

Outsourcing Mental Health Programs: Harms to Public Education and to Students

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Abstract

Students are experiencing high levels of stress and mental health distress and are at greater risk of suicide, resulting in calls to provide appropriate mental health supports in schools. In response, provincial governments are outsourcing K–12 mental health supports to private organizations (both non- and for-profit). Through a review of Manitoba education documents, we traced over 50 private organizations recommended by the provincial government and over \$8.9 million of public money spent on these programs. Situated within the broader neo-liberal trend of the privatization of public education, we then used a critical policy analysis approach to analyze these programs' content, explicating the ways in which these outsourced programs endorse the deprofessionalization of

the teacher and the self-responsibilization of students while enlisting problematic content. We argue that outsourcing ultimately undermines education as a public good and recommend holding governments accountable, developing research-informed mental health supports, and implementing a critical assessment process when considering outsourcing to private organizations.

Keywords: outsourcing, privatization, public education, public good, mental health

Résumé

Dans un contexte où les élèves ressentent des niveaux élevés de stress et de la détresse psychologique, augmentant ainsi le risque de suicide, des appels ont été lancés afin de fournir un soutien adéquat en matière de santé mentale dans les écoles. En réponse, les gouvernements provinciaux confient les services de soutien en santé mentale destinés aux élèves de la maternelle à la 12^e année à des organisations privées (à but lucratif ou non). À travers une analyse des documents éducatifs du Manitoba, nous avons repéré plus de 50 organisations privées recommandées par le gouvernement et plus de 8,9 millions de dollars alloués à ces programmes provenant des fonds publics. S'inscrivant dans la tendance néolibérale plus large de la privatisation de l'éducation publique, une analyse critique des politiques a permis d'évaluer le contenu de ces programmes externes, et d'expliquer la manière dont ils favorisent la déprofessionnalisation des enseignants et la responsabilisation individuelle des élèves, tout en intégrant des contenus problématiques. Les auteures soutiennent que l'externalisation compromet ultimement l'éducation en tant que bien public, et recommandent de responsabiliser les gouvernements, de mettre en place des mesures de soutien en santé mentale fondées sur la recherche et d'établir un processus d'évaluation critique des programmes en cas d'externalisation vers des organisations privées.

Mots-clés : externalisation, privatisation, éducation publique, bien public, santé mentale

Introduction

Children and youth in Canada are experiencing high levels of stress, mental health distress, and suicidality, causing public health, education, and mental health practitioners and scholars to call for appropriate mental health supports for students in schools (Furi & Guimont, 2003; Kessler et al., 2007; Malla et al., 2018; Vaillancourt et al., 2021). Nearly 20% of youth experience some form of mental health symptoms (Malla et al., 2018) and Canada has one of the highest youth suicide rates in the industrialized world, with suicide being the second leading cause of death for Canadian youth (Furi & Guimont, 2003). Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) youth face higher rates of distress due to historic and ongoing colonial violence and systemic abandonment (Vaillancourt et al., 2021). These mental health needs have only increased since the COVID-19 pandemic (Vaillancourt et al., 2021). Clearly, our current systems are inadequate in supporting the mental health needs of children and youth (Malla et al., 2018; Vaillancourt et al., 2021).

Governments need to appropriately fund school divisions to support this work (Vaillancourt et al., 2021) and can do so by hiring enough teachers to attend to the needs of students, hiring mental health professionals to work in schools, and funding appropriate school-based programs. In a meta-analysis of existing research on school personnel supporting student mental health, Sanchez et al. (2018) found strong effects when school personnel who are already in the child's life implement targeted interventions multiple times a week. Vaillancourt et al. (2021) indicated that a national school-based mental health strategy is needed—one that delivers services embedded within schools, is culturally sensitive, and is interwoven into the public education institutions responsible for the care and education of the whole child. This public funding should not only support students on an individual level (as is often the target of intervention through a biomedical model), but must also commit resources toward tackling the root causes and systemic issues that are often at the heart of the distress of students, families, communities, and educators. In other words, funding for mental health initiatives should include programs that address issues like food and housing insecurity, systemic racism, and greater access to Indigenous knowledge and cultural programs through the hiring of Elders and Knowledge Keepers, as determined by the needs of communities.

In response to the identified need for improved school-based mental health services—and as we will demonstrate through this critical policy analysis—governments

are rapidly outsourcing mental health supports in K–12 schools to private organizations, including both non-profit and for-profit organizations. In this article, we outline how the Manitoba government has been recommending and directly funding private organizations to provide mental health supports in schools. This means that students, educators, and families are being directed to non-government programs, training, curriculum, and other resources to address mental health issues. Our critical policy analysis found that the Manitoba government has recommended (i.e., referenced, adopted, and/or funded) more than 50 private organizations and provided more than \$8.9 million of public money to private organizations to address mental health.

We situate outsourcing within the broader neo-liberal trend of privatizing public education that is creeping across Canada and undermining education as a public good (Moore et al., 2024; Winton, 2022). We then discuss the ways that outsourcing mental health programming undermines the ability of schools to care for and educate students, diminishes the implementation of appropriate programming, and endorses problematic content. In our recommendations, we call on educators and academics to resist these efforts to outsource mental health care in schools to private organizations and provide ideas for auditing, developing appropriate programming within schools, and implementing a critical assessment process when considering recommending or funding private mental health organizations in K–12 schools.

Neo-Liberal Creep

Neo-liberalism is an approach committed to free market capitalism, deregulation of capital markets, and reduction of government responsibility and expenditure. It is an assemblage of political and economic policies that privileges market competition, defunds and privatizes social services such as health and education, reduces taxes (inhibiting the redistribution of wealth), reconfigures human wants and needs into profit opportunities, and emphasizes financial capital over productive capital (Blackmore, 2019; Brown, 2015; Duggan, 2012; Giroux, 2005; Klees, 2020). One of the main intentions of neo-liberal reforms is to increase privatization, in part by rerouting funding from public social services to private corporations. The effects of which, as Brown (2015) explains, include intensifying inequities, promoting unethical commercialization, decreasing the boundaries between corporations and the state, destabilizing the economy, and constructing human

beings into market actors. This latter point, the shifting construction of human beings from political actors to human capital, erodes the citizenry of a moral or ethical life (Brown, 2015). Neo-liberal political theorizing provides a critical framework for reading current political and public discourses within and about education in order to explicate the ways in which neo-liberalism is pervading public education.

Neo-Liberal Creep in Education

The “unstoppable flood” (Ball, 2003, p. 215) of neo-liberal education reforms has been spreading internationally (Ball, 2003; Blackmore, 2019). In Canada, neo-liberal reforms in education began in the 1980s and have continued to spread and increase in intensity. In addition to austerity discourses and budget cuts for social services, this manifests in moves to increase privatization, marketization, and managerialism (Poole et al., 2021; Winton, 2022; Yoon & Winton, 2020). Our interests in this article concern the privatization of education, which is allowed to flourish through policy reforms that “encourage private actors to take on roles and responsibilities formerly provided by the public sector” (Winton, 2022, p. 7) and manifests in fundraising, school fees, international student programs, and private-public partnerships (Winton, 2022; Yoon et al., 2020). Outsourcing is a form of privatization and commercialization in which private companies are paid to take on work within and required by public schools. Outsourcing might be used to manage “hard services” such as computer services, payroll services, bussing, and vending machines, but it can also take on “soft services” related to textbook supply, instructional resources, testing materials, or curriculum development (Savard, 2004). In some cases, it might make sense to outsource soft services, particularly if expertise is required from community groups outside of the education sector; for example, community-based 2SLGBTQ+ organizations, or Elders or Knowledge Keepers from a particular Indigenous community. In these cases, it is prudent—and ethical—to engage with those outside the public education sector to elicit particular expertise or knowledge deemed to be required by the professionals who work in the school.

However, in most cases, outsourcing in public education reflects neo-liberal moves to privatization that declare motives of efficiency or cost reduction, and which have become ubiquitous and widespread, “a trend engineered through global policy networks that seek to profit from government outsourcing” (Burch, 2021, p. 2). Accor-

ding to Burch (2021), these global policy networks that are influenced by powerful multinational corporations have constructed narratives insisting that moves to privatize are in the best interest of students, and obfuscate the role of the public in public education, constituting education as a commodity. Such reforms ultimately intensify inequalities, promote unethical commercialization, decrease boundaries between corporations and the state, and reconfigure students and teachers into commodities—all of which undermine education as a public good (Ball, 2003; Brown, 2015; Davies & Bansel, 2007; Duggan, 2012; Giroux, 2005; Hursh, 2005).

Our concern is how the neo-liberal reform policies that facilitate outsourcing lead to teacher deprofessionalization and increased self-responsibilization. Neo-liberal reforms in education are often implemented as a result of teacher-blaming (de Saxe et al., 2020), which leads to greater teacher managerialism (Ball, 2003) and increased standardization, detracting from teacher expertise and judgement. Teachers become deprofessionalized, in part, because their ability to make professional and ethical judgements is undermined (Phelan & Janzen, 2024). At the same time, these technical solutions reorient the success and failures of students directly onto teachers (Biesta, 2015), directing teaching toward self-responsibilization, which reinforces individual responsibility and detracts from social context, political decision making, and inequitable structures that undermine teaching in the first place (McLeod, 2017).

Neo-Liberal Creep in Mental Health

Neo-liberal ideologies and practices also show up in the conceptualization of mental health distress and interventions, both focusing on the individual. As Esposito and Perez (2014) stated:

Mental disorders become viewed as conditions largely divorced from social, economic, and political contingencies and turned into personal pathologies that can be diagnosed and treated through the allegedly value-free traditions and naturalistic methods of science and medicine. (p. 415)

The framing of mental health distress as an individual problem, rather than reflective of societal issues, demonstrates a neo-liberal de-politicization of needing to survive what are often stressful and inhumane living conditions (Cosgrove & Karter, 2018; Esposito

& Perez, 2014). Esposito and Perez (2014) articulated how a neo-liberal mental illness lens relies on pathologization, individualization, and medicalization, where “wellness” becomes reserved for individuals who are engaging in market-productive thoughts and behaviours. In this way, as Cosgrove and Karter (2018) argued, the disease framework of distress “responsibilizes” individual people for their distress, concealing the relationship between people’s behaviours and systemic and structural injustices. Missing from the disease framework are the ways in which neo-liberalism itself functions as structural violence that impacts mental health (Esposito & Perez, 2014). In addition, this framing fails to recognize how the responsabilization of youth in schools, enacted through neo-liberal values like competition and productivity, may perpetuate distress, anxiety, and depression (Maiese, 2022).

Furthermore, many of the interventions in mental health (with youth and otherwise), tend to rely on logics of responsabilization, including things like resilience, empowerment, grit, and so on (Maiese, 2022; Mayor, 2019). For example, Howell (2012, 2015) demonstrated how the rise in resilience training for those who have experienced trauma shifts all responsibility to modes of self-help and disturbingly requires trauma survivors to not only “bounce back” but to be strengthened by their experiences. Others, like Golden (2017) and Garrett (2016), found strong overlaps between mental health discourse and neo-liberal values and ideologies, particularly via interventions using discourses of responding “well” to these challenges and adversities. Golden (2017) wrote about how “trauma-informed” mental health approaches in schools utilize the language of “grit” in ways that blame students who express symptoms and uplift those who overcome their trauma “through discipline and self-control” (p. 348), thus requiring distressed students to change, not school or society (Maiese, 2022).

Methodology

As part of a larger ongoing project, we had been collecting education documents referenced by the Manitoba government’s education department that referred to *trauma* or *trauma-informed* practices. Our initial goal was to conduct a critical review of the kinds of trauma-informed policies, practices, and approaches being used in schools. However, upon reading these documents, we discovered, quite by accident, that the Manitoba

government was not only explicitly recommending¹, but in some cases, directly funding many private organizations to provide mental health programs, training, curriculum, and other resources to be used in schools (outsourcing). Out of curiosity, our research team began doing background reading on this outsourced content.

In order to systematically review the documents, we adopted a critical policy analysis (CPA) approach to education research. As Young and Diem (2018) argue, an important feature of CPA is the interwoven relationship between theory and methodology, where a critical theoretical framework is used in every stage of the process: framing the research questions, data collection, analysis, and knowledge translation. From within this paradigm, policy is not something to be accepted as is, rather it is instead to be critiqued and carefully considered (Bacchi, 2012). Critical policy analysis is thus helpful in uncovering and understanding power relations and structures of oppression through a deconstructive process. Within the context of a neo-liberal theoretical framework (described above) and given the widescale outsourcing of mental health supports, expertise, and contracts to private organizations that we were observing, we formalized our inquiry to consider the following questions: (1) To what extent, and to whom, is the Manitoba government outsourcing mental health supports in K–12 education? (2) What does a critical policy analysis of these outsourced mental health supports reveal about their content and the role of educators and the schools in supporting the well-being of youth in K–12 schools?

We first conducted a scan of the Manitoba Education website of all curriculum documents and related resources that either had been created within the past five years and/or are currently in use and that include the term “trauma” anywhere within the text of the document. We also conducted the same search in past issues of the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents’ (MASS) journal² to see what programs were being used by school divisions. We compiled a list of all the private organizations referenced in these documents, noting which were government-recommended, government-adopted,

1 We have noted wording in some documents that claims, “The following resources are provided for information purposes only. Manitoba Education bears no responsibility for the accuracy or content of the links. Users are responsible for evaluating the content and appropriate use of the information provided.” However, by including these links and programs in government documents, this is a de facto endorsement and inappropriately downloads the responsibility of the government to individual educators.

2 *MASS Journal* is a professional magazine produced by the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents in which MASS members can publish articles about their work in the school division. It is not peer-reviewed.

and/or government-funded (see the Appendix). This list is by no means exhaustive, as we only included private organizations that were cited in *MASS Journal* articles and education documents that explicitly used the term “trauma” somewhere in the document or article, and no other terms related to mental health, such as “well-being,” “counselling,” “physical health,” “supports,” etc. It is likely, therefore, that the outsourcing of mental health care to private organizations is far larger in scope than what we have captured in our analysis. We then traced any funding provided to these programs by searching (via Google) the keywords: “program name” (e.g., Safe Talk) AND “Manitoba” OR “funding in Manitoba.” Through these searches we found funding information in media reports and government press releases, financial statements/budgetary reports, promotional materials, and program websites. It is important to note that, because we only searched organizations that were referred to in education documents and *MASS Journal* articles that named trauma, and did not trace funding provided by school divisions directly to private organizations, the scope and scale of outsourced mental health programs in education is likely far greater than what our focused analysis documented.

After compiling the list of all government-referenced programs, we each independently read the documents related to these programs to familiarize ourselves with their contents. Working from a CPA paradigm, we engaged in a document analysis aligned with Lawless and Chen’s (2019) critical thematic data analysis, explicitly looking for patterns in the distribution of resources, power, and knowledge through a neo-liberal lens. In this deconstructive process, we paid attention to how students, families, educators, and distress were discursively constructed. We also examined the ways in which the construction of mental well-being as an individual problem (rather than a systemic one) might be connected to the perpetuation of inequitable educational systems. After comparing our emerging analysis, we engaged in an iterative process of analysis, discussion, and reading, collectively analyzing and determining the final themes and using existing literature to enrich our theoretical understandings. We organized our critique of outsourcing into three themes: (1) the deprofessionalization of teachers undermining the ability of schools to care for and educate students, (2) the self-responsibilizing of students (and teachers) detracting from systemic problems, and (3) the endorsement of problematic content (i.e., content that lacks a transparent and peer-reviewed evidence base and is laden with blaming, racist, and discriminatory discourses). Below, we weave together our findings and discussion, as this aligns with many CPA and critical thematic analysis approaches to presenting findings.

Findings and Discussion

In analyzing these documents, we found more than 50 private organizations referenced by the Manitoba government, meaning organizations that have been recommended (in government-produced documents), adopted, and/or funded. Of these 50 organizations that were referenced, at least 25 received government funding. Over the past five years (2019–2024) over \$8.9 million of public funds were funneled out of the public system to private organizations for mental health. This figure does not include any funding provided directly by school divisions or schools. For example, although we could find no evidence of provincial funding, numerous school divisions have adopted the Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA), such as the Pembina Trails division, which spent \$43,700 on VTRA in 2024–2025.

The Deprofessionalization of Teachers

Although providing funding for mental health resources may seem like an appropriate measure in the context of increased mental health concerns for youth, outsourcing supports for students to private organizations can lead to teacher deprofessionalization. In this era of “PISA-shock” (Ertl, 2006) and its concomitant manufactured crisis of student failure and teacher ineffectiveness, education has been reoriented to become hyper-focused on test scores, competitiveness, and individualism, thereby constructing “successful” education as something that can be standardized, instrumentalized, and privatized. When teaching is constructed as an apolitical intervention intended to fix/change an unknown and presumed homogenous group of students, teachers become technicians focused on “learnification” (Biesta, 2010), where academic achievement obscures students and their particularity, context, and the relationality inherent in teaching. In such moves, the deprofessionalization of teaching is activated; a confluence of narratives that assume that teaching is a technical activity, curriculum and knowledge are static and apolitical, and students are homogenous (Phelan & Janzen, 2024). In this context, curriculum—rather than something *lived* with students (Aoki, 2004)—becomes decontextualized and dehumanized—one-size-fits-all. These prepackaged approaches obscure the particularity of students and their contexts, undermining teachers in their efforts to educate and care for students.

An example of this kind of program is the Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) program, which was created by the for-profit Center for Trauma-Informed Practices (CTIP) (previously known as The North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response). The VTRA program was endorsed by the Manitoba government in the document *Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion* (Manitoba Education, 2021) and receives funding from numerous school divisions in Manitoba. It is also endorsed and funded by other school districts across Canada, including in Toronto, London, and Edmonton. According to the VTRA website, “VTRA Training instills the perspective that serious violence is an evolutionary process, meaning that pre-incident data is often available to help proactively identify and prevent the occurrence; put simply, VTRA implies that nobody ‘just snaps’” (Center for Trauma Informed Practices, n.d.). The description goes on to explain the three stages of the framework, which include initial data collection and immediate interventions, risk evaluation for moderate-to-high-risk situations, and data-driven and trauma-informed interventions.

There is little training content available on the VTRA website (as access to the content requires payment), yet the ways they frame their work and the assumptions being made on their website are telling when considered critically. For example, a section of the website that discusses “Training, Tools and Technology” is dominated by language that focuses on data sharing and data-use agreements, technical support, policy and protocol development, and management software. While it is undoubtedly important to have both preventative and reactive plans in place in schools regarding potential school violence, programs featuring framing priorities that are premised on technical mechanisms and instrumentalist means supplant the importance of teacher professionalism founded on relationships and professional judgements.

In one VTRA protocol we were able to publicly source³, the protocols and agreements appeared to undermine core educational values of building strong relationships. For example, partners signing on to the protocol agree to adopt an approach rooted in an “investigative mindset” of paying attention to “pre-attack behaviours” (Dufferin Child

3 The protocol was available through a report by Dufferin Child & Family Services (located in Ontario) entitled *Guelph Wellington Dufferin VTRA Protocol: Community Violence Threat Assessment Protocol, a Collaborative Response to Assessing Violence Potential*.

& Family Services, 2023, p. 6) in order to determine who might be a “plausible threat” (Dufferin Child & Family Services, 2023, p. 7). There appears to be little concern for the student who “pose[s] a risk for violence” (p. 3), as terms such as “care” do not appear at all in the 38-page document.

This orientation obscures the importance of teaching as an ethical relation (Todd, 2003), whereby assumptions about students are resisted, where students’ precarity and humanity is assumed, and where relationality with students is central (Phelan & Janzen, 2024; Todd, 2003). When teaching is understood as being premised on ethical relations, it cannot be reduced to data collection and protocol alignment. Teachers cannot do their work if they are not in relation with students, nor if their mindset toward students is visualizing students as a threat waiting to happen, as in the example above. Therefore, technocratic approaches to responding to behaviours assume that teaching is a matter of “data collection and assessment,” and that “interventions” can be applied without any concern for the particularities of the student or their context (Phelan & Janzen, 2024). Teaching that is constructed as a technical endeavour—void of relational and ethical orientations and of professional judgement—is reflective of neo-liberal ideologies and the assumptions that all children are homogenous, behaviours can be managed through data extraction and management, and teachers’ responses to children can be easily scripted and enacted through prescribed stages.

An example of this argument is a recent Winnipeg news event (Searle, 2024). A 13-year-old autistic boy who made a toy gun out of Popsicle sticks and a rubber band was subjected to a violent threat assessment, which would have included an in-depth interview with the child’s parents (which the parents refused to participate in). The VTRA was invoked even though school professionals affirmed that the child posed no threat to anyone’s safety. The father of the boy argued the policy was being misapplied and could be harmful to students who are neurodiverse. However, his concerns were merely “duly noted” by the superintendent, who asserted that the school division needed to proceed with the protocol. As this example illustrates, adopting external programs can cause—or even force—educators and school leaders to default to the procedures and policies prescribed by those organizations, rather than policies and procedures developed locally by school boards and schools disregarding the use of professional judgement entirely.

The importance of teacher professionalism rests on caring for students through positive and ongoing relationship development, as well as responsive teaching practices

informed by professional judgement. Moreover, there is a danger of creating a carceral environment in schools, in which, as we saw in this example, the surveillance of children and the school's response to them seeks conformity of behaviour, not educative approaches to "mis" behaviour (Janzen & Schwartz, 2018). This approach risks leading to the unwarranted criminalization of children, which disproportionately affects racialized students (Ennab, 2022; Maynard, 2017). Due to the extensive collection and sharing of data by VTRA, there is a concomitant danger of the misuse of data that leads to profiling and discrimination against already-marginalized students. The use of VTRA is an example of how contracting out services to private organization—and subsequently being wed to their policies and procedures—undermines the professional judgement of educators and locally developed governance policies, disproportionately putting neurodiverse, racialized, and marginalized youth at risk. In such a structure, teaching is void of professional judgement, ethical relationality, and responsibility.

The Self-Responsibilization of Students and Teachers for Systemic Problems

Outsourcing can lead to funding being diverted to quick-fix approaches that are not necessarily appropriate and that fail to put the systemic sources of mental distress in context. As Kutcher et al. (2017) highlighted, doing something to make it seem as though you are addressing suicidality or mental health is not the same as doing the right thing. Indeed, we found many examples in the data where neo-liberal individualized and surface-level solutions are prioritized, resulting in the true root causes of mental health distress being obscured.

Drawing from our analyzed data, Care for All in Education is a partnership between the Canadian Mental Health Association and the government of Manitoba. Care for All in Education was designed to provide mental health resources to provincial school staff and was awarded \$500,000 of funding in 2022 by the Manitoba government. Much of the resourcing remains narrowly focused on the "self-care" of teachers, without centring the structural causes of teacher mental health distress and burnout. For example, in March of 2024, the Care for All in Education website featured a write-up on a mindset tool that involved focusing on the "circle of control," referring to the aspects of life over which we have full control and influence. They provided a fictional case study of a teacher facing burnout who was encouraged to focus on having a positive attitude and

to change how she responds to bad behaviour in the classroom (Care for All in Education, 2024a). The case study suggested that by focusing on what was within her control (i.e., her reactions) and thinking positively, the teacher was able to let go of her worries. Indeed, much of the website endorses the idea that individual teachers need to be more resilient and change their behaviour or mindset, rather than addressing the real material conditions that have led to burnout.

Similar logic was utilized by Care for All in Education when creating resources for school leaders about supporting staff's mental health. In October of 2024, leaders were encouraged to provide well-being resources (e.g., videos, podcast episodes) in an accessible location, or to "ensure workers are working the appropriate hours and taking their union-mandated breaks" (Care for All in Education, 2024b). Completely absent from the advice to school leaders is any suggestion that they consider whether the working conditions of their staff (e.g., workload, class sizes, ratios of support staff to students with additional needs, appropriate funding, etc.) make it possible for staff to take a break or take steps to reduce their levels of distress. Throughout the Care for All in Education website, mental health is positioned as something that can be solved via changing one's attitude or behaviour. This is particularly troubling when considering that the website was set up in the context of educational staff sheltering at home and needing to teach and support (often distressed) students online in the middle of a pandemic.

Individualizing logic was also found in the behaviourist program PAX Good Behavior Game® and the PAX Dream Makers initiative, both created by the for-profit American group PAXIS Institute, but housed within a non-profit in Canada. Originally provided with \$1.3 million by the Manitoba government in 2011–2012, the Manitoba government again invested over \$675,000 in 2020 to implement PAX programming in Northern First Nations communities (Government of Manitoba, 2020). As we have written in detail about the harmful implications of PAX programming elsewhere (see Sanni-Anibire et al., 2025), a general description of the PAX programs for the purpose of this article is that they reward desired behaviours (through silly prizes like getting to act like an animal). Like many outsourced programs, PAX is premised on a behaviourist approach that suggests that a child's "bad" behaviours are simply an individualist problem (i.e., the "bad" child), rather than being seen as behaviours that stem from other systemic and contextual issues (e.g., large classroom sizes, systemic barriers to education, chronic poverty and hunger, reactions to racism, etc.).

In the same way that bad behaviour is individualized, so too are the motives of the resilience rhetoric found in many programs we reviewed. Conceptions of resiliency, found in programs such as Life Space Crisis Intervention, Real Restitution, Shanker Self-Reg, and Zones of Regulation, burden students with self-improvement rather than addressing systemic barriers or structural inequities. Conceptualizing mental health supports in this way is reflective of neo-liberal ideologies that centre liberal individualism, where the individual is positioned as void of context, requiring of entrepreneurial “grit,” continuously self-improving, and solely responsible for self-regulation (Adams et al., 2019; Garrett, 2016; Golden, 2017; Maiese, 2022; Mayor, 2019). In cases like that of PAX Dream Makers, described as an engagement and leadership initiative targeted toward Indigenous youth, the government’s outsourcing of funds to a behaviourist, settler-led program removes resources from true Indigenous control and siphons funds to an American-founded corporation for a “suicide prevention” program that claims to be led by Indigenous youth. We argue that financial investment in broader suicide prevention measures rooted in eradicating systemic inequities (e.g., reducing poverty levels, creating affordable housing, increasing access to clean water) and the provision of culturally appropriate learning (e.g., land-based instruction, language revitalization), particularly in Northern First Nations communities, would be a much more appropriate use of public funds (Barker et al., 2017; Turner, 2014).

A significant ramification of this kind of widespread outsourcing is that essential school-based programming and systemic and community-based investments are overlooked or underfunded. Investment that focuses on the root causes of stress and mental health struggles (e.g., poverty, discrimination, intergenerational trauma) and that directly addresses the ways in which colonial, racist, and oppressive contexts contribute to mental health distress is a core part of youth mental health. For example, Turner (2014) argued that determinants of suicides among Indigenous youth cannot be captured through a biomedical model of symptoms. Instead, she argues, it is necessary to look at the lasting harm of colonialism and to support communities with higher self-determination, cultural continuity, shared identity, and language revitalization efforts. From Turner’s (2014) perspective, mental wellness is a collective endeavour, not an individual one. Building on this work, Barker et al.’s (2017) synthesis posits, “A growing body of research argues that conventional interventions, largely rooted in Western individual-level behavioural change frameworks, are culturally discordant with Indigenous paradigms” (p. e208). They sum-

marize evidence recommending “culture as treatment” and holistic, community-driven responses as essential responses to the issue of youth suicide. Further, research demonstrates that when there is significant effort to improve systemic issues that contribute to student and staff distress, burnout, and mental health difficulties, long-term improvements can occur. For example, Gray et al.’s (2017) review of literature demonstrates the importance of whole-school climate and environment for the mental well-being of students and staff. In addition, there is a need to hire and train school-based mental health professionals (e.g., school social workers, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers) who have a deep understanding of culturally safe and relevant approaches to offer ongoing support for students.

Endorsing Problematic Content

When mental health programs offered by private organizations are recommended, adopted, or funded by the government, the content of these programs is effectively endorsed (likely unwittingly) by the government and risks being incorporated into and normalized in schools. Our analysis shows that many of the endorsed programs are laden with concerns, including a lack of public access to the content, poor (or no) research evidence to support the programs’ claims, and problematic content—even racist content.

First, much of the content produced by private organizations referenced by the government is not publicly available, and therefore cannot be fully accessed or reviewed by members of the public, educators, or families. This lack of transparency bars the public and professional scrutiny of content purchased with public money. One such example is the organization Sources of Strength, an American, for-profit company the mission of which is, in part, to “provide exceptional training and curriculum for youth and adults, utilizing a strength-based and upstream approach to mental health promotion and prevention of adverse outcomes like suicide, violence, bullying, and substance misuse” (Sources of Strength, n.d., Mission & Vision section). Although Sources of Strength has received provincial funding of \$200,000 over three years (2021–2024), most of the actual program content is behind a paywall and cannot be reviewed for appropriateness, cultural relevance, suicide prevention effectiveness, or research veracity. The public can review statements about the organization’s “evidence base”; however, in order to access this, one must email the organization to receive PDFs of published articles. The website offers branding resources and grant writing supports to assist in applying for funding to cover the purchase costs—all of which support corporate marketability, but do not allow for scrutiny of the program content.

A second concern is that many of the Manitoba government–recommended mental health programs we reviewed claim to be evidence-based or research-informed, including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Real Restitution, Zones of Regulation, Kimochis, and Resilience Research Centre, among others. Despite these claims, some programs lack robustly peer-reviewed content and evidence-based support for their program’s effectiveness. One specific example is SafeTALK, a government-funded suicide prevention training program run by the for-profit company LivingWorks, which claims that “over 50 peer-reviewed studies and government reports show that LivingWorks programs increase participant skills to recognize signs a person is having thoughts of suicide and to confidently intervene to help keep them safe” (LivingWorks, n.d., Evidence & Results section). Yet, a peer-reviewed systematic review of the available research on the SafeTALK program found that there was “insufficient evidence” of effectiveness, stating that SafeTALK “is not ready for wide dissemination due to the insufficient information on validity of the training materials, technical support, and quality control” (Kutcher et al., 2017, p. 383). The PAX Good Behavior Game® program, which is both government-funded and government-implemented, is described as a “universal behavioral vaccine” (Embry, 2015), promising far-reaching benefits such as “future financial success” (Paxis Institute, n.d.), as well as bullet points claiming a “20–30% reduction in the need for special education,” “50–70% reduction in mental health difficulties,” “an increase in school attendance,” and “happier families” (Paxis Institute, 2024, p. 2). Several purported benefits are not supported by the research studies and are, at best, correlational rather than causal. Although the SafeTALK and PAX programs, among others, make claims of being research-informed or evidence-based, these appear to be unsubstantiated rhetorical tropes. Moreover, there is a lack of rigorous evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of the programs with students who are Indigenous, racialized, 2SLGBTQ+, disabled, neurodiverse, and/or living in poverty. This is of particular importance, especially because these students are often most marginalized—and most harmed by—schools and their structures. Paying for-profit companies to provide mental health suicide intervention programs that do not meet even basic research standards is dangerous and irresponsible.

Our third concern is of problematic program content, specifically content that moved past the self-responsibilizing resilience rhetoric and furthered it into incorporating discriminatory discourses about marginalized groups. For example, Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) is a government-recommended training program that seeks to teach

adults to transform crisis situations into learning experiences for young people displaying challenging behaviours. The program uses language that stigmatizes, labels, and dehumanizes children and their families, describing students as “at-risk” (a common euphemism for poor and/or BIPOC youth), having “primitive and bizarre” and “self-defeating” behaviours, and living “in a hostile environment comprised of fragmented and overbearing families, alienated schools and the destructive social forces of guns, gangs, drugs, promiscuity and poverty” (Long et al., 1998, p. 4). This language not only operates from a deficit orientation (Swadener, 2010), it reinforces stereotypes and ignores colonial, racist, and structural failures embedded in our systems. The developers of LSCI accuse students of “bringing all the social ills of our society into the classrooms, causing teachers to feel overwhelmed and helpless” (Long et al., 1998, p. 4), suggesting that children and families are the reasons that classrooms and schools have become troubled spaces. This counters an important pillar of public education—that schools are accessible and equitable for all children (Henley & Young, 2008; Winton, 2022). Moreover, it detracts from the ways in which educational institutions can traumatize children and families.

In an article promoting LSCI, the writers and developer of the program—all of whom appear to be white⁴ men—claim LSCI takes an alternative approach to engaging with the “dysfunctional attitudes” (Long et al., 1998, p. 6) of youth. They state that students “often feel they are ‘picked on’ or ‘discriminated against’ even in the face of benevolent authority figures” (p. 6). Their use of the word “feel” and the quotation marks around “picked on” and “discriminated against” suggests that these experiences are not real and only exist in the students’ distorted perceptions. This approach gaslights youth, reflects deficit-oriented perspectives of some children and families, and positions the developers and educators as authority figures and saviours who can rescue youths from their “distorted” selves (p. 6). In doing so, they minimize, trivialize, and diminish students’ experiences of racism and discrimination—real and potentially trauma-inducing problems that are faced by BIPOC youth.

Through LSCI, we see how stereotypes, violent language, and racist undertones illustrate the intersections of racism, colonialism, and neo-liberalism; undertones that are

4 Stemming from W. E. B Du Bois’s campaign calling for the capitalization of those of African descent (Coleman, 2020) and the history of white supremacist groups capitalizing white to bolster racist ideologies, we capitalize Black but not white.

reflective of the settler–colonial carceral moves in education (Rudolph, 2023) and enacted in school discipline programs and practices. Colonial and racist policies and practices (historical and contemporary) have dis/relocated, disenfranchised, attempted to eradicate, and enslaved Indigenous and Black people for the purposes of resource access and capital accumulation (Bertrand, 2022; Tuck, 2013). In the present day, we see this manifest in economic inequity and overt and hidden violence against BIPOC students, perpetuated and magnified by the ideals of neo-liberalism. In school, this intersectional violence results in pushout, segregation and streaming, privatization, defunding of public schools, Eurocentric and heteronormative curriculum, and harmful “interventions” (Bertrand, 2022; Tuck, 2013). Rather than reinforcing these harmful stereotypes, mental health programs in schools ought to be addressing the ways in which oppressive policies and practices in schools can be a cause of mental health distress for marginalized youth.

Recommendations

Neo-liberal agendas construct knowledge as something that is standardized, objective, and fixed (Phelan & Janzen, 2024). The mental health programs that we reviewed are problematic and largely assume students will respond to the delivered curriculum in similar, seamless, and predictable ways. The developers of these programs also assume for a passive teacher facilitating the programs, thus overriding teachers’ relationships with students, as well as their professional wisdom and judgement. The purchasing of pre-packaged programs intended to “fix” educational problems allows governments and educational leaders to promote the appearance of responding to concerns while not actually having to do the extensive and expensive work of seeking and addressing root causes or hiring long-term experts to work in schools. As we have demonstrated, these programs are inherently decontextualized, lacking insight and knowledge of students, schools, and communities. They are intended to be neatly transmitted without concern for the particularities of children, respect for the profession, or acknowledgement of the very political nature of education (Apple, 2004). In taking a one-size-fits-all approach (e.g., VTRA), or including a multitude of approaches under one umbrella (e.g., PAX), these organizations aim to stealthily market and conveniently package parcels of programming to appeal to a broad base of global markets.

Not only does this epistemological framing collide with understandings of education that foreground relationality and particularity of students and their context, these standardized approaches privilege Eurocentric systems of knowledge that “are intertwined with western modernity, colonialism, and imperialism” (Leonardo et al., 2023, p. 106). They also reinforce, as Justice (2023) argued, the idea of school as a white good. Understood this way, it is no surprise that outsourced programs risk propagating “intersecting forms of oppression” (Bertrand, 2022), which, when developed by outsourced and often for-profit organizations, is even more problematic due to these organizations’ capitalist agendas.

When governmental responsibilities are outsourced to private organizations, schools and educators are undermined in their ability to educate and care for students. This happens in part because of the decreased funding available to employ and train professionals (including teachers, counsellors, therapists, Elders, etc.) situated *within* schools to support ongoing prevention, intervention, and relational activities with students and families. We also have concerns about the ethics and integrity of sharing data with these organizations—an issue not fully taken up in this analysis, but worthy of future exploration—especially because the misuse of data can lead to profiling already-marginalized students.

Based on our analysis, we offer the following recommendations regarding the outsourcing of public education programs. First, it is essential that each province conduct an audit on the private programs, training, and curriculum that are directly funded, adopted, or recommended, so as to ascertain the amount of public money being funneled to private organizations. In addition to determining the organizations and the resources being spent on them, this audit will also be useful in determining possible conflicts of interest. Second, a thorough critical assessment is needed of the private programs, training, and curriculum that school divisions have purchased, adopted, or recommended, to consider both the research veracity of these programs and the framing of their content.

Third, there is a need for all school divisions and provincial governments to develop and implement a critical assessment process when recommending, adopting, or funding private mental health organizations. Importantly, and despite the problems with outsourcing outlined above, we do not want to suggest that all private organizations are doing inappropriate work. Some organizations provide essential, culturally responsive, and community-based programs that are outside of the expertise of teachers and the public education system. In order to differentiate between these kinds of programs and

those that divert funds outside of the educational system or reinforce harmful messages or mindsets, we have developed a set of recommendations for government leaders and employees, policy makers, educational leaders, and educators to reflect on when considering recommending, adopting, or funding private organizations. As we have previously argued (Sanni-Anibire et al., 2025), we recommend a critical reflection process that asks:

- Does this decision move funding, personnel, or resources out of the public education system and funnel it to private organizations?
- What is the private organization and what are its interests? For example, is the private organization for-profit, or is it a non-profit, community-based organization that provides particular expertise not otherwise available in the schools?
- Does this private organization do the work that can and should be done in schools and by school-based professionals? If so, might the money be better spent on hiring teachers, school social workers, counsellors, Elders, or therapists?
- Does the private organization's program, training, or curriculum reflect and engage anti-racist, decolonizing, and equity-oriented principles? Is there sound independent research available to support the program's claims?
- Does the content of this program, training, or curriculum assign the problem, blame, or responsibility for change on students, families, or teachers (e.g., is there a focus on being "more resilient"), or does it focus on systemic changes such as developing understandings of colonialism or structural racism?

We believe that further investment is required to develop research-informed and sustainable mental health supports that are government-funded, school-based, and reflective of anti-racist, decolonizing, and equity-oriented principles to best meet the mental health needs of all students in Canadian schools. Schools need research-informed, well-designed, and appropriately funded mental health programming rather than scattershot programs. We also believe additional research is needed on the scope of the problem of outsourcing mental health programs, curriculum, and personnel in education. Given, as noted in the above Methodology section, that our findings are limited to a small subsection of existing documents created by the Manitoba government, the scope and complexity of outsourcing is likely larger in this province and across Canada than what this analysis captured. Further research that includes interviews and focus groups with existing mental

health personnel working in schools, educational staff, administrators, and, most importantly, students about their experiences with existing mental health offerings in schools is needed to better understand the barriers, strengths, and challenges in accessing supports.

Ultimately, outsourcing undermines schools' responsibility to care for and respond to students. The slew of "trauma-informed" programs and services that are recommended within government documents contain problematic content that may contribute to schools being trauma-producing experiences, rather than truly trauma-informed. Excessive investment in these programs represents attempts at superficial quick fixes, rather than a commitment to addressing the root causes of the challenges that students encounter. It also diverts funds and attention away from school-based, evidence-based, localized programming and staff who can more effectively respond to the needs of students and schools. To best take care of all our students, we have a responsibility to limit outsourcing and to fight for better support to be well-funded and created *within* our public systems.

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Appendix

Outsourced Mental Health Resources and Programs in the Manitoba Government's Education Documents and *MASS Journal*

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/ Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|---|--|----------------|----------|---|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| ADAPT Manitoba: Association for Developmental Autism Programs and Therapies | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Anaca Technologies (now XELLO) | Manitoba Sourcebook for School Guidance Counsellors (2007) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Aulneau Renewal Centre | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Boston Children's Hospital, Trauma and Community Resilience Centre | Life After War: Education as a Healing Process for Refugee and War-Affected Children (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Bridges Transition | Manitoba Sourcebook for School Guidance Counsellors (2007) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Canadian Healthy Schools Alliance | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/ Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|---|--|----------------|----------|--|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| Care for All in Education Initiative (CMHA) | Manitoba’s K–12 Action Plan (2023) | Yes | Yes | \$500,000 (2020) \$380,000 (2021) \$170,000 (2021) |
| Violence Threat Risk Assessment [VTRA] (Center for Trauma Informed Practices) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Centre for Youth Crime Prevention | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Centre on Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) – Lives in the Balance | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/ Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|---|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute, Inc. (CTRI) | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (Crisis Prevention Institute) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Developmental, Individual Differences, Relationship-Based Model (DIR and DIRFloortime) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Everyone Matters | Best Practices in School-Based Suicide Prevention: A Comprehensive Approach (2014) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Interdisciplinary National Self-Injury Network Canada | Best Practices in School-Based Suicide Prevention: A Comprehensive Approach (2014) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Kids Help Phone | Government of Manitoba News Release (01/25/23) | Yes | Yes | \$50,000 (2021) \$150,000 (2022) |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|---|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| KIDTHINK Children’s Mental Health for Children, Inc. | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Yes | \$5,000 (2022) |
| Kimochis | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Klinic Community Health | Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging (2017) | Yes | Yes | \$428,000 (2021) |
| Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| LitWorld’s Resilience Project | Life After War: Education as a Healing Process for Refugee and War-Affected Children (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| LivingWorks Education, Inc. (AS-SIST) | Manitoba Sourcebook for School Guidance Counsellors (2007) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/ Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|---|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| LivingWorks Education, Inc. (Safe-TALK) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | \$40,000 (2021) |
| Manitoba Rural Learning Consortium | Manitoba's K–12 Action Plan (2023) | Yes | Yes | \$165,000 (2011) |
| | | | | \$400,000 (2022) |
| | | | | \$600,000 (2023–2024) |
| Mount Carmel Clinic | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| PAX/ PAX Dream Makers | Government of Manitoba News Release (01/25/23) | Yes | Yes | An unspecified portion of \$2 million in funding (2015) |
| | | | | \$675,000 (2020) |
| PREVNet | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Project 11 (True North Youth Foundation) | Government of Manitoba News Release (01/25/23) | Yes | Yes | \$621,000 (2019) |
| | | | | \$207,000 (2021) |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|--|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| Qualtrica Associates | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) | Life After War: Education as a Healing Process for Refugee and War-Affected Children (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Real Restitution | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Resilience Research Centre (RRC) | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Respect Ed (Respect in School RIS/Respect Group) | Manitoba Education and Early Learning Website (No date) | Yes | Yes | \$300,000 (2012) \$300,000 (2018–2020) \$250,000 (2022) \$100,000 (2023–2024) |
| Riverbend Counselling | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/ Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|---|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| School Threat Assessment | Safe and Caring Schools: Companion Guide for Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Suspension (2023) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Seeds of Empathy/ Roots of Empathy | Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging (2017) | Yes | Yes | An unspecified portion of \$2 million in funding (2015)* |
| Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging (2017) | Yes | Yes | \$144,500 (2023) \$143,126 (2022) |
| Sources of Strength | Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging (2017) | Yes | Yes | \$100,000 (2021) \$150,000 (portion of funds; 2021)* \$100,000 (2024) |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|--|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| Strongest Families Institute | Government of Manitoba News Release (01/25/23) | Yes | Yes | \$500,000 (2019) \$600,000 (annually; 2023) |
| Studio III (Low Arousal) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Talking Oaks Counselling Services | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Teen Talk (SERC Youth Program) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Whole-School Approach to Planning for Safety and Belonging (2017) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| The International Council on Development and Learning (ICDL) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| The MEHRIT Centre (Shanker Self-Reg) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |

| Resources/Programs Referenced | Document/Source Referenced in (Year Published) | Reference Type | | |
|--|--|----------------|----------|---|
| | | Recommended? | Adopted? | Funding Amount from 2019–2024 (Year Funded) |
| The Pharos School Prevention Programmes | Life After War: Education as a Healing Process for Refugee and War-Affected Children (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| Thrival Kits (CMHA) | Final Report of the Poverty and Education Task Force (2023) | Yes | Yes | \$580,000 (2021) \$1.4 million (2021) |
| Ushindi Counseling & Consulting Services (UCCS) | Life after War: Professional Learning, Agencies, and Community Supports (2012) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| VECTOR: Virtual Resource Centre | Manitoba Sourcebook for School Guidance Counsellors (2007) | Yes | Unknown | Unknown |
| WEVAS (Working Effectively with Violent and Aggressive States) | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| Zones of Regulation | Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive Enhancing Proactive Supports to Minimize the Use of Seclusion (2021) | Yes | Yes | Unknown |
| | | | | Total: \$8,909,626 |

*Portion of funds. We do not know what percentage of the money went to the specific program listed, therefore any fund marked with an * was excluded from the total funding calculations.