

Stella's Place Partners with George Brown College to Create Mobile App to support young adults with mental health needs

June 23, 2015 – Toronto – Stella's Place, a Toronto-based young adult mental health organization, today announced it is partnering with George Brown College to create a mobile app to connect students to mental health resources.

Launching in 2016, iConnect will be a web-based platform and mobile application designed to provide young adults aged 16-29 real-time access to online mental health resources including:

- Peer-to-peer individual and group chat;
- Online counsellor chat;
- A path to face-to-face peer support and counselling at participating organizations; and
- Resources, information, counselling and tools to support mental health from participating organizations.

"This online access is critical to reaching and engaging a large cohort of young adults who otherwise suffer in silence or go undiagnosed," said Jenny Carver, Executive Director of Stella's Place. "Together with George Brown, we are taking the necessary step forward to support this group of young adults so that they can connect online, which is where many of them live," added Alicia Raimundo, Young Adult Engagement Coordinator at Stella's Place.

The app is being developed by a team of young adult partners at Stella's Place and George Brown with a goal to reach thousands of young adults in Ontario. They will be fully engaged as partners in the planning and development of iConnect to ensure it meets their needs.

"iConnect will provide a growing number of students with connections, peer support and recovery services and tools," said Georgia Quartaro, Dean of Preparatory and Liberal Studies at George Brown College. "We are excited to have found a partner in Stella's Place that is leading the path in peer-focused young adult mental health services."

The first phase of the project will focus on supporting students with mental health needs transitioning from secondary school to post-secondary education and young adults seeking services through Stella's Place.

iConnect is being funded by Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Mental Health Innovation Fund. This and other programs are moving forward because of the vision of private donors like Donna Green – Founder and President of Stella's Place – who donated one million dollars to help change the mental health landscape for young adults.

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About Stella's Place

Initiated by young adults and their families, Stella's Place will deliver core clinical mental health services in a positive, peer-driven and recovery-focused setting. Stella's Place Toronto will be the first community-based, comprehensive, integrated mental health assessment and treatment service for young adults in Canada. We will be a critical touchstone and supportive lifeline to more than 500 young adults and their families each year. Stella's Place is a registered charity and a non-profit organization. The first Stella's Place will open in Toronto in 2016, although some programs are being phased in currently. www.stellaplace.ca

About George Brown College

Toronto's George Brown College has established a reputation for equipping students with the skills, industry experience and credentials to pursue the careers of their choice. The college offers programs from its three campuses located across the downtown core, including its newest location at the Toronto waterfront, which opened in September 2012. George Brown offers 142 full-time programs and 193 continuing education certificates/designations across a wide variety of professions to a student body of over 25,800 (full-time enrolment) students, including over 3,500 international students; and over 62,800 continuing education registrants. Students can earn certificates, diplomas, postgraduate certificates, apprenticeships and degrees. www.georgebrown.ca