
Plan your Quest.	
	Think about what your Quest will look like. For example:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the length of your Quest?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How and where will you complete your Quest (classroom, social media, whole school, a combination)?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will you tell others about the Quest (announcements, social media, newsletters, posters, etc.)?
Explore the <u>Connect Quest activities</u>.	
	Choose the activities that will support your Quest goal.
	Gather your supplies and prepare your school for the Quest (e.g., ask for permission, set dates, book rooms and spaces, get everyone excited!)
Lead your Quest.	
	Have fun and start building connections!
Reflect on your Quest.	
	Celebrate the hard work of your Quest! Think about what you saw and experienced in your school. Note what can help with your next Quest.





Connect Quest Planning Tips

- Kick off your quest with a group warm-up activity!
- Use some Connect Quest activities, such as My Top 2s or Stress-o-meter, to get to know the people on your quest team better and find out each other's strengths and interests.
- Imagine sitting on a cloud looking down at your school event as it is taking place. What does it look, feel and sound like? What are students doing? What is your role? What are the roles of your teammates?
- Think about how you can plan Connect Quest activities around events that are already happening in your school.
- There might be breaks between activities during your Connect Quest. During those breaks, consider sharing information about your Connect Quest with other students (e.g., social media, posters in the school, etc.).
- You don't need to have an activity planned for every moment or every day during your Connect Quest. Every day, week, or month will look different, and that's okay.
- Remember to celebrate the progress along the way!
- Prizes make things exciting. Think of awarding small toys, fidgets or whatever works in your school.



Did you know?

Great leaders have bright ideas, kind hearts, and the energy to bring people together.





Lead a Quest!

Build your own Quest! It's up to you which activities you select and how long you want it to be.

Here are some examples of how you might organize the plan for a one-day, one-week, one-month or year-long Quest.

Here are some Quest options you can try for a:

- **Day** – a quick spark of connection
- **Week** – a mini connection challenge
- **Month** – a bigger connection challenge to grow and share
- **Year** – keep the momentum and connection going all year!



One-Day Quest

Location: School Hallway or Multipurpose Room

How we'll get students excited about the Quest: Promote the day with posters throughout the school, social media shareables, and school announcements, and talk about it with other students.

Time	Activity
Recess: Self-Reflection Activities	<u>My Top 2s</u>
	<u>Stress-o-meter</u>
	<u>What's the Reality?</u>
	<u>Happiness Team</u>
Lunchtime: Sharing Self-Care Activities	<u>Dr. Fun</u>
	<u>Joys of Journalling</u>
	<u>Device Challenge</u>
	<u>Playlist Party</u>

Our plan to share the connection adventures:

Take photos of students participating in the activities (with their permission). Talk to students who attended the drop-in event and write a story in the school newsletter. Plan another event based on feedback from students and school staff.





One-Week Quest

Location: School-wide

How we will get students excited about the Quest: Promote the quest with posters throughout the school, social media shareables, on announcements and in classrooms, and talk about it with other students.

Day	Activity	Our plan to share the connection adventures
Monday	<u>Rat Park Adventure</u>	Take pictures of our Rat Parks and post them in the hall or on social media. Have younger grades visit the rat parks and explain the exercise to them.
Tuesday	<u>My Top 2s</u>	Post the Top 2s on the wall, write them on a whiteboard, tell friends about it.
Wednesday	<u>Rock Snake</u>	Use the snake as a welcome path at school events, share a photo in the school newsletter, create wall art with rock snake photos, display the rocks in your trophy case.
Thursday	<u>Connection Bingo</u>	Ask students to share new connections, highlight the first person to get a bingo, and display the bingo cards in class.
Friday	<u>Nature Moment</u>	Share your experience with a friend or teacher, and share ideas on how to collect more nature moments.





One-Month Quest

Location: School (inside and outside)

How we will get students excited about the Quest: Promote the month with posters throughout the school, social media shareables, on announcements and in classrooms. Talk about it with other students, parents and other school community members.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		<u>Connection Bingo</u>		
<u>Compliments Challenge</u>				
		<u>Lunch Link</u>		
<u>Scavenger Hunt</u>				
			<u>Nature Moment</u>	

Our plan to share the connection adventures:

Take photos of students (with their permission) planning and engaging in the challenges and activities and share on social media and in school newsletter. Talk to students, staff and community members who participated during the month and write a story for local media. Challenge other schools to put on their own month-long quests. Promote the idea of school wellness campaigns far and wide.





Year-Long Quest

Location: School (inside and outside)

Make copies of the Month-Long Quest Map and keep the connection going all year long!

Invite school leaders to:

- Discuss yearly strategy, seasonal themes and plans for getting started.
- Add relevant yearly events and special days or weeks (e.g., Mental Health Week) to the school calendar.
- Identify other opportunities in the school calendar to plan a series of Quests.





Build your own QUEST MAP!

Here are a few blank maps you and your team can use to plan your Quest.

One Day Quest
Name:
Location:

How we'll get students excited about the Quest:

Time	Activity

Our plan to share the connection adventures:



Use your quest goal and theme to come up with a name for your Quest! Having a name will help build excitement and interest in the Quest (e.g., Connection Week).





One Week Quest

Name:

Location:

How we will get students excited about the Quest:		
Day	Activity examples	Our plan to share the connection adventures
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		





One Month Quest

Name:

Location:

How we will get students excited about the Quest:				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Our plan to share the connection adventures:				





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