

SEPTEMBER 2026

FREEDCAN NEWSLETTER

The logo features the words "FREED" and "CAN" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. They are centered within a solid red circle. This red circle is itself centered within a larger white circle. The entire graphic is set against a light pink background. A thick red curved line sweeps across the left side of the image, passing behind the white circle. Another red curved line starts from the bottom right and curves upwards towards the white circle.

**FREED
CAN**

In this Issue:

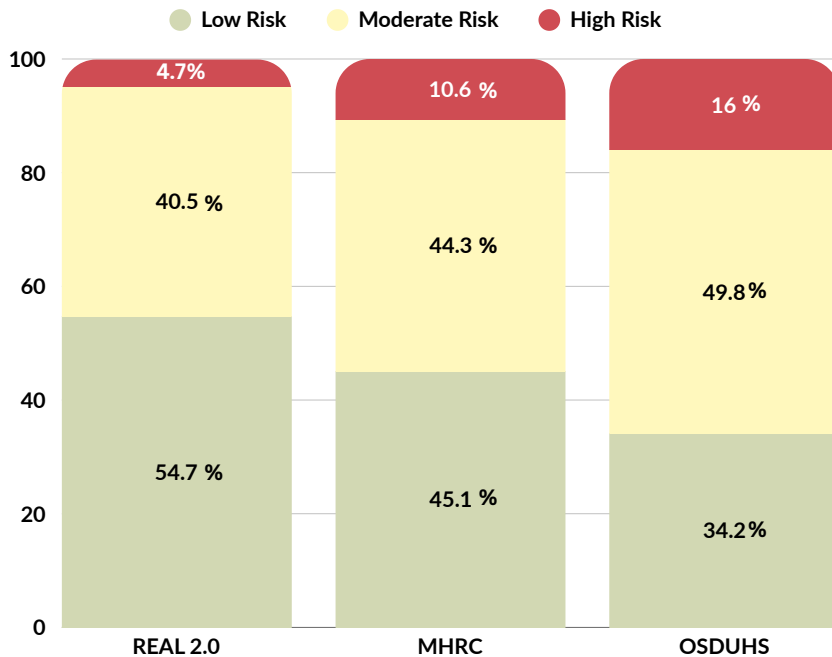
- New publication on Ottawa Disordered Eating Screen (ODES)
- New Publication from Our FREED UK Partners
- Meet our New Students
- FREEDcan Level 1 & 2 Training - August 2026 Highlights
- New Colour Vision Accessible ODES Formats
- Upcoming Training and Coaching Opportunities
- Upcoming Townhall Registration
- Psychoeducation- Preparing for Post-Secondary

Knowledge Mobilization

New publication on the Ottawa Disordered Eating Screen (ODES)

Development and Validation of the Ottawa Disordered Eating Screen (ODES): A Brief Screening Tool for Service and Surveillance

Proportion of Participants Classified as At-Risk by ODES Across Samples



REAL 2.0 = Research on Eating and Adolescent Lifestyles; MHRC = Mental Health Research Canada; OSDUHS = Ontario Student Drug Use

About the Surveillance Study

To assess utility as a screener and surveillance tool, the ODES was implemented in the: 2024 Mental Health Research Canada (MHRC) Poll 21 (n = 3,213; ages 16-65); 2023 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS; n = 10,145; ages 11-20); and the Research on Eating and Adolescent Lifestyles 2.0 study (n = 278; ages 26-31).

Obeid, N., Ryall, S., McVey, G., Bondy, S. J., Buchholz, A., Spettigue, W., Goldfield, G., Mistry, N., Drouin, S., Cooper, M., Major, S., Hamilton, H., Boak, A., Norris, M. (2026). Development and Validation of the Ottawa Disordered Eating Screen for Youth (ODES): A brief Screening Tool for Service and Surveillance. *BMC Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-026-28657-7>

We are excited to share a recent publication from the FREEDcan team: "Development and Validation of the Ottawa Disordered Eating Screen (ODES): A Brief Screening Tool for Service and Surveillance," published in *BMC Public Health*. The ODES is a brief, four-item screening tool designed to help identify individuals who may be experiencing disordered eating thoughts and behaviours. Developed to be practical and accessible, the tool has the potential to support early identification across a variety of settings, including healthcare, community services, research, and population health surveillance. This publication represents an important milestone in FREEDcan's ongoing efforts to improve the early detection of eating disorders and related concerns. By providing a simple and effective screening tool, the ODES may help connect individuals to assessment, support, and care sooner.

[VIEW PUBLICATION HERE](#)

Knowledge Mobilization

Featuring a New Publication from Our FREED
UK Partners



Weight Status and Pathways to Eating Disorder Referral From Primary Care in England and Northern Ireland

- Our UK colleagues recently published a study exploring the impact of weight status on referrals to specialist ED services, looking for referral patterns in electronic health records from more than **35 000** adults diagnosed with an eating disorder in England and Northern Ireland
- **75.8%** of adults diagnosed with EDs in primary care did not have a recorded referral to a specialist ED service
- Body weight seemed to impact referrals, particularly for anorexia nervosa, where those who were underweight were more likely to be referred than those who were not, despite prior evidence illustrating that **symptoms can be severe at any weight**
- Sex and geographic region also impacted referral rates, with potential disparities in care highlighted—for instance, **women were more likely to receive a referral than men**
- Key lessons for FREEDcan from this research include the importance of: **1) primary care provider training to improve equitable early detection of and response to EDs; 2) clear referral pathways and guidance for providers to ensure that all those who need care are appropriately referred**

We are also inspired by the methodological approach, leveraging existing datasets to gain much-needed information about existing patterns and gaps – taking existing conditions and context into account helps guide the implementation of effective screening, initial response, and early intervention for EDs.

Meet Our New Students

Welcome to the Team,
Astra Yang *she/they*

I completed my BSc (Hons) at Queen's University in Psychology, with an undergraduate thesis examining the phenomenological and psychophysiological associations between perceived social support and self-compassionate body image in trans and gender-diverse participants.

My interests in body image, natural language production, youth wellness, and community-informed science led me to pursue an MA of Experimental Psychology on the lab's FREEDcan team, seeking to identify and address gaps in young people's eating disorder early intervention pathways. I feel incredibly grateful to be a part of this field, and can't wait to see where it leads!



Beyond research, I love practicing archery, experimenting with music, and visiting museums and art galleries.

Meet Our New Students

Welcome to the Team,
Emily St-Germain *She/Her*

I am currently completing my Honours Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, French Stream, at the University of Ottawa, with an expected graduation date of April 2027. Throughout my degree, I have developed a strong interest in working with children and youth, particularly in the mental and behavioural health fields.

With a strong passion for youth mental health and early intervention, I wanted to participate in meaningful and impactful research. Given the high rates and significant impact of eating disorders in our community, I was interested in joining this lab to contribute to early intervention research.



Outside of school and research, I have a strong passion for sports. I grew up playing hockey and participating in various water sports, and I continue to stay involved in sports today. I also love hiking and travelling.



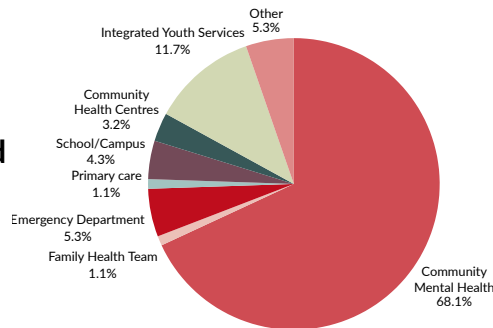
FREEDcan Level 1 & 2 Training

AUGUST 2026- BUILDING CAPACITY HIGHLIGHTS

Overview of Attendees: 58.2% from Ontario, 10.1% from BC; and 31.6% from Saskatchewan

97

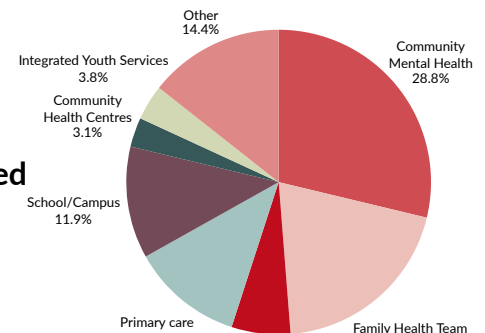
Individuals attended
Level 1 Training



Sector (n=97)
Level 1

81

Individuals attended
Level 2 Training



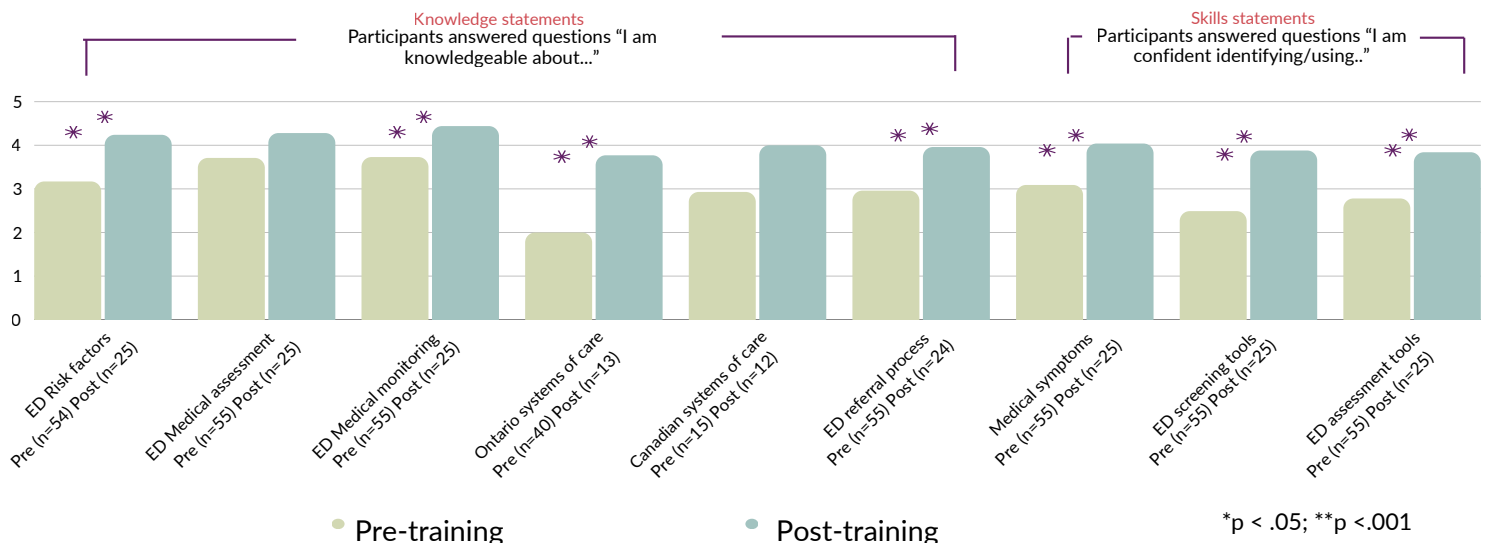
Sector (n=81)
Level 2

Shift in Knowledge and Skills

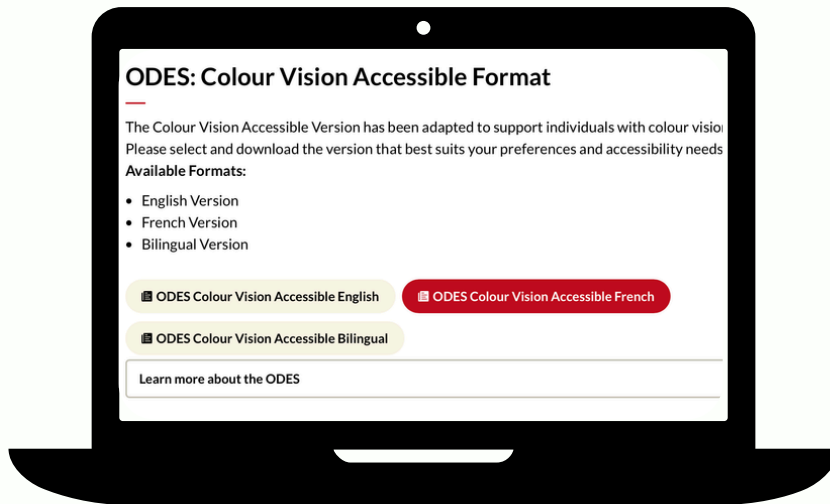
Level 1 Training: Becoming ED-Informed



Level 2 Training: Screening, Assessment and Initial Response



New on the FREEDcan Website: ODES Colour Vision Accessible Formats



We are pleased to offer a new Colour Vision Accessible Version of the ODES, adapted to support individuals with colour vision differences.

This format now includes symbols to improve accessibility while maintaining the same content and functionality as the standard version.

Available in English, French, and bilingual formats, users can select and download the version that best meets their language and accessibility needs.

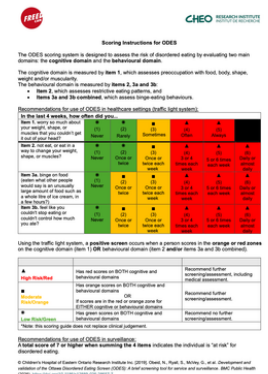
ACCESS ACCESSIBLE ODES FORMATS

Recommendations for use of ODES in healthcare settings (traffic light system):

In the last 4 weeks, how often did you...						
Item 1. worry so much about your weight, shape, or muscles that you couldn't get it out of your head?	☉ (1) Never	☉ (2) Rarely	■ (3) Sometimes	▲ (4) Often	▲ (5) Always	
Item 2. not eat, or eat in a way to change your weight, shape, or muscles?	☉ (1) Never	☉ (2) Once or twice	■ (3) Once or twice each week	▲ (4) 3 or 4 times each week	▲ (5) 5 or 6 times each week	▲ (6) Daily or almost daily
Item 3a. binge on food (eaten what other people would say is an unusually large amount of food such as a whole litre of ice cream, in a few hours?)	☉ (1) Never	■ (2) Once or twice	■ (3) Once or twice each week	▲ (4) 3 or 4 times each week	▲ (5) 5 or 6 times each week	▲ (6) Daily or almost daily
Item 3b. feel like you couldn't stop eating or couldn't control how much you ate?	☉ (1) Never	■ (2) Once or twice	■ (3) Once or twice each week	▲ (4) 3 or 4 times each week	▲ (5) 5 or 6 times each week	▲ (6) Daily or almost daily

Using the traffic light system, a **positive screen** occurs when a person scores in the **orange or red zones** on the cognitive domain (item 1) **OR** behavioural domain (item 2 **and/or** items 3a and 3b combined).

▲ High Risk/Red	Has red scores on BOTH cognitive and behavioural domains	Recommend further screening/assessment, including medical assessment.
■ Moderate Risk/Orange	Has orange scores on BOTH cognitive and behavioural domains OR If scores are in the red or orange zone for EITHER cognitive or behavioural domains	Recommend further screening/assessment.
☉ Low Risk/Green	Has green scores on BOTH cognitive and behavioural domains	Recommend no further screening/assessment.
*Note: this scoring guide does not replace clinical judgement.		



UPCOMING TRAINING & COACHING OPPORTUNITIES

Training

04

November

FREEDcan Level 1- Become Eating Disorder Informed: Early Intervention for Eating Disorders

FREEDcan's Level 1 foundational training designed for all staff and providers working in youth-serving treatment settings (ages 8–25), including community mental health and addiction services, family health teams, primary care, integrated youth services, community health centers, campus mental health, etc.

Click here to register and for other session details:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/-GqHzLXQrwxwgqllgiHg](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?from=addon&url=https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?from=addon&url=https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/-GqHzLXQrwxwgqllgiHg)



25

November

FREEDcan Level 2: Screening, Assessment, and Initial Response

FREEDcan's Level 2: Screening, Assessment, and Initial Response training is designed for providers working within youth-serving community settings who are involved in assessment and/or care delivery for young people with eating disorders or disordered eating.

Click here to register and for other session details:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/LTMoSw_UQg2yxOsJdZPENQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?from=addon&url=https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?from=addon&url=https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/LTMoSw_UQg2yxOsJdZPENQ)



Coaching Sessions

21

October

16

December

Level 1 & 2 Training: Virtual Coaching Session Series

This coaching session is for staff and providers working in youth (ages 8-25) treatment settings who have completed FREEDcan Level 1 and 2 training

Click here for the Zoom link and other session details:

<https://events.freedcan.ca/training/detail/2026-06-24-1300-Level-1-amp-2-Training-Virtual-Coaching-Session-Se>



Visit our [website](#) for more details and to register for upcoming training and coaching sessions

Semiannual TOWNHALL MEETING

Join us on

December 2, 2026

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm (EST)

Who is this for?

Join colleagues and partners from across the FREEDcan Network, including researchers, clinicians, pilot site teams, staff, community organizations, and youth and family partners, as we share updates, explore emerging science, and discuss future directions.



Explore, Discuss & Shape What's Next

Key Discussion Topics

- Key updates and progress across FREEDcan initiatives
- Current and upcoming Network priorities
- Emerging science and insights related to early intervention for eating disorders
- Lessons learned and updates from pilot sites
- Developments in digital health and resource access
- Opportunities to ask questions, share perspectives, and help shape future directions

Scan to Register:



Register at this link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/VUsMD1ILTJCGgf_hxWbXPA

**REGISTER
NOW!**

Psychoeducation

Preparing for Post-Secondary

Starting post-secondary is exciting, with lots of opportunities and new experiences. But change can sometimes bring challenges and there are common difficulties faced by people recovering from an eating disorder. Whether you are starting post-secondary for the first time, or returning after taking some time out, this guide aims to give you tips about how to cope. Then again, being at post-secondary is not all about worries and problems, there are so many things to look forward to, so we have focused on all the positives too. The original guide was developed in the UK, and it has been adapted to fit the Canadian context.

Le commencement des études postsecondaires est une expérience passionnante qui offre de nombreuses possibilités et de nouvelles expériences. Cependant, le changement apporte son lot de défis et les personnes qui se remettent d'un trouble alimentaire sont souvent confrontées à des difficultés. Que vous commenciez vos études postsecondaires pour la première fois ou que vous les repreniez après un temps d'absence, ce guide est conçu pour vous aider à gérer la situation. Les études postsecondaires ne sont pas que du négatif! Cette étape de la vie offre plein d'occasions à saisir, donc nous nous sommes aussi concentrés sur les éléments positifs. Le guide original a été élaboré au Royaume-Uni et a été adapté au contexte canadien.



[VIEW IN ENGLISH](#)



[VOIR EN FRANÇAIS](#)

Call for Content and Network Sign-Up!

Share Your Work!

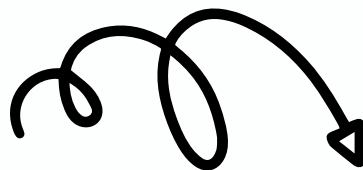
Have articles, insights, or updates related to the FREEDcan model? We'd love to feature them in our quarterly newsletter! Send your content to freedcan@freedcan.ca.

Stay Connected with FREEDcan: Our recorded events are located on our website and are available to all network members. Please email freedcan@freedcan.ca to receive the password for our recordings.

Not part of our network?

Join our network to receive our quarterly newsletters!

[FREEDcan Network](#)



SEPTEMBER 2026

FREEDCAN NEWSLETTER



**FREED
CAN**

Thank You



Email

freedcan@freedcan.ca



Website

<https://www.freedcan.ca>

CHEO

RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE