

LET'S TALK

Mental Wellness

WITH OUR KIDS!



PERSONAL WELLNESS 6-9
MENTAL FITNESS STRAND

Positive Mental Health

BUILD A STRONG SUPPORTIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP THAT PROMOTES POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUTH.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Youth need to know they are safe, cared for and supported.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Spend time with your child regularly.
- Model positive strategies for dealing with your own mental health such as regular exercise, speaking with professionals when needed, and talking about your own feelings.
- Encourage regular sleep.

HELP YOUR CHILD DISCOVER THEIR UNIQUE STRENGTHS, INTERESTS, AND ABILITIES.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Youth need to explore new interests to discover their strengths and meet new people with similar interests.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Make note of new things that seem to interest your teen and encourage them to explore this area.
- Provide opportunities to use new skills.
- Support your teen whenever possible in the pursuit of interests and hobbies.
- Celebrate achievements.

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TALK ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS AND MODEL HOW TO MANAGE EMOTIONS.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This demonstrates acceptance and interest in their mental health and provides strategies for managing emotions and building resiliency.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Ask questions to clarify your understanding of how they are feeling.
- Don't feel like you need to have the answers. Sometimes just listening can lighten the burden.
- Model and teach strategies that can lessen anxiety such as:
 - Deep breathing techniques
 - Reading or listening to music / playing when anxious
 - Spending time with a pet
 - Going for a walk or other form of exercise

ENGAGE YOUR CHILD IN DECISION MAKING AND OVERCOMING SETBACKS.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

By including them in small decisions, they will learn the skills needed to make bigger decisions in the future. They will learn how to cope with obstacles.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Provide choice when possible and appropriate.
- Include them in discussions about household rules, family vacations, care of pets, etc.
- Assist them in making decisions by discussing the impact of a decision on themselves and others and exploring alternatives.
- Reframe challenges into opportunities to explore an otherwise unknown option.
- Point out that setbacks teach them that there are other ways to achieve their goals.

Mental Health Needs

MONITOR FOR SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This allows you to provide your teen with mental health support as soon as possible.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Be aware of changes in weight, eating habits, obsessions with weight or food, and/or changes in sleep habits.
- Be aware that mood swings, social withdrawal and lack of motivation, although more common in teens, can be a sign of distress.
- Be aware of the signs: [Canadian Mental Health Association](#)

DISCUSS THE STIGMA OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Parents can help uncover incorrect assumptions behind the stigma.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Educate teens on the difference between everyday stress and a mental health diagnosis.
- Share real-life examples of mental health struggles and examples of successful coping strategies.
- Model caring and acceptance.

KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP AND TO ACCESS SERVICES.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Knowing this information ahead of time can lessen the wait time for mental health supports.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

Explore these services:

- Child and Youth Team through the school Guidance Office
- [Kids Help Phone](#) 1-800-668-6868
- [The Link Program](#)
- [Chimo Helpline](#) 1-800-667-5005
- [Canadian Mental Health Association NB](#)
- [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health \(CAMH\)](#)
- [Mood Disorders Society of Canada](#)
- [Stress vs. Anxiety Video](#)

FOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS RELATED TO POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH:

COMPETENCE

The need to feel that we have strengths and weaknesses that are recognized.

AUTONOMY

The need for personal freedom to make choices and control our own behaviour.

RELATEDNESS

The need to belong and connect with others.

RELEVANCE

Students perceive the things we ask them to do as being in their own self-interest.

