



# Can parental involvement help to prevent youth suicide in Nunavik?

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# Presentation plan

- Nunavik's situation regarding physical activity, mental health and suicide.
- Benefits of physical activity.
- Protective factors against suicide.
- What can parental involvement add?
- Similitude.
- Presentation of a current research project on parental involvement.

# Nunavik's situation

- 82 % of the Inuit population of Nunavik do not reach the recommended amount of physical activity per week. (Nolin et coll., 2007);
- 30 % of the Inuit population of Nunavik is overweight and 28 % is obese (Nolin et coll., 2007);
- Suicide is accounting for 23,1 % of men's deaths and 15 % of women's deaths (Kirmayer et Paul, 2007).

# Benefits of physical activity

<b>Physical benefits</b>	<b>Mental benefits</b>
Reduces risks of cardio-vascular diseases	Good self-esteem
Reduces risks of developing some types of cancer	Reduces anxiety and depression's symptoms
Reduces risks of having type II diabetes	Enhances psychological resilience
Helps to keep a healthy weight	Helps to manage stress
Helps to keep a normal blood pressure	Improves school grades and helps to reduce dropping out
Helps to form good muscles and bone tissues	Helps to develop social skills and problem solving skills
	Helps to facilitate difficult situations
	Gives a feeling of belonging
	Reduces feeling of despair

# Protective factors (White and Jodoin, 1998)

Influence levels	Protectives Factors
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Easy temperament</li><li>•Creative problem-solving</li><li>•Personal autonomy</li><li>•Previous experience with self-mastery</li><li>•Optimistic outlook</li><li>•Sens of humour</li></ul>
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Family relationship characterized by warmth and belonging</li><li>•Adults modelling healthy adjustment</li><li>•High and realistic expectations</li></ul>
Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Social competence</li><li>•Healthy peer modelling</li><li>•Acceptance and support</li></ul>
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Presence of adults who believe in them</li><li>•Parent involvement</li><li>•Encouragement of participation</li></ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Opportunities for participation</li><li>•Evidence of hope for the future</li><li>•Community self-determination and solidarity</li><li>•Availability of resources</li></ul>

# Parental involvement

- **Parental involvement** (Flouri and Buchanan, 2002): « not only the emotional support provided by a parent to a child, but also a blend of three components
  - 1) Engagement: direct interaction with the child;
  - 2) Accessibility or availability to the child;
  - 3) Responsibility regarding the child's care. »

# Parenting and parenting style

- **Parenting** (Kendziora and O'Leary, 1993):  
« everything a parent can do, or fail to do that has an influence on the child. »
- **Parenting style** (Flouri, 2005): the way parents take care of their children, for example, it can be with warmth or with severity.

# Benefits and risk factors associated with parental involvement

<b>Protective effects</b>	<b>Risk effects</b>
Development of personal aptitudes	Psychological distress
Prevention of suicidal thoughts	Can lead to depression
Prevention of suicidal behaviours	Maladaptive parenting style can lead to suicidal behaviours
Development of personal social skills	Self destructive behaviours
	Difficulties in maintaining social meaningful relations
	Psychopathology

# Similitude

- As it can be seen, parental involvement, in a sport context, can help to develop and upgrade the child's individual protective factors.
- Parental involvement can also help to develop familial protective factors against suicide.

# Current research project on Parental involvement in Nunavik

- Project's context : In the Nunavik Youth Hockey Development Program (NYHDP), parental involvement is perceived as problematic by the organizers.
- Objective : To explore and understand the notions of « parental involvement » and « parenting » as defined by Inuit parents in four northern villages of Nunavik.

# NYHDP

- It is a hockey program with two major goals:
  - To reduce school dropping out
  - To reduce youth criminality
- One of its major composite is a link with the school.

- Northern villages : Kuujjuaq, Puvirnituk, Kangiqsualujjuaq and Quaqtaq.
- Objectives :
  1. To explore and describe, as viewed by Inuit parents, the concept of parenting.
  2. To explore and describe parental involvement in the NYHDP as perceived by Inuit parents.
  3. To identify the barriers perceived by Inuit parents to their involvement in the NYHDP.
  4. To identify the facilitating factors to active parental involvement inside the NYHDP, again, according to Inuit parents.
  5. To compare the previous objectives between the four northern communities.

# Preliminary results (data from Kuujuaq 2007 and 2009)

- Parenting : two types of definition
  - Focus on responsibility towards child care:  
« I usually try to raise them good, how I was raised. Hum, just being behind their backs, clean their rooms, feed them, mostly that, taking care of them. Knowing where they are and what they do. » (P01).
  - Focus on engagement toward the child:  
« I think to be a good parent you have to take your kids first, think about them first. » (P07).

- The definition of parenting influences directly the type of involvement a parent will provide.
- Parenting style does not seem to influence the type of involvement a parent will provide.
- Despite differences in the parent's concrete actions in the NYHDP, all of them feel involved in the life of their kids.
- Their perception of their own involvement is consistent with their definition of parenting and this definition reflect on the actions taken towards the NYHDP.

# Perceived barriers

## Frequency of mention of perceived barriers to parental involvement.

Perceived barriers	Frequency
Schedule conflicts with parents' activities.	2
Schedule conflicts with working hours.	3
Schedule conflicts with familial activities.	1
Other familial obligations.	1
Alcohol consumption.	1
No perceived barriers.	2
Number of children at home.	1

# Suggestions mention by parents

- Review the schedule to fit working hours.
- Make more publicity around the NYHDP.
- Upgrade the link between the school and the NYHDP.
- To have more discipline in the NYHDP.

# Social marketing

- To explain clearly the benefits of parental involvement for the child, the family and the community.
- To explain clearly what can be the actions taken by parents in order to be involved in the NYHDP.
- To upgrade the NYHDP in order to reduce the perceived barriers to parental involvement.

# Conclusion

- NYHDP can be considered a sport program that allows young participants to benefit from the positive repercussions related to the regular practice of physical activity on mental and physical health.
- In that context, parental involvement can allow the creation of strong and warm relationships.
- It is then possible to think that physical activity, combined with parental involvement, can develop and upgrade some protective factors against suicide and reduce suicidal behaviours.