

Mental Health Support Resources for Learning Continuity Grades 7-12



Figure 1



A Message from your GSACRD Voice Team

This resource was created and prepared for you by GSACRD Voice.

We are a team of Mental Health Capacity Builders that work to promote positive mental health in children, youth, and families within the Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools in the communities of Morinville and Legal. We believe that mental health and emotional wellbeing can be developed, nurtured, and supported through school-based and community mental health promotion, prevention, and education.

This resource provides a collection of information and ideas to raise awareness, increase knowledge, and build personal and interpersonal skills to empower families in their pursuit of health and happiness. While we know there is a large amount of information in this document, we have organized it in a way so that you can ***‘take what you need, when you need it’***. Use the table of contents to link you to the page of information you may be needing whenever you see fit!

For more information on our team and the work we do within our schools and community, please visit our Instagram page **@gsacrd_voice** and Facebook page at **@gsacrdvoice**. You can always contact our Program Manager, Lauren Chow (lchow@gsacrd.ab.ca), should you have any questions.

Thank you!

Sincerely,
Your GSACRD Voice team
Lauren, Brittany, Caitlin, & Deanna



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Your Mental Health and COVID-19

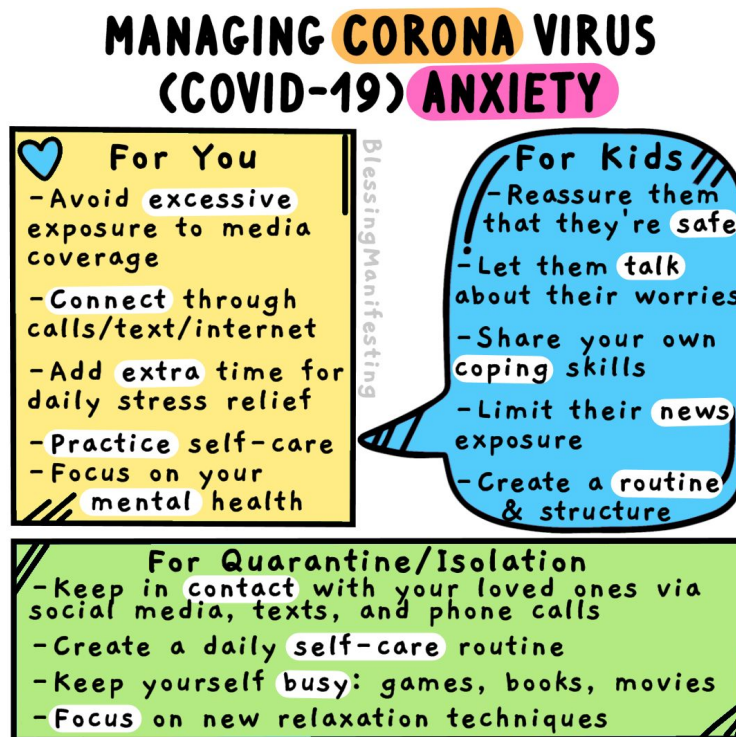


Figure 2

In uncertain times, it becomes more than essential to take care of our mental health. This section provides mental health tips specific to COVID-19. Topics include how to take action, establishing a routine, self-care, limiting exposure to social media and news outlets, how to help others, and how to talk about COVID-19.

** To find more general information in regards to your mental health, see [Your Mental Health \(General\)](#), starting on page 16.*

Take Action!

Here are some things you can do not only to *avoid getting sick*,
but to help others stay healthy as well!

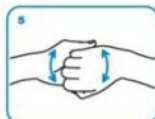
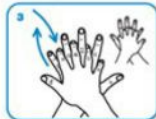
★ Wash Your Hands!

Washing your hands is very important to help prevent the spread of illnesses and to keep yourself healthy. See the following graphics, provided by Alberta Health Services, for correct handwashing protocol.

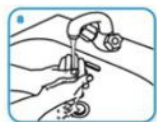
How to Wash your Hands *Alberta Health Services (2019)*



- Roll up long sleeves and push up any wrist accessories
- Wet hands with warm water
- Apply enough soap to cover surfaces of the hands



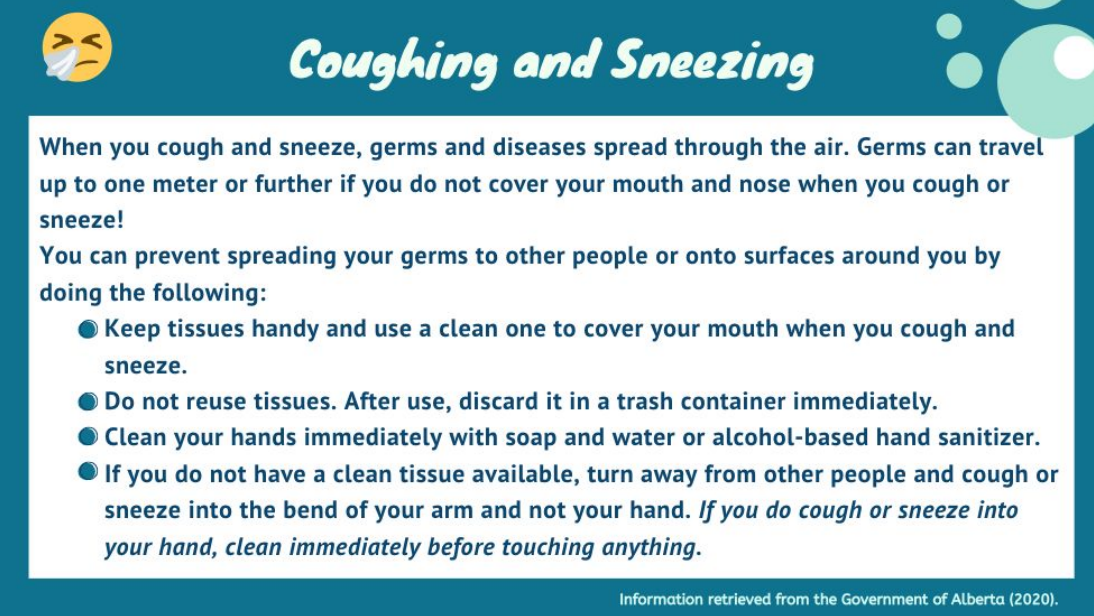
- Vigorously rub soap over palms, backs of hands and wrists
- Include space between fingers, fingertips and thumbs
- Procedure should take 15 to 30 seconds



- Rinse under warm, running water
- Pat hands dry with disposable towel
- Turn tap off with the disposable towel

★ Cover your Nose and Mouth when Coughing and Sneezing!

Did you know germs can travel more than 2 meters from your mouth?! That is one reason why it is so important to cover our nose and mouth when we sneeze and cough. See the following guidelines for coughing and sneezing provided by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.



Coughing and Sneezing

When you cough and sneeze, germs and diseases spread through the air. Germs can travel up to one meter or further if you do not cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze!


You can prevent spreading your germs to other people or onto surfaces around you by doing the following:

- Keep tissues handy and use a clean one to cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze.
- Do not reuse tissues. After use, discard it in a trash container immediately.
- Clean your hands immediately with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- If you do not have a clean tissue available, turn away from other people and cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm and not your hand. *If you do cough or sneeze into your hand, clean immediately before touching anything.*

Information retrieved from the Government of Alberta (2020).

★ Keep your Home Clean!

Germs have a funny way of sticking around on surfaces that are not regularly cleaned. Take some time to clean and disinfect your living space to get rid of pesky germs and reduce the risk of sickness in the house!



Keeping your Home Clean

Increase daily cleaning and disinfection of common areas and high touch surfaces. Some examples of high touch surfaces in the home include (but are not limited to):

- doorknobs
- kitchen, cabinet, and microwave handles
- countertops, kitchen table, desktops
- lightswitches
- washrooms

(1) First, clean the area so that it is ready to be disinfected. Cleaning refers to the removal of visible dirt, grime and impurities. Cleaning does not kill germs but helps remove them from the surface.

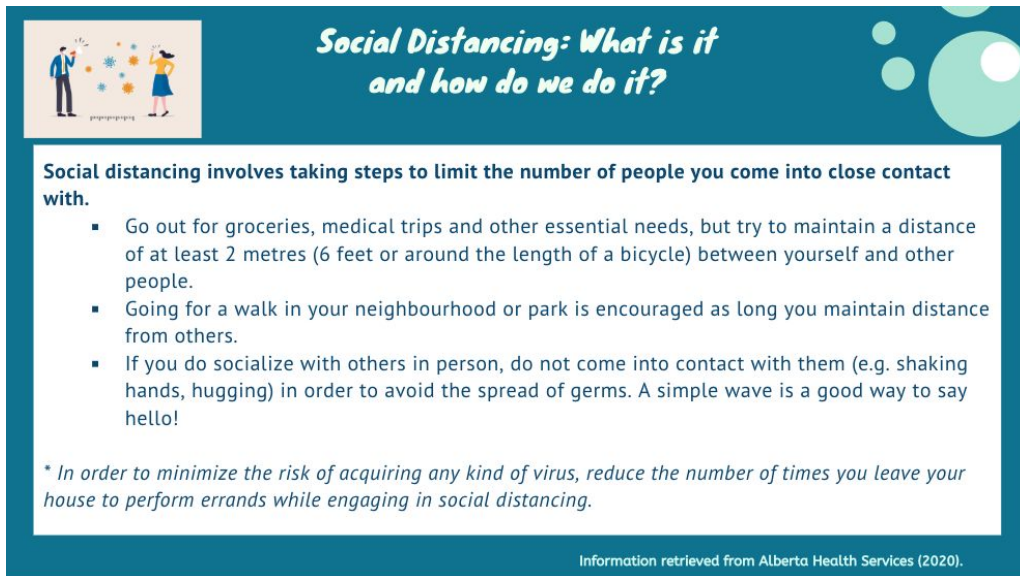
(2) Next, use a disinfectant on the cleaned surface. Disinfecting refers to using chemical to kill germs on surfaces. This is most effective after surfaces are cleaned. Both steps are important to reduce the spread of infection. Be sure to follow the instructions on the label to disinfect effectively. Alternatively, you can prepare a bleach water solution with 100 ml of unscented household bleach per 900 ml of water.

** Be sure to use take the appropriate precautions when using chemicals, such as bleach, for cleaning and disinfecting.*

Information retrieved from Alberta Health Services (2020).

★ *Practice Social Distancing!*

Social distancing is another way we as individuals can help prevent the spread of germs and viruses. See the blue graphic on the following page for an explanation of what social distancing is and for some ideas on how to take part in order to keep the world a healthier place.



The graphic is a blue rectangular box with a white border. In the top left corner, there is a small illustration of two people standing apart, with colorful dots representing germs or viruses between them. The title "Social Distancing: What is it and how do we do it?" is written in a white, stylized font in the top right. The main body of the graphic contains text in white and blue. It starts with a bold statement: "Social distancing involves taking steps to limit the number of people you come into close contact with." This is followed by a bulleted list of three items. At the bottom, there is a note in italics. The footer of the graphic says "Information retrieved from Alberta Health Services (2020)." in small white text.

Social distancing involves taking steps to limit the number of people you come into close contact with.

- Go out for groceries, medical trips and other essential needs, but try to maintain a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet or around the length of a bicycle) between yourself and other people.
- Going for a walk in your neighbourhood or park is encouraged as long you maintain distance from others.
- If you do socialize with others in person, do not come into contact with them (e.g. shaking hands, hugging) in order to avoid the spread of germs. A simple wave is a good way to say hello!

** In order to minimize the risk of acquiring any kind of virus, reduce the number of times you leave your house to perform errands while engaging in social distancing.*

Information retrieved from Alberta Health Services (2020).

Additional Videos and Information:

- Hand Washing/Corona Song from Vietnam: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Btull3oArQw&feature=youtu.be>
- TikTok Corona Hand Dance from Vietnam: https://www.instagram.com/p/B8wTW_BllKj/?utm_source=ig_embed
- *Centre for Disease Control and Prevention:*
 - Fight Germs! Wash your Hands!: <https://youtu.be/eZw4Ga3jg3E>
 - What You Need to Know About Handwashing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d914EnpU4Fo>
- South China Morning Post - Animated Match-burning Video to Show Social Distancing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Hi9-5F2zW4>
- Alberta Health Services - Hand Hygiene: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page6426.aspx>
- World Health Organization - Hand Hygiene:
[https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Hand Hygiene Why How and When Brochure.pdf](https://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Hand+Hygiene+Why+How+and+When+Brochure.pdf)



Establish a Routine

Having a routine provides a structure that youth can rely on. This creates a sense of safety, reassurance, and self-control. Having structured routines helps them to feel confident and secure in how their world works, and teaches youth responsibility. Following these patterns helps students to physically and mentally prepare for any transitions and changes in their day. Here is an example of a schedule you could help set up with any student in your home, or if you are the student, try to build your own! Remember to adjust based on grade and course hours.


Course Hours/Grade:

Grade 7-9: 10 hours/week

Grade 10-12: 3 hours/course per week

You can google “daily schedule template” to find a blank copy to print or here is a blank copy you can start with: [Daily Schedule Template](#)

Time	Activity
Before 9:00 am	<p>Wake up, get dressed, and eat a healthy, nutritious breakfast. → <i>While an everyday pyjama party sounds fun - getting dressed for the day sets us up for productivity and success!</i></p> <p>List 3 things you are grateful for each morning. You can write them down, tell them to someone in your family, and challenge your loved ones to do the same. During this time, focus on these feelings of gratitude that you have. This time should be focused on connecting with loved ones in your home and self-care.</p>
9:00 am to 10:00 am	Education and activities provided by teachers.
10:00 am to 10:15 am	<p>Break time!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Go outside for 15 minutes - enjoy the sun and fresh air● Find a meditation/yoga video on YouTube <p>→ <i>For more ideas on activities, see Practice Self-Care starting on page 10, or Self Care Activities, starting on page 20 of this resource.</i></p>
10:15 am to 11:30 am	Education and activities provided by teachers.
11:30 am to 12:00 pm	<p>Connect!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Call or facetime a loved one● Connect over text or the internet.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play games or online games with family/friends.
12:00 am to 12:45 pm	<p>Lunch Break - eat a healthy lunch that will make you feel energized and balanced!</p> <p>→ Does your plate match the healthy plate model?? Look it up in the Healthy Eating on page 17!</p>
12:45 to 1:15 pm	<p>Take some time for self-care. Try reading a novel, work on an art project, or listen to music.</p>
1:15 pm to 2:15 pm	<p>Do some physical activity! Try a YouTube video, such as Yoga with Adriene or POPSUGAR fitness.</p> <p>→ If you want more time, combine this block with the previous for some extra self-care!</p> <p>→ For ideas, check out Physical Activity (Healthy Habits) on page 18, or Physical Activity (Self-Care) starting on page 24.</p>
2:15 pm to 3:30 pm	<p>Education and activities provided by teachers.</p>
3:30 pm to 4:00 pm	<p>Help around the home!</p> <p>Learn how to do some life skills activities such as laundry, cleaning, or organizing. Helping out your families around the home will increase feelings of support and connection.</p>
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm	<p>Help prepare a healthy dinner!</p> <p>→ For recipes and cooking tutorials, see Cooking, starting on page 40.</p> <p>Ensure to eat dinner altogether as a family. Mealtime together will provide opportunities to discuss your day and do an activity called “Highs and Lows”. You can do this activity where each person tells everyone one “high” point of their day (their favourite part of their day) and one “low” point of their day (their least favourite part of their day). Let everyone express their worries and fears. Always reassure everyone in your family that they are safe.</p> <p>These open family conversations can create a sense of safety, support, love and connection during times that are uncertain.</p>
After 6:00 pm	<p>Turn off electronics, limit TV/News footage for the evening</p> <p>→ Try playing a board game together as a family, watching a movie, going for a walk, or engaging in a workout!</p>

Practice Self-Care

Self-care is about making decisions and taking action with your own health in mind. Feelings of stress (upset stomach, tightness in chest, shortness of breath, unable to focus) are often signs that you should try engaging in some form of self-care to help relieve those feelings. COVID-19 has brought out many feelings of stress and anxiousness, and in times such as these, it is important to find healthy ways of coping with stress. Headspace, from the National Youth Mental Health Foundation in Australia, provided a list of things you can do to keep a healthy headspace while coping with the stresses of COVID-19 (see graphic to the right - Graphic provided by Headspace, National Youth Mental Health Foundation (2020).



Figure 3

For Headspaces' list of 7 Tips for a Healthy Headspace please visit:

<https://headspace.org.au/tips/>

There are many different activities you can do to engage in self-care, like art, sports, or reading! Check out [Self-Care](#) on page 20 for a non-exhaustive list of some self-care activities that you can do on your own or with the family!

Tips to maintain a healthy headspace during this time

- 1** Be mindful of exposure to information through stories, traditional and social media. It can be helpful to take a break from the 24-hour news cycle
- 2** Do things that make you feel safe and connected, and be with those who are helpful to your wellbeing
- 3** Engage in activities that promote a sense of calm and feeling grounded (use of alcohol and other drugs can be counterproductive with this)
- 4** Our [7 tips for a healthy headspace](#) demonstrate simple and effective things that can help people to create and maintain a healthy headspace, irrespective of whether they have been affected by COVID-19 or not
- 5** It can help to talk with a trusted adult if it all feels a bit much.

For more information and tips for young people affected by stress related to coronavirus (COVID-19), check out: <https://headspace.org.au/young-people/how-to-cope-with-stress-related-to-covid-19/>

Limit Social Media & News Exposure

Constant information on COVID-19 can cause anxiety and stress in anyone. It is important to stay informed as the COVID-19 pandemic is very serious, but did you know constantly exposing yourself to information, updates, and news stories can negatively affect your mental health? Here are a few things to keep in mind when rethinking your exposure to social media and news regarding COVID-19:



- ❖ ***Cut back on the amount of time you spend on social media and the news.*** Set a goal to only check updates once or twice a day. Also, change the settings on your automatic daily updates to match your goal (i.e. automatic updates 1-2 times a day).
- ❖ ***Try to focus on information that helps you take practical steps to protect yourself and your family.*** Think about what the needs of your family are, and take in the information that is relevant (i.e. when and how to engage in social distancing, when and how to self-isolate, and how to shop for groceries).
- ❖ ***When reading up on COVID-19, stick to trusted, verified news sources.*** Some trusted news sources include:
 - Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>
 - Government of Alberta: <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>
 - World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/>
 - Alberta Health: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>
- ❖ ***If you don't want to discuss it, don't!*** Some people might feel better discussing their stresses and anxious feelings surrounding COVID-19. For others though, these discussions might increase feelings of stress and anxiousness. If you are the latter, it is okay to tell family, friends, and co-workers that you don't want to participate in the discussion. Keep in mind this does not mean you should ignore all news and important messages. It means to keep your mental health at the forefront of your mind and recognize when you need space from this stressful topic.
- ❖ ***Be mindful of your conversations with others surrounding COVID-19.*** As mentioned in the previous point, some people will not want to constantly talk about COVID-19 with others. If you do feel at ease discussing your stresses and anxious feeling regarding COVID-19, be mindful that though it feels okay for you, it might not feel okay for others. Respect others' wishes to distance themselves from such discussions should they choose to do so.

In summation, when it comes to COVID-19, it is important to take in the information that you and your family need, while cutting down on the excess. That way, you are not ignoring the situation altogether, but are keeping making your mental health a priority.

Help Others

Helping others is a great way to promote your own positive mental health! Here are some specific strategies for helping others when it comes to COVID-19:

- **Support local businesses and nonprofits.**
 - Donate to your local food bank or order takeout from a local restaurant.
- **Check-in and offer assistance to at-risk neighbours.**
 - Older people and those with medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease, may be more vulnerable and require help.
- **Protect others from getting sick!**
 - Wash your hands and cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- **Self-isolate if you are sick!**
 - Avoid contact with others if you are experiencing fever and cold or flu-like symptoms.
 - For information on self-isolation, check out the following link:
<https://www.alberta.ca/self-isolation.aspx>
- **Take only what you need when shopping for groceries.**
 - We all need supplies at home, but excessive stockpiling makes it difficult for everyone else. If one person loads up on something, that leaves less for everyone else, including those who are unable to access items on a regular basis. Stockpiling also increases costs for everyone! Aim to get groceries for 1-2 weeks at a time. That way, there will be enough for everyone.
- **Be kind to yourself and others!**
 - Currently, there is a lot of stress to go around. A smile can go a long way whether you are giving or receiving! Do what you can to help, and always choose to be kind!



Figure 4

Talking About COVID-19 - For Parents

It is normal to feel scared and anxious about COVID-19 and how it may impact our health and the health of our loved ones. There is also a lot of uncertainty right now about how it will change our daily lives, including participation in school, work, and other community-based activities. As a result, it is important to be kind to ourselves and to those around us as we navigate the uncertainty together. Talking about our thoughts and feelings, and being supportive of others is an important step in protecting our mental and physical health. However, sometimes it can be challenging to know where to start, so we have included some resources to help. See the list below for some ways to approach the COVID-19 discussion with your teen.

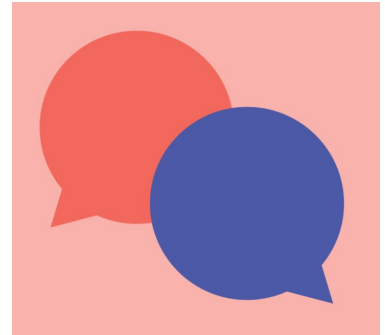


Figure 5

Dr. Laura Markham Helps Kids Manage Coronavirus Fears

Renee Jain, MAAP, founder of GoZen! spends some time interviewing clinical psychologist Dr. Laura Markham on how kids and parents can ask and answer questions around coronavirus. Check out the following link for the full scoop!

★ https://youtu.be/IV_5qliG4NM

Kids Health.org - Coronavirus (COVID-19): How to Talk to Your Child

To learn more about how to talk to your kids and family, click on the following links:

★ <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-how-talk-child.html>

★ <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/coronavirus-landing-page.html?ref=search>

AHSChannel - Helping Teenagers Struggling with the Stress of COVID-19

For caregiver advice from Dr. Nicholas Mitchell on how to help deal with COVID-19, click on the following link:

★ https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLi1tOF1l5ZoUVdu5tVzAqjOxblGbEXr9q&time_continue=29&v=92W03F4BROc&feature=emb_logo

For more general ideas on how to talk to your teen regarding other mental health topics, check out [Talking Mental Health with Your Teen](#) on page 44.

COVID-19 Public Resources

Here is a non-exhaustive list of online COVID-19 resources available to you and your family.

- **Health Link (811)** - Free advice from healthcare professionals, for COVID-19 related questions:

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/link/index.html>

** Dial 811 to speak directly to a healthcare professional*



- **AHS Online Self-Assessment** - Use this tool to determine if you need to call 811 to get tested for COVID-19: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>
- **AHS Information for Albertans** - The most up to date information for Albertans regarding COVID-19: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16997.aspx>
- **My Health Alberta Symptom Checker** - Review current symptoms on the interactive symptom checker: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/health/Pages/Symptom-Checker.aspx>
- **Government of Canada COVID-19 Information** - Up to date information, including updates, prevention and risk, symptoms and treatment, and travel advice: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

For general [Mental Health Resources](#), see pages 47 and 48.



Other Information

For more information on how you can help your child and family during this time, please click on the following link (provided by Alberta Health Services, 2020):

[Caregiver Considerations around COVID-19 \(AHS\)](#)



Healthy Albertans.
Healthy Communities.
Together.



Your Mental Health (General)



Figure 6

“Mental health is **more** than the *absence* of a mental health condition or illness: it is a positive sense of well-being, or the capacity to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. Mental health impacts each and every one of us. We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health.”

- Canadian Mental Health Association, 2020



The following section provides many different ways in which anyone can develop their positive mental health. Some strategies we have provided to help with improving mental health include developing healthy habits, engaging in self-care, doing fun activities, how to talk about mental health with the family, where to access supports and services, as well as some additional resources.

Healthy Habits

“Healthy habits harbour happiness.”

- Zero Dean

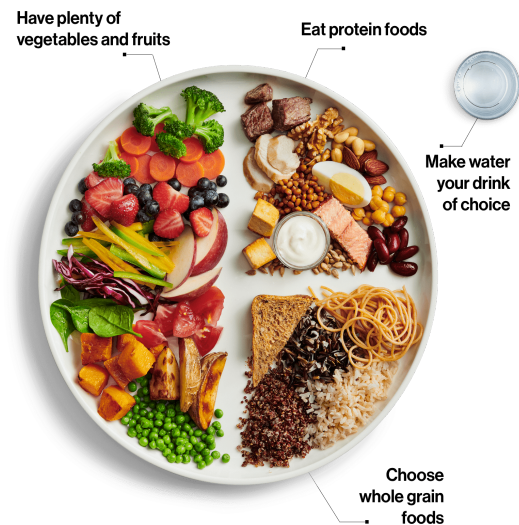
Developing healthy habits is the key to living a long and healthy life. Good habits can improve your physical and mental wellbeing (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2020). In this section, you'll find important information on healthy eating, physical activity, and sleep.

1) Healthy Eating

Eating a nutritious diet is an important part of maintaining both our physical and mental health. It helps give us energy, feel good, and think clearly. Make it a habit to choose healthy foods, including vegetables and fruits, whole grains and plant-based proteins. While choosing foods, try to limit processed foods with added sugar, sodium and saturated fat. Be sure to drink plenty of water as well to help support body and brain function.

The Canadian Food Guide provides tips on how to eat a healthy, balanced diet. By filling half our plate with vegetables and fruit, a quarter with proteins, and a quarter with whole-grain foods, we can help support our overall wellbeing. We can also support healthy eating habits by choosing foods that we enjoy and by taking the time to cook and eat with others.

For more information on healthy eating and following the food guide, please visit: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>



For healthy recipes that you can prepare with your family, see [Cooking](#) in the self-care section on page 40.

2) Physical Activity

Being active every day is essential for proper growth and development in youth. It is also a great way to protect your physical and mental health. It helps us feel energized and healthy, builds strong muscles and bones, improves self-esteem, reduces stress, leads to better sleep, and improves our focus. Physical activity also releases endorphins, which are chemicals in the body that are known to improve mood and happiness.

The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for Youth:

Guidelines



For health benefits, youth aged 12-17 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. This should include:



Vigorous-intensity activities at least 3 days per week.



Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week.



More daily physical activity provides greater health benefits.

Moderate aerobic activity:

- ❖ Makes you breathe harder and your heart beat faster. You should be able to talk, but not sing. Examples include walking quickly, skating, bike riding and skateboarding.

Vigorous aerobic activity:

- ❖ Makes you breathe so hard, you won't be able to say more than a few words without needing to catch your breath. Examples include running, basketball, soccer and cross-country skiing.

Strengthening activity:

- ❖ Build and strengthen your muscles and bones. Examples include push-ups and sit-ups, lifting weights, climbing stairs, yoga and riding a bike.

For more information on the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines, please visit:

<https://csepguidelines.ca/children-and-youth-5-17/> and www.publichealth.gc.ca/paguide

For ideas on how to get active, please see [Physical Activity](#) in the Self Care section on page 24.

3) Sleep

Everyone needs the right amount of sleep to maintain mental and physical health. Sleep is also especially important in youth because of its role in brain and body development. Good quality sleep helps us focus, make good decisions, manage our emotions, and learn information. Not getting enough sleep is known to negatively impact mood and ability to think clearly. Without sleep, we also would not have the energy needed to practise other healthy habits, like engaging in physical activity.



Children ages 5 to 13 years should get between **9 to 11 hours** of sleep/night.

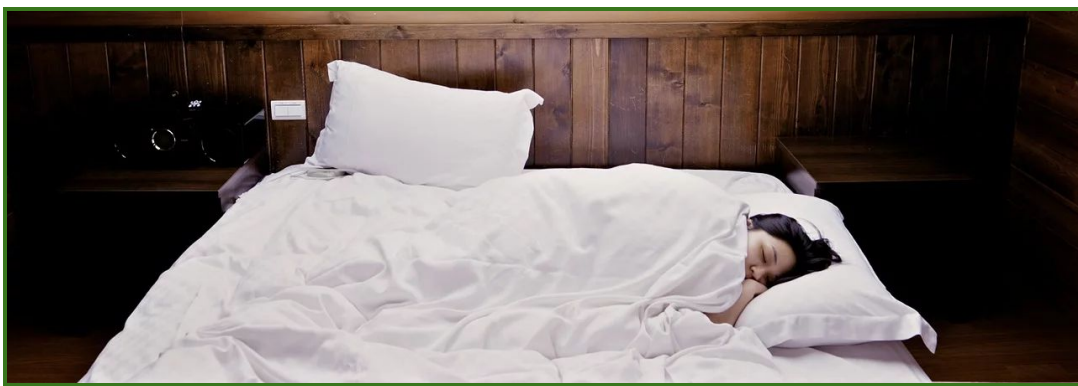
Children ages 14 to 17 years should get between **8 to 10 hours** of sleep/night.

Building healthy sleep habits:

- ❖ Make time for sleep.
- ❖ Maintain a sleep schedule with a set bedtime and wake up time.
- ❖ Create a comfortable sleep environment that is cool, quiet and dark.
- ❖ Reduce distractions, such as loud noises and bright lights.
- ❖ Avoid using electronic devices, such as a television, smartphone or computer, at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- ❖ Engage in regular physical activity throughout the day.

For more information on sleep for teens, please visit:

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/teens-and-sleep>



Self-Care

Self-Care is a broad term that encompasses anything that you do to take care of yourself. In this section, we provide many different ways you can engage in positive self-care.

1) Mindfulness

Mindfulness happens when we are fully engaged in the present moment. It involves being aware and accepting of your thoughts, emotions and environment. If you are feeling anxious or afraid, be aware of your worrying thoughts and the sensations in your body, such as your heart beating faster. Try not to judge these thoughts or sensations, just notice them and then let them go. These mindfulness techniques will help calm the body and focus the mind:

Deep breathing:

Starting in the middle, go up to the left and trace the left portion of the 8 with your finger while you breathe in.

When you get to the middle of the 8 again, breathe out while you trace the right part of the 8 with your finger.



Figure 7

Grounding with your senses:

Use this coping strategy when you feel anxious or stressed. Take a deep breath and tune into your body and the environment around you.

Focus on your five senses and try to identify:

- ❖ 5 things you can see
- ❖ 4 things you can feel
- ❖ 3 things you can hear
- ❖ 2 things you can smell
- ❖ 1 thing you can feel





Guided Relaxation:

Use this guided relaxation script to calm your body and mind. It can be read by a family member or a friend, or you can record yourself reading the script and play it back whenever you want.

Guided Relaxation



"Beach Relaxation"

Close your eyes and bring yourself to a calm, quiet place in your mind. Just stay here and relax for a few moments.

Breathe deeply and comfortably and notice how wonderful it feels to tune into your own body.

Just listen as the air moves in and out.... in.... and out. It is a quiet and beautiful sound.

Now imagine transporting yourself magically to a warm, sunny beach. You can choose your favorite beach. Or if you've never been to a beach, just imagine what it would be like.

Picture yourself there now. At the edge of the ocean, you feel the lapping of the warm waves against your toes. Let your toes sink deeply into the wet sand.

The sun shines brightly and gently warms your skin. It's as if the sun is reaching down and pouring its love on you.... so warm and so nice.

As you slowly walk along, you feel the rhythm of the calm waves flow over the sand. You look out across the horizon, and all you see is deep blue water and bright blue sky. The ocean is so big! You can't see across it to the other side.

Notice how your breathing becomes calm and even. Inhaling and exhaling slowly and calmly. Paying attention now, you slow down your breathing even further and allow your muscles to relax.

Feel the warmth of the sun melting your muscles into complete relaxation. Slowly and easily your body relaxes more and more releasing tension or frustration, releasing any worries or doubts you have. They ebb away, just like the waves being pulled back out to sea.

The ocean reminds of us abundance, or how there is always plenty to go around. Think about all the fish and plants that live in the ocean. How many tiny grains of sand are there under your feet?

Your body is relaxed and your mind is relaxed now, too. You can empty your mind of all worries or thoughts that have been bothering you. Just enjoy this moment you have now.

The tranquility you feel right now can be yours at any time. You can imagine yourself standing at this ocean of possibility whenever you need to remember how big, abundant, and giving this world is.

Imagine the beautiful golden warm sun penetrating each and every cell and muscle, making you feel so wonderful and alive! I'm sure you can feel the peace that surrounds you now, letting you know that everything is all right.

Take in a nice, deep breath again and bring your attention back to where you are. When you're ready, open your eyes and stretch. Keep these peaceful feelings with you as you drift off to sleep.

green child
magazine

By: Melissa Dormoy of Shambala Kids

Figure 8





Journaling and Reflection:

Reflecting on our experiences can be a good way of encouraging mindfulness. One way of engaging in reflection is through journaling our thoughts, emotions and experiences. In stressful times, writing in a journal can help identify what is causing us stress, address our positive and negative thoughts, and set goals for managing those thoughts. Journals are also safe spaces to be open and express ourselves without judgement.

Try using some of these journaling prompts below to help you get started:

- ❖ How are you feeling today?
- ❖ What quotes inspire you on difficult days?
- ❖ Write down the things that trigger feelings of anxiety in you.
- ❖ Identify one to three strategies you can use to combat feelings of anxiousness.
- ❖ What does self-care mean to you?
- ❖ How can you add self-care into your daily routine?
- ❖ Describe a difficult situation you've encountered. How did you cope with it and what did you learn from the experience?
- ❖ What songs help lift your spirits when you're feeling down?
- ❖ Create a bucket list of things you'd like to accomplish or experience in the next year.

Expressing Gratitude:

There are so many wonderful things to feel grateful for. Expressing gratitude can help us feel more positive, develop closer relationships with others, and build resilience in our day to day lives. Try journaling using one of the prompts below or starting a conversation on what you are grateful for with those around you.

- ❖ Something that made you smile today
- ❖ A favourite activity that you enjoy
- ❖ Someone that makes you feel loved
- ❖ A happy memory that you have from your childhood
- ❖ Something that keeps you healthy
- ❖ A place that you love to travel
- ❖ A new skill that you have learned





Additional Mindfulness Resources

Videos:

- **Stop, Breathe & Think** - Mindfulness and deep breathing videos to calm and relax:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkB9zEEqnP9kMIf5VChd99Q>
- **Kelty Mental Health** - Mindful moments:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSI69qTE6w&list=PLERqxY_UqhB6PJ9-Cr-l6VMGfvWCTvQWq&index=8
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFBf7lSkjs8&list=PLERqxY_UqhB6PJ9-Cr-l6VMGfvWCTvQWq&index=9
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLQthlENxYQ&list=PLERqxY_UqhB6PJ9-Cr-l6VMGfvWCTvQWq&index=10

Websites:

- **Mindfulness for Teens** - Guided meditations and other resources for mindful practice:
<http://mindfulnessforteens.com/guided-meditations/>
- **Headspace: Mindfulness** - Provides additional information on mindfulness and how do we practice it daily:
<https://www.headspace.com/mindfulness>
- **Bits of Positivity** - Free guided gratitude meditations:
<https://bitsofpositivity.com/free-guided-gratitude-meditations-mindfulness-resources-for-teens-and-adults/>

Apps:

- **Smiling Mind** - Practice daily meditation and mindfulness exercises (Free).
- **Headspace: Meditation and Sleep** - A guided meditation app (Two-week free trial; Annual or monthly fee afterwards).
- **Stop, Breathe & Think** - Mindfulness and meditation app (Fee for the premium app).





2) Physical Activity

Physical activity is a great way to relieve stress, have fun and build positive mental and physical health. For more information on the benefits of physical activity, please see [Healthy Habits](#), starting on page 17.

Dance

Listening to music and moving to the beat is a great way to engage the body and mind. Through dance, we can release endorphins, stretch our bodies, relieve stress and have fun. There are plenty of ways to get involved with dance. Check out our resources below for some ideas:

❖ *Choreograph your own dance:*

Pick a song.

Choose your dance style:

- Pop/rock/hip-hop
- Country/line dance
- Salsa
- Zumba
- Etc.

3. Create the steps. Some places to look for ideas include:

- Workout videos
- Popular dances like the Macarena or Electric Slide
- Moves from your favourite dancers or music videos
- Dance video games
- Friends or family members.

4. Practice

5. Perform your dance for an audience or teach it to your family and friends.

Videos:

- ❖ **Saskia's Dansschool** - Kids & teens easy dance videos:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLL7beOYvKmd-Kj8dR3QuxQS54jCwSZ6L>
- ❖ **Mihran Kirakosian** - Dance videos and tutorials for teens and adults:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/mihrantv/playlists>
- ❖ **Just Dance** - Dance choreography to get active:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0Vlhde7N5uGDIFXXWWEbFQ>
- ❖ **KIDZ BOP Dance Along Videos:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHd2s_saYsQ&t=126s

Websites:

- ❖ **Foundry** - Information on how dance is connected to mental health:
<https://foundrybc.ca/stories/dance-mental-health-qa/>
- ❖ **Brambilabong.com** - Offers tutorials for hip-hop, dubstep, and popping routines:
<https://www.brambilabong.com/pages/free-dance-tutorials>

Yoga

Yoga can help calm the body and mind. By moving through different poses, yoga acts to relieve stress, reduce muscle tension and strain, and increase body awareness. Engaging in yoga is also an opportunity to practice mindfulness and become present and engaged in the moment. Please see the resources below for more information on practicing yoga:

Yoga Poses for Beginners:

Hold each pose 3-5 breaths. Pay attention to the way each pose makes your body feel.



Figure 9 Yoga Rove. com

Videos:

- ❖ **Yoga With Adriene** - Guided yoga videos for all ages:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>
- ❖ **Yoga Ed.** - Guided yoga videos for teens:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtKF2-K_dbAGVRVg6Yd98zPbhHb8JPRE

Home Workout

There are plenty of ways to get active while at home. Workout routines, videos and apps are available to burn some energy and release some stress. Try some of the ideas below to get active:

Workout Routine:

FITNESS SKILLS

Before you start these exercises, it's important to make sure you do the movements properly. These exercises can help develop strength and endurance.









Running		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stand up tall with core tight• Shoulders and arms are relaxed and swing naturally• Breathe rhythmically, filling the belly
Push-ups		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep body in a straight line, with arms a bit wider than shoulder width• Arms fully extended at the top• Chest close to the floor at the bottom
Plank		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep body in a straight line• Keep knees off the ground• Keep weight evenly distributed between elbows/forearms and feet
Donkey Kicks		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start from standing position, move hands to the floor slightly wider than shoulder width• Kick the feet off the ground and move them back in the air• Stand up straight at the end
Jumping		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start with your feet at shoulder-width and keep heels super-glued to the ground• Bend your knees and squat deep• Use arms by bringing them back and driving them forward to initiate the jump• Jump up straight and tall, and land softly by absorbing the landing by bending at ankles, knees and hips
Burpees		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drop into a push-up, keeping the body straight• Jump up to stand with feet moving between the hands• Stand up tall, jump up and clap hands above head
Squats		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep heels super-glued to the floor• Squat deep to get your knees at a 90-degree angle to the floor• Keep your back arched like a superhero
Crunches		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep core contracted through the entire movement• Elbows are wide, don't pull on your head or neck• Imagine bringing your ribcage toward your hips

Figure 10

Fast & Low

Perform each of the following activities:

1. 30 count jumping jacks.
2. 30 count plank hold.
3. 30 count fast jump rope.
4. 30 count low squat.
5. 30 count fast running with high knees.
6. 30 count plank hold.
7. 30 count wide fast feet (like you are running through tires).
8. 30 count low squat.
9. Rest for 60 seconds.
10. Repeat.



Figure 11

BOKS Give Me 8!

1. Jog in place.
2. High knees (knees to chest).
3. Line jumps (pretend there is an imaginary line and jump over it side to side).
4. Squat with speed bag (squat while making a fist and pretend there is a speed bag in front of you).
5. Slalom skiers (quick rotations with feet together).
6. Tuck jumps (jump up high and tuck your legs up to your chest).
7. Repeat.

Figure 12

BOKS Kids Canada: <https://bokskids.ca/>



Workout with Playing Cards:

Shuffle playing cards. Once you've warmed up, flip the first card and do the exercise that corresponds with it (see below). You can continue this process of flipping one card and completing the exercise until you go through the whole deck or until you've reached the amount of time you planned for your workout.

Every suite in the deck of cards represents a different exercise and the card value equals the number of reps

- Spades: Squats
- Hearts: Push-ups
- Clubs: Lunges
- Diamonds: Tricep dips



Example: You flip over a 10 of hearts... you do 10 push-ups.

All face cards represent a cardio move and you do 20 reps of each.

- Jacks: 20 jumping jacks
- Queens: 20 plank jacks
- Kings: 20 jump squats
- Aces: 20 mountain climbers

Workout from: <https://www.eatingbirdfood.com/full-body-deck-of-cards-workout/>

Videos:

- ❖ **POPSUGAR Fitness** - Exercise videos for physical activity at home:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBINFWq52ShSgUFEoynfSwg>
- ❖ **Fitness Blender** - Full-length workout videos for physical activity at home:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/FitnessBlender>
- ❖ **Zumba with Dovydas** - Free Zumba workouts for all ages.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOjZigyo_fg2V7JdGwePSwg

Websites:

- ❖ **ParticipACTION** - Tips and information for getting physically active:
<https://www.participaction.com/en-ca>

Vision Board

- ❖ What is important to you (i.e. health, adventure, helping others, etc.)?
- ❖ What are your career goals?
- ❖ What do you want to learn?
- ❖ How do you want your family life to look?
- ❖ What hobbies will you have?
- ❖ What will help you feel fulfilled in your life?

- ❖ Photos you have taken
- ❖ Images from magazines
- ❖ Images from the internet
- ❖ Quotes that you like
- ❖ Pages from books
- ❖ Drawings or other forms of art



Figure 13

After creating your board, hang it somewhere where you will notice it each day. At least once a week, take time to reflect on your board and remind yourself of the goals and desires you have for your life. Reflect on these goals and your progress towards meeting them.

- ❖ <https://blog.mindvalley.com/vision-board/>
- ❖ <https://www.jackcanfield.com/blog/how-to-create-an-empowering-vision-book/>



Abstract Painting:

Abstract art is a great way to practice creativity because there is no right or wrong way to create it. It encourages a sense of accomplishment and resilience because even accidents come out looking beautiful. There is no need for prior training or skill - it is simply an opportunity to express yourself and have fun.

One technique involves squeezing blobs of paint onto the paper or canvas and then blending them together. Each painting will be unique depending on the amount of paint, types of colours and direction of brushstrokes that you use.

Supplies:

- Thick paper or acrylic canvas
- 2-3 colours of acrylic paint (one dark and two lighter colours)
- A medium-sized brush



Instructions:

- Squeeze a few blobs of paint onto the paper or canvas. The blobs should be about the size of a pea and there should be an inch or two of space between them. Put fewer blobs of the darker colour and more of the lighter colour(s).
- Blend out the colours with the paintbrush. It's entirely up to you how much you blend the paint together. You could keep it quite rough and expressive or more blended.
- Take a look at your painting to see that you have enough of each colour showing. If not, squeeze a tiny bit more of the paint onto the paper and blend it in.
- Once you're happy with all the colours, leave your painting to dry.



*Craft from Birch and Button: <http://birchandbutton.com/easy-abstract-acrylic-painting-diy/>

Colouring pages:

Colouring can be a therapeutic method to capture our focus and engage our minds. Through colouring intricate designs, we can practice the art of mindfulness and take steps to calm our thoughts. Check out some example colouring pages on the following page.



Above colouring pages from: <https://diaryofajournalplanner.com/free-mindfulness-colouring-sheets/>

For more free colouring pages, please visit:

- ❖ <https://www.art-is-fun.com/free-adult-coloring-pages/>
- ❖ <http://intheplayroom.co.uk/2015/11/26/inspirational-words-grown-up-colouring-pages/>
- ❖ <https://diaryofajournalplanner.com/free-mindfulness-colouring-sheets/>

4) Games

Take a break from technology and unwind with some fun family games. Interactive games are great for engaging our brains and building critical thinking skills. They also offer the chance to be creative and unleash your silly side. Try out some of the great games below:

Card Games:

Spoons:

You will need:

- A pack of cards (no jokers)
- Spoons (one less than the number of people playing).



How to play:

- You need at least 3 players for this game.
- Deal 4 cards to each player.
- Place the rest of the cards in a pile (stockpile), face down on the table next to the spoons.
- The object of the game is to get 4 of a kind in your hand (i.e. all 4 kings) and then pick up a spoon without people noticing.
- On their turn, a player will pick up a card from the stockpile and then discard one into a discard pile facing up.
- The next person then does the same (they can pick up from either the stock or discard pile).
- When one person has 4 of a kind they can grab a spoon.
- As soon as one player gets a spoon then all of the other players need to grab one. There will be one player who will not get a spoon.

**Game from: <https://www.mybaba.com/how-to-play-spoons/>*

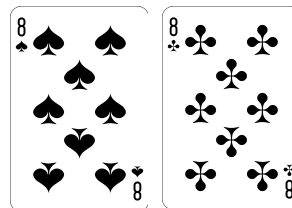
Crazy 8's:

You will need:

- A pack of cards

How to play:

- Deal 5 cards to each player.
- Place the rest of the cards in a pile (stockpile), face down on the table.
- Take a card from the stockpile and place it facing up in a separate pile; this card is the “starter”.
- Starting to the dealer's left, each player must place one card face-up on the starter pile. Each card played (other than an eight) must match the card showing on the starter pile (it must be either the same suit or the same number). For example, if a Queen of hearts is the starter, then any heart or Queen can be placed on top.



- If a player does not have any cards that match the card in the starter pile, then they must draw a card from the stockpile until they get a card that can be played.
- A player may draw from the stock, even though there may be a playable card in the player's hand.
- All 8's are wild! That is, an 8 may be played at any time during a player's turn. If an 8 is played, the player will then choose a new suit (i.e. hearts, diamonds, spades or clubs).
- The next player must play either a card of the specified suit or another 8.
- The player that gets rid of all their cards first wins!

*Game from: <https://bicyclecards.com/rules/>

For more card games that you can play with your family, please visit: <https://bicyclecards.com/rules/>
Or <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVeEx96wzFgzhXsy7cBC8hw/playlists>

Minute to Win It Games:

Face the Cookie: Using only the face, move cookies from the forehead to the mouth.

Supplies Needed:

- At least 3 cookies



Instructions:

1. When the clock starts, the player may grab the first cookie and place it on the forehead.
2. The cookie must remain in contact with the face (i.e. player may not toss the cookie from the forehead and catch it in the mouth).
3. If a cookie falls, the player may reset an intact cookie on the forehead for the next attempt.
4. To complete the game, the player must hold an intact cookie 3 times with his or her mouth within the 60-second time limit.

A Bit Dicy: Balance six dice on a popsicle stick held in your mouth.

Supplies Needed:

- Popsicle Stick
- Dice

Instructions:

1. The player places a single popsicle stick in his/her mouth.
2. When the clock starts, the player will pick up and vertically stack one die at a time on the stick.
3. Players may not allow dice to rest against their nose or to touch any part of their face.
4. In the event that a die is dropped or falls off of the stick, the player must restart.
5. To complete the game, 6 dice must be stacked one on top of the other on the popsicle stick within the 60-second time limit



Figure 14

Junk In The Trunk:

Wiggle a box that is attached to your waist filled with ping-pong balls until the box is empty.

Supplies Needed:

- 8 ping-pong balls
- 1 empty tissue box
- 1 belt

Instructions:

- 1) Fill the tissue box with ping-pong balls, then attach the tissue box to the back of the belt. Put on the belt with the tissue box sitting at the small of the back.
- 2) When the clock starts, players may begin moving their bodies to shake the ping-pong balls out.
- 3) The player's hands or arms may not touch the box or belt.
- 4) Players may only touch the floor with his or her feet.
- 5) To complete the game, players must get all 8 ping-pong balls out of the box within 60-seconds.

For more Minute to Win It games, please visit:

<https://www.playpartyplan.com/minute-to-win-it-games-for-kids/>

Or <https://www.signupgenius.com/groups/minute-to-win-it-games.cfm>

DIY Family Games:

Telephone Pictionary:

Similar to the game of telephone, except with using pictures and phrases.

Supplies needed:

- Paper
- Pencils

Instructions:

- Everyone starts with a piece of paper and a pencil.
- Each person writes a funny sentence and then passes the paper to the person next to them.
- That person draws a picture to match the sentence. *Then folds the paper down covering only the sentence, not the picture, and hands the paper to the next person.*
- The next person looks at the picture, writes a caption for the picture, and folds the paper down covering the sentence, but leaving the picture.
- Keep passing the paper until you get your paperback.
- When each player gets their paperback, they can unfold it to reveal a short funny story.



*Game from: <https://www.imagineforest.com/blog/telephone-pictionary-game/>

Classification:

Supplies needed:

- Paper
- Pencils

Instructions:

- Each person creates a grid of 6 by 6 boxes.
- Agree on 5 categories to write in the 5 squares on the left. Some of our favourite categories are: books, games, famous pairs, songs, countries, colours.
- Once you've chosen your categories, chose a 5 letter word, and put 1 letter across the top row
- For each letter of the word, you will need to come up with an item in each category that starts with that letter. In the example, the word is "SALTY", so we find colours beginning with s, a, l, t, and y.
- Set a timer for 10 minutes, and try to come up with something to fill in each square!



	S	A	L	T	Y
colors	silver	aqua	lavender	teal	yellow
books	Sylvester and the Magic Pebble	Anne of Green Gables	Little House in the Big Woods	Treasure Island	Yes Day
clothing	socks	apron	lab coat	tutu	yarmulka
animals	seal	alligator	lion	turtle	yak
Boys' Names	Stephen	Alan	Lyle	Thomas	

Scoring:

- 5 points if you have an original answer
- 1 point if you have the same answer as someone else
- 0 points if you leave it blank

*Game from: <https://simpleplayideas.com/fun-family-game-night-classification>

Would You Rather:

A fun game where you read out two different options, and each player must choose one option.

Example questions:

- Would you rather have superpowers or have Christmas never end?
- Would you rather have a third leg or a third arm?
- Would you rather be able to create a new holiday or create a new language?
- Would you rather be the funniest person alive or the smartest person alive?
- Would you rather be a famous singer or a famous actor?
- Would you rather be able to control the weather or have the ability to talk to animals?
- Would you rather only be able to whisper or have an incredibly loud voice?
- Would you rather speak every language or play every instrument?
- Would you rather live without a TV or without a phone?
- Would you rather have a pet dinosaur or a pet dragon?
- Would you rather eat a beetle or get stung by a bee?

For more ideas on possible questions, please visit:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/groups/would-you-rather.cfm>



5) Connecting with Nature

Spending time outdoors and in nature is a wonderful way to help relieve stress and feel connected to the beautiful world around us. Spending time in nature may help promote mindfulness, improve feelings of happiness, reduce anxiety and help us feel more energetic and alive. Try out some of the ideas below to experience nature:

Sit Spotting

Sit spotting is a simple mindfulness activity that can reduce stress and help build your connection with nature. To engage in sit spotting:

1. Find a special spot outdoors that you can get to easily. It could be in your backyard, in a neighbourhood park or in another natural area.
2. Get in a comfortable position where you can sit quietly.
3. Engage your senses.
 - ❖ Listen to the sounds around you, like the birds chirping or water dripping.
 - ❖ Observe the colours of the sky, the trees, the ground.
 - ❖ Feel the wind and the temperature.
 - ❖ Smell the fresh rain or snow.
4. You may also wish to track your observations with notes and pictures in a nature journal.



* Activity from: <https://runwildmychild.com/sit-spotting-nature-meditation/amp/>

Stargazing

Spend some quality time gazing at the stars, identifying the constellations and enjoying the fresh night air. Here are some tips from the Canadian Space Agency for getting the most out of your experience:

- ❖ Turn off the lights or move somewhere where it is dark.
 - Light from our homes, streetlights and other sources can make it difficult to see the stars.
- ❖ Check the weather forecast.
 - Try to choose a night when the sky will be clear from clouds.
- ❖ Find a clear spot where you can see as close to the horizon as possible
 - Make sure tall buildings and trees are not blocking your view as you stargaze.
- ❖ Using your eyes:
 - Many of the night sky's beautiful sights, such as constellations and the Milky Way, can be enjoyed with the naked eye. Avoid looking at bright lights while you're stargazing. This will make your eyes less sensitive. It is important to give your eyes 15 to 20 minutes to adjust to the darkness.
- ❖ Using binoculars and telescopes
 - Did you know that you can observe the Moon's craters with regular binoculars? A telescope is best for objects like planets, galaxies, and nebulae, but you don't need one to enjoy stargazing.

- ❖ Use sky maps and [star finders](#) to help locate stars and other objects in the sky. You can even use apps to turn your smartphone into a star finder.



Figure 15

For more information on how to stargaze, please visit:

<https://www.asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/astronomy/tips-tricks/stargazing-tips.asp>

Apps:

- ❖ SkyView® Lite - This app lets you track your favourite constellations as they move across the sky.
- ❖ Star Chart - This app also helps you locate stars in the sky.


Gardening

Spring is a wonderful time to try out your gardening skills and earn your green thumb. Gardening can be a therapeutic process through connecting with nature. It is also an opportunity to feel productive and proud of yourself as you learn to grow your very own plants. Even when the weather is cold, we can garden indoors and bring nature into our homes. Look below for how ideas on how to start your journey:

Indoor Herb Garden

1. Pick a container.
 - Choose 6-inch containers that have drainage holes and saucers.
2. Pot up your herbs.
 - Fill containers halfway with potting mix.
 - Remove herbs from containers by pushing from the bottom.
 - Gently loosen roots and place the plant in the pot.
 - Fill with soil to the depth the plants were growing in the original pots.
 - Water well.
3. Choose a Spot.



- 
- Place plants in a sunny window that receives at least 6 hours of strong sunlight each day.
4. Refresh plants.
 - Water as needed to keep the soil lightly moist, but don't overwater.
 5. Give herbs a boost.
 - Feed with fertilizer as needed to give plants the nutrients they need to grow.

** Instructions from: <https://www.espoma.com/indoor-gardening-2/spice-up-your-life-start-an-indoor-herb-garden/>*

Outdoor Carrot Garden

1. Dig your planting area or build a **raised bed** to hold your carrots.
2. Prepare the soil.
 - Ensure that the soil is loose and free of rocks and other debris.
 - Mix in compost or other organic matter to act as fertilizer.
3. Spread the seeds.
 - In rows, drop carrot seeds directly on the soil 2-4 weeks before the last spring frost date.
 - Moistening the soil beforehand helps the seeds stick and not blow around.
 - Cover the seeds with 1/4 inch of fine soil or compost, then water gently.
4. Help them grow.
 - Keep your planted seeds moist to help them germinate. This may mean watering once or twice a day for about 3 weeks.
 - Once their true leaves form, thin the carrot seedlings to about 3 inches apart.
 - Carefully remove weeds from the area by pulling or hoeing.
5. Harvest the carrots:
 - Begin pulling your carrots when you see their shoulders poking out of the ground and their colour looks ripe. This will also help thin out the crop and let the remaining carrots grow larger.



** Instructions from: <https://www.miraclegro.com/en-ca/library/edible-gardening/growing-carrots-delicious-and-crunchy>*

7) Cooking


Cooking is a great opportunity to show off your creativity and love for food. It is also a chance to build self-esteem and feel productive by creating your own delicious meals from scratch. See the resources below for ideas and tutorials on different meals you can prepare:


Marvellous muffins

With a hint of cinnamon and a burst of sweetness from raisins, these wholesome and moist muffins are a nourishing way to start your day.




 Vegetarian

 30 mins or less

 Kid-friendly

 Freezer-friendly

 **PREP TIME**
10 min

 **COOK TIME**
18 min

 **SERVINGS**
12 muffins

Ingredients

• 60 mL (1/4 cup) canola oil	• 5 mL (1 tsp) vanilla extract
• 150 mL (2/3 cup) packed brown sugar	• 250 mL (1 cup) all purpose flour with added bran or all purpose flour
• 1 egg	• 175 mL (3/4 cup) wheat bran
• 1 very ripe banana, mashed	• 60 mL (1/4 cup) wheat germ
• 1 zucchini, grated (about 250 mL/1 cup)	• 5 mL (1 tsp) baking powder
• 5 mL (1 tsp) ground cinnamon	• 2 mL (1/2 tsp) baking soda
• 125 mL (1/2 cup) 0% fat plain Greek yogurt	• 125 mL (1/2 cup) raisins or dried cranberries or dried blueberries

Directions

1. In a large bowl, whisk together oil, sugar and egg. Add banana, zucchini and cinnamon; stir in yogurt and vanilla.
2. In another bowl, whisk together flour, wheat bran and germ, baking powder and soda. Add flour mixture to banana mixture and stir until just moistened. Stir in raisins.
3. Divide among lightly sprayed or paper lined muffin tins. Bake in preheated 200°C (400°F) oven for about 18 minutes or until light golden and firm to the touch. Let cool slightly before enjoying.

Tips

- ✓ What kid doesn't like making muffins? Little chefs can **mash the banana**, while older kids can **grate the zucchini** and scoop batter into the muffin cups.
- ✓ Add a little crunch. Stir in 60 mL (1/4 cup) **chopped, toasted walnuts** into the batter.
- ✓ **Keep a stash** of these muffins in the freezer for a perfect handy snack when you're on the go. Allow muffins to cool completely. Wrap each muffin separately or place in a plastic freezer bag for up to 2 weeks. Warm in a microwave to enjoy another day.
- ✓ Try using less of the ingredients that are high in added sodium, sugars or saturated fat. Adding salt or sugars directly to your recipe? Remember, a little often goes a long way.

*Recipe from:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/tips-healthy-eating/meal-planning-cooking-healthy-choices/recipes/energy-boosting-muffins.html>

Mediterranean tomato and ricotta pasta

No one will guess that the secret ingredient in this creamy pasta dish is ricotta. Packed with colourful vegetables, this tasty meal will be a hit.



Vegetarian



PREP TIME
15 min



COOK TIME
20 min



SERVINGS
6

Ingredients

- 1 pkg (375 g) whole grain rotini or fusilli
- 10 mL (2 tsp) extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small zucchini, grated
- 1 small carrot, grated
- Half a red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 15 mL (1 tbsp) dried oregano
- 5 mL (1 tsp) dried basil
- 1 jar (700 mL) tomato passata
- 125 mL (1/2 cup) water
- 45 mL (3 tbsp) chopped fresh parsley or basil
- 250 mL (1 cup) light ricotta cheese
- 30 mL (2 tbsp) grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

Directions

1. In a pot of boiling water, cook pasta for about 8 minutes or until tender but firm. Drain well and return pasta to pot; set aside.
2. Meanwhile, in a large nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium heat and cook zucchini, carrot, pepper, oregano and basil for about 5 minutes or until starting to turn golden. Stir in passata, water and parsley. Bring to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Pour over pasta and stir in ricotta and Parmesan, if using.

Tips

- ✓ Ask **little chefs** for ideas on what pasta shape to use. In addition to rotini and fusilli, there are **lots of other shapes available**. Have fun looking for these at the grocery store.
- ✓ Transform this pasta dish by **baking it**. Spread pasta mixture into a casserole dish and sprinkle top with 125 mL (1/2 cup) part skim mozzarella, shredded and bake in 200°C (400°F) oven for about 10 minutes or until cheese has melted.
- ✓ **Passata** is **cooked tomatoes** that have been **crushed and strained**, and it's usually sold in a tall glass jar.
- ✓ Try using less of the ingredients that are high in added sodium, sugars or saturated fat. Adding salt or sugars directly to your recipe? Remember, a little often goes a long way.

Recipe developed by Emily Richards, PH, EC for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Reproduced with permission from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

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Health Canada Santé Canada



*Recipe from:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/tips-healthy-eating/meal-planning-cooking-healthy-choices/recipes/mediterranean-tomato-ricotta-pasta.html>



*Videos:**

- ❖ **Mind Over Munch** - Healthy meal recipes for the family:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MindOverMunch/playlists>
- ❖ **HealthNut Nutrition** - Healthy recipes and tips for the family:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HealthNutNutrition/playlists>
- ❖ **Tasty** - Simple recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJFp8uSYCjXOMnkUyb3CQ3Q/playlists?view=50&sort=dd&shelf_id=2
- ❖ **Nerdy Nummies & Recipes** - Fun baking recipes for teens:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmYbk1i3xY5nLckBv9_aLGgPQUWY_ESH

Websites:

- ❖ **Health Canada** - Recipes that meet the recommendations of the Canadian Food Guide:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/tips-healthy-eating/meal-planning-cooking-healthy-choices/recipes.html>
- ❖ **Eating Well** - Simple and healthy recipes for any meal:
<http://www.eatingwell.com/>

***While these resources and websites contain great ideas for healthy food choices and recipes, please remember that nutrition counselling should be sought out from Registered Dietitians (RD), Registered Nutritionists, or Nutritionists (a protected term for dietitians in Alberta). Seeking counselling from a RD ensures that you are receiving credible and evidence-based information. Many health benefit plans include coverage for Registered Dietitians, and most of the time it only requires a referral from your doctor.**

8) Other Fun Ideas!

- ☐ Have a [spa day](#) at home! Have a bubble bath and facial, and paint your nails.
- ☐ Play a family board game, or create one!
- ☐ Listen to music or try karaoke!
- ☐ Learn to play a musical instrument!
- ☐ Create a [jar of awesome](#)! ----->
- ☐ Play with a pet, or take them for a walk!
- ☐ Watch a movie! Grab some popcorn and cuddle up on the couch!
- ☐ Read a book! Ask friends for a new book suggestion!
- ☐ Cook or bake! Try something new! Check out [Cooking](#) starting on page 40 for recipe ideas.
- ☐ Exercise in the backyard! Check out the workout activities found in [Physical Activity](#), starting on page 24, for ideas!
- ☐ Get outside! Take a walk, or simply lay in the snow or grass!
- ☐ Write a poem or short story!
- ☐ Look at family photos!
- ☐ Meditate or pray!
- ☐ Create a pillow fort!
- ☐ Listen to a podcast!
- ☐ Learn a magic trick!
- ☐ Learn a new language!
- ☐ Draw a comic book!
- ☐ Decorate your room!
- ☐ Play sports outside, such as soccer, basketball or frisbee!



Talking Mental Health with Your Teen

Talking about your mental health can be tough. Here are some tips for how you can approach discussing difficult topics such as mental health with your kid and family.

★ **Give your full attention, be curious and take it seriously.** We all know it's not nice to be half listened to. Being actively interested in your child can be a powerful way to help them feel listened to and understood. Try to resist the urge to downplay or dismiss what your child is telling you.

★ **Emphasise that you are always available to talk.** It may be that your child doesn't want to talk, can't find the words at the moment or is trying to assert their independence. But don't be misled by your teenager's need for separation. They need you just as much as ever.



★ **Take time to reflect.** Research shows that thinking about what is going on in your child's mind and being aware of your own thoughts and feelings promotes secure attachment, good social skills and the ability to 'read' others.

★ **Provide empathy.** When children feel truly understood they start to be able to manage their emotions and this has a big impact on their wellbeing. Using empathy is also a great way to defuse tension.

★ **Be aware of your own stress and negative feelings.** They can really get in the way of feeling close to your child. Reflecting on the causes of stress can prevent it from spilling into your relationships at home.

★ **Think about timing.** Ask yourself 'Is this the right time to talk?' Choose a time when you can focus on your child and ignore distractions.

Figure 16

For more information on how to discuss mental health topics with your teen, check out the following booklet provided by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families:

★ <https://www.annafreud.org/media/7223/secondary-parents-leaflet-final-proofed.pdf>



“The ABCDE Exercise”

Use the ABCDE exercise when you need help changing your thoughts and beliefs or the thoughts and beliefs of your child in regards to anything that might be creating stress or anxiety in your life. The ABCDE exercise can be used individually or in a discussion with your child. See the full explanation of the ABCDE exercise below provided by [LoveOurMinds](#) (2019).

The ABCDE technique can be used in any situation to challenge thoughts that are harmful and irrational. It's a great tool for anxiety because it helps you take a step back and view the things you're worried about in a more realistic light. This exercise forces you to acknowledge how your anxiety is negatively affecting you. It also helps you recognize when you are worrying about something that will probably never happen, which is often the case when we're anxious. Consider the questions below:

Activating event: What is causing you to feel anxious?

Belief – Why do you feel anxious? What do you believe is going to happen?

Consequence – How is your anxiety making you feel? How is it affecting your mind, your body, and your behaviour?

Dispute – Is your belief irrational? How likely is it that the worst case scenario will actually happen? What positive scenarios are more likely to occur?

Effective new beliefs: What is a more helpful way of viewing the situation? If your friend felt anxious about this, what advice would you offer them?

Here's an example of using the ABCDE technique for public speaking:

A: I have to give a presentation at work tomorrow.

B: I might make myself look bad in front of my boss and coworkers. If it doesn't go well, I won't end up getting the promotion I wanted. I'll probably screw up and stumble on my words. Everyone will notice that I'm nervous.

C: I can't concentrate and my breathing is getting heavier. I wasn't able to enjoy dinner with my family because I was worrying about what might happen.

D: I've been preparing for weeks. I've gone through the presentation several times without a problem. I've been successful in my career so far, and my boss and coworkers have always been satisfied with my work. They won't be judging me as harshly as I think, they'll just be focusing on the information. I'll go through the presentation as I practiced and everything will go smoothly.

E: It's normal and okay to be anxious before an event like this – anyone would be. Even if it doesn't go well, I won't lose my promotion over one presentation. I'm experienced in my field and I'm confident that I can give a great presentation on this topic.

Figure 17

To try the ABCDE exercise on your own or with your teen, use the table on the following page:



The <i>ABCDE</i> Technique - Changing Thoughts and Beliefs	
Activating event:	
Belief:	
Consequence:	
Dispute:	
Effective new beliefs:	

Mental Health Resources



If you are feeling distressed, reach out to your loved ones or call the [Distress Line](tel:780-482-4357) at: 780-482-4357 (HELP). For a list of other supports, please see the following table.

Mental Health Support Information

Emergency Mental Health Concerns – Stollery Children’s Hospital or local ER	911
Stollery Children’s Hospital Crisis Line/Services	780-427-4491
Text4Hope (COVID-19 Support Resource)	Text: ‘COVID19HOPE’ to 393939
Mental Health Distress Line (24/7) (Canadian Mental Health Association)	780-482-4357
Kids Help Phone	Phone: 1-800-668-6868 Text: “CONNECT” to 686868 Chat Online: https://kidshelpphone.ca/

<u>Counselling Supports</u>	
Mental Health Helpline	1-877-303-2642
Addiction Services Helpline	1-866-332-2322
<u>Intake Services</u> (Connects you to an AHS Mental Health Clinic in St. Albert & Morinville)	
Access 24/7 (18+)	780-424-2424
Addiction & Mental Health Youth <u>Child & Adolescent</u> (Northgate)	780-342-2701
Walk-In Counselling Services (AHS) FREE 50-minute, solution-focused, single therapy session on a first-come, first-serve basis. Available to children and youth ages 6-17 Monday to Friday 12:30 – 4:00 PM. (Last client seen at 3:00pm)	St. Albert Clinic: St. Albert Provincial Building, 30 Sir Winston Churchill Avenue, St Albert Phone: 780 342-1410 Northgate Clinic: 9499 137 Avenue Phone: 780 342-2700 Rutherford Health Centre: #202, 11153 Ellerslie Road Phone: 780 342-6850



AHS Addiction Services Mobile Unit GSACRD Counsellor: Sara Heitzman	780-422-7383
Primary Care Network	780-997-0046
FCSS Family and Community Support Services	St. Albert – 780-459-1756 Morinville – 780-939-7833 Redwater 780-992-6267 Gibbons 780-923-3331 Bon Accord – 780-921-3550
CASA Child, Adolescent, and Family Mental Health	www.casaservices.org
Private Psychologists in your area	www.psychologistsassociation.ab.ca www.psychologytoday.com/ca
Hope for Wellness Helpline (First Nations/Inuit)	1-855-242-3310
Legal Aid Alberta	780-427-7575



Additional Resources

Websites

- **Anxiety in Youth** (Anxiety Canada) - Information on anxiety and self-management strategies: <https://www.anxietycanada.com/learn-about-anxiety/anxiety-in-youth/>
- **5 Ways to Deal with Anxiety** (kidshealth.org) - Methods to manage anxiety for teens: <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/anxiety-tips.html>
- **Mental Health Literacy Series** (Alberta Health Services) - Videos and information on a variety of mental health topics: <https://www.cyfcaregivereducation.ca/videos>
- **Teen Mental Health** - mental health information targeted for teens: <http://teenmentalhealth.org/>
- **Big Life Journal** - Tips to build self-esteem and confidence in teens: <https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/build-self-esteem-confidence-teens>

Podcasts

- **The Happiness Lab** (Dr. Laurie Santos) - tips for leading a happier life: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-happiness-lab-with-dr-laurie-santos/id1474245040>
- **Happier with Gretchen Rubin** - tips for developing good habits and increasing happiness: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/happier-with-gretchen-rubin/id969519520>
- **The Overwhelmed Brain** (Paul Colaianni) - discussion surrounding stress relief and happiness: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-overwhelmed-brain/id743537890?mt=2&ls=1>
- **Unstoppable Teen** (Kevin Mincher) - ideas to help teenagers, parents and teachers experience more success and happiness: <https://unstoppableteen.com/podcast/>
- **The Mindful Kind** (Rachel Kable) - simple exercises for bringing mindfulness into your life. <https://www.rachaelkable.com/podcast/>

Ted Talks

- **How to Make Stress Your Friend** (Dr. Kelly McGonigal): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTAoXEU>
- **How to Practice Emotional First Aid** (Dr. Guy Winch): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2hc2FLOdhl&t=3s>
- **There's No Shame in Taking Care of Your Mental Health** (Sangu Delle): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvpmZktlBFs>





Youtube Videos

- *3 Minute Mindful Breathing Meditation* (Relieve Stress): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEfs5TJJZ6Nk&t=135s>
- *4-7-8 Mindful Breathing* (GoZen!): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxbdx-SeOOo>
- *Relax and Breathe - Do Nothing for 10 Minutes*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXltOYosLRY>
- *Stress and the Teenage Brain*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYuH3BqbSIE>
- *Mindfulness: Youth Voices* (Kelty Mental Health): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kk7IBwuhXWM&t=53s>

Apps:

- *Always There* - Phone app to connect you with a Kids' Help Phone Counsellor
- *Insight Timer* - A free daily meditation practice with the world's largest collection of free guided meditations.

Books:

- *Practicing Mindfulness* by Matthew Sockolov - Includes over 75 essential meditations
- *The Mindfulness Journal for Teens* by Jennie Marie Battistin - Provides simple breathing exercises, easy meditations, and journal prompts
- *Mindfulness for Teen Worry* by Jeffrey Bernstein - Teaches easy-to-use mindfulness skills to manage the four most common worry struggles teens face.





Image Sources:

- Figure 1: Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/265970447308209/photos/rpp.265970447308209/265974570641130/?type=3&theater>
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- Figure 9: *Retrieved from:* <https://yogarove.com/>
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