

# **A Qualitative Comparison of Resilience-Based Programs within Canadian Military Colleges**

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Late adolescence and young adulthood are critical developmental periods for the onset of many mental health conditions. Considering the inherent stressors of Canadian Military Colleges (CMCs) Naval and Officer Cadet (N/OCdt) training programs, N/OCdts enrolled in CMCs may be at an increased risk for the development of acute, and perhaps chronic, mental health outcomes. A surge of literature over the past decade has supported the notion that enhancing mental fitness and resilience improves performance and reduces negative behaviours in various environmental contexts. In addition, military organization worldwide are adopting resilience-based programs into their training curricula. Currently, N/OCdts in CMCs are provided with opportunities to complete courses/modules within two separate resilience-based programs in order to encourage and promote mental wellness (i.e., ‘Road to Mental Readiness’ and the ‘Resilience Plus Program’). Using criteria outlined in the Best Practice Networks environmental scan of existing post-secondary mental health strategies across Canada, we conducted a qualitative comparison of these resilience-based programs with the hopes of better understanding mental health resources available to CMCs students. Both resiliency-based programs appear complementary to one another in shaping well-rounded and resilient leaders. Recommendation for the development of CMCs’ mental health strategy include surveying the mental health of N/OCdts, and continued development of the Resilience Plus program alongside psychological first aid/education and awareness training programs.