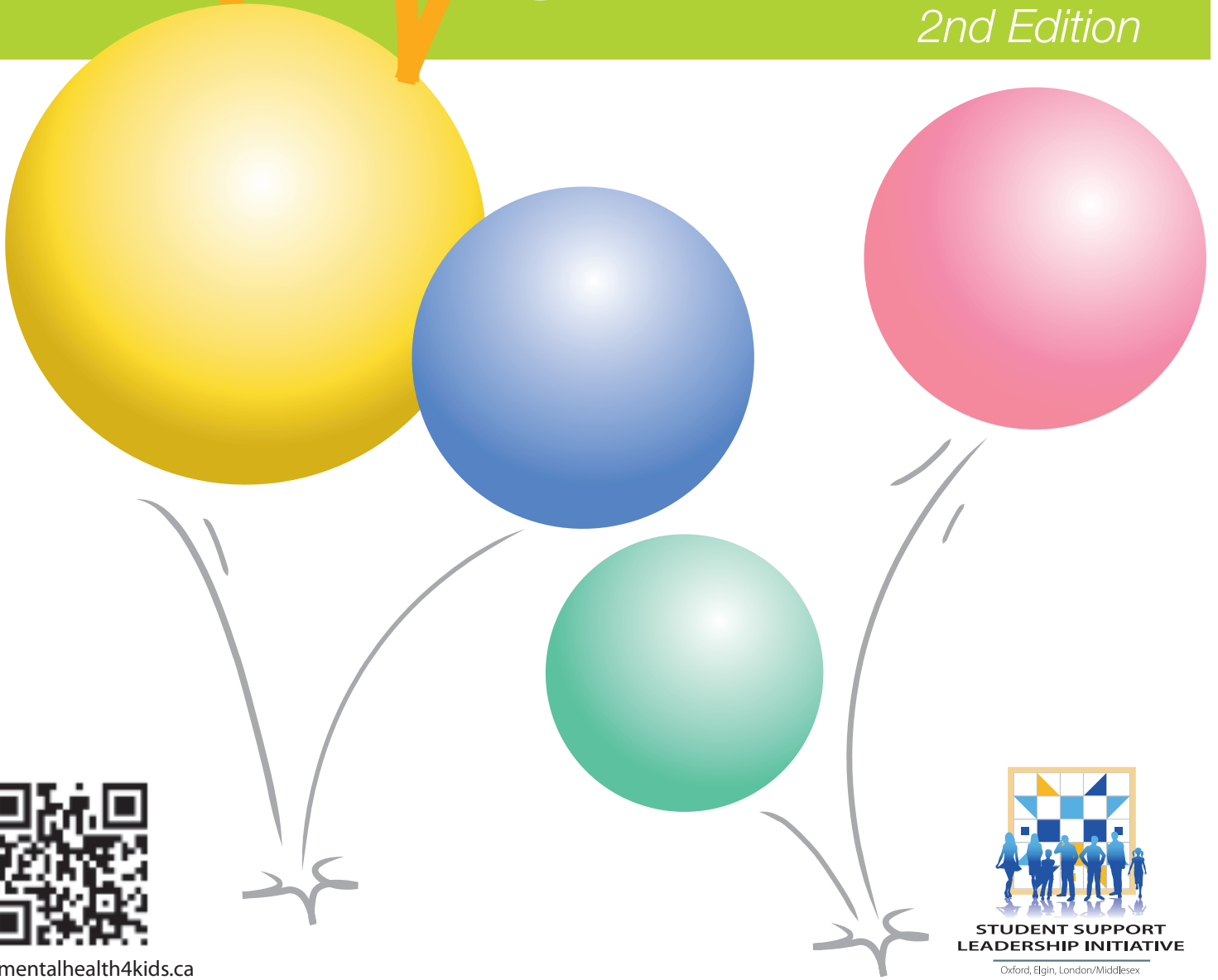


# Bounce

BACK...AGAIN

*2nd Edition*



[www.mentalhealth4kids.ca](http://www.mentalhealth4kids.ca)

**STUDENT SUPPORT  
LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE**  
Oxford, Elgin, London/Middlesex

# Bounce Back STRONGER!



Oxford, Elgin, London/Middlesex

## STUDENT SUPPORT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

### PARTNERS

Addiction Services of Thames Valley  
Anago (Non) Residential Resources Inc.  
Association of Professional Student Services Personnel (APSSP)  
Central Community Health Centre  
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)  
Centre for Children & Families in the Justice System  
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Care (Children's Hospital)  
Children's Aid Society of London & Middlesex  
Children's Aid Society of Oxford County  
Child & Youth Network – City of London  
CMHA Elgin  
CMHA London/Middlesex  
CMHA Oxford  
Community Employment Services Woodstock  
Community Services Coordination Network  
CPRI – Child & Parent Resource Institute  
Craigwood Youth Services  
CUPE – LDCSB  
EFTO- Thames Valley  
Elgin St. Thomas Public Health  
Employment Services Elgin  
Family & Children's Services St. Thomas & Elgin County  
Family Service Thames Valley  
Fanshawe College – Human Services  
First Episode Mood & Anxiety Program (LHSC)  
Ingersoll Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic  
London District Catholic School board  
London InterCommunity Health Centre  
Merrymount Children's Centre  
Middlesex London Health Unit  
mindyourmind (FSTV)  
Ministry of Children & Youth Services  
Ministry of Education  
N'Amerind Friendship Centre  
OECTA  
OPC – Principals  
OSSTF  
Oxford County Public Health & Emergency Services  
Oxford Elgin Child & Youth Centre  
Parents for Children's Mental Health  
School & Community Integration Partnership (SCIP)  
Southwest CCAC – Mental Health & Addiction  
Nurses in District School Boards (MHAN)  
Southwest Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)  
St. Joseph's Health Care  
St. Leonard's Community Services, London & Region  
Thames Valley District School Board  
thehealthline.ca  
Vanier Children's Services  
West Elgin Community Health Centre  
Western Area Youth Services  
Western University  
Woodstock & Area Community Health Centre

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The **Student Support Leadership Initiative** is a collaborative partnership focused on child & youth mental health & wellbeing and finding ways to better support children, youth and their families who experience mental health challenges. Working together, this group of over 50 school and community partners is creating collaborative pathways to enhance mental health programs and services.

## INTRODUCTION

Dear Educators and Community Service Providers,

The week of May 5th to 9th is both Education Week and Child & Youth Mental Health Awareness Week. The Student Support Leadership Initiative has again engaged in a **coordinated approach to celebrate mental health awareness week** across the Thames Valley community.

The theme, once again this year is **RESILIENCY** – the ability to thrive during both good and challenging times, and adapt well to stress or adversity. It is the ability to **BOUNCE BACK** – as many of our children and youth have told us: to keep trying, to come back after hard times, to get back on your feet.

**Bounce Back... Again, 2nd Edition**, provides new and revised resources, ideas and suggestions to assist us in learning about resiliency, why resiliency exemplifies mental health and ways we can celebrate and promote resiliency in each other. This year, we are particularly proud of the new 2014 Bounce Back resources to support youth-lead mental health initiatives in the school context.

The primary goal of this resource kit is to help you start a **conversation with children or youth** about bouncing back from adversity. We hope you take the time during Mental Health Awareness Week to pick even one idea that you can use... From there, you never know what our children and youth will do when they feel encouraged, inspired and valued!

**The Complete Tool Kit:** The complete Tool Kit with more resources, videos and helpful links can be accessed at: [www.mentalhealth4kids.ca](http://www.mentalhealth4kids.ca)

We are grateful for the contributions of the **SSLI Mental Health Awareness Week Action Team** who created this resource for **Bounce Back... Again, 2nd Edition**:

Co-chairs: Dr. Michelle Gilpin (TVDSB) & Sandra Savage (LDCSB)

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(Middlesex London Health Unit)

Gillian Kriter (CPRI)

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Mike Gorgey (Oxford County Public Health Unit)

Rita Crowther (parent)

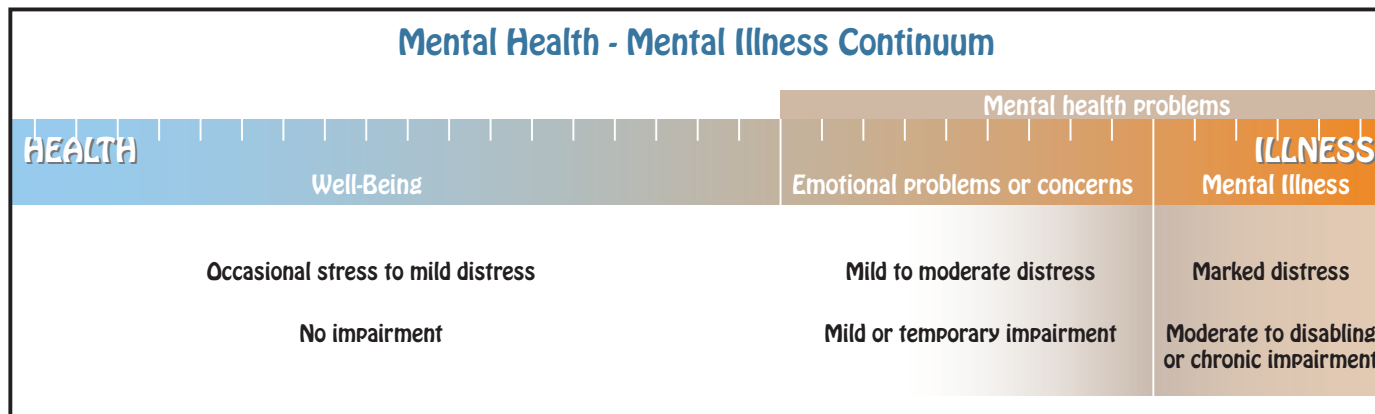


# WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Everyone has a different way of defining and describing their Mental Health.....  
There is **NO ONE** definition of Mental Health that fits for everyone.....



➤ Some see Mental Health along a continuum of well-being



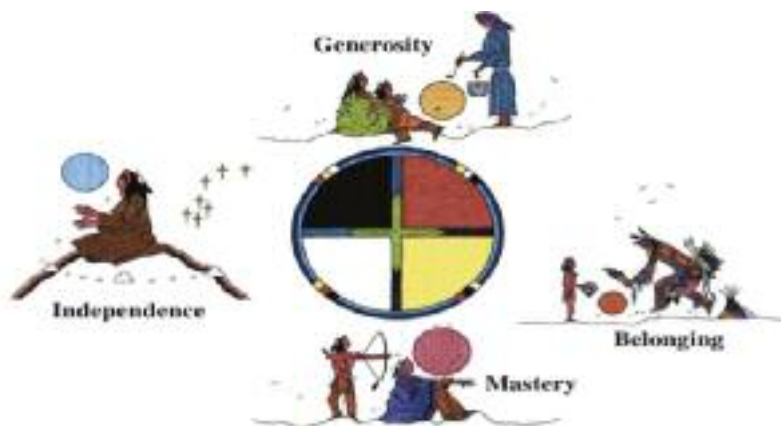
<http://smh-assist.ca>

The idea is that we are all somewhere on this continuum and move up and down along this continuum depending on how well we are doing and feeling.

➤ BUT.....Others Define Mental Health as an integrated part of all other aspects of our world...



Source: Medicine Wheel – <http://www.the-longhouse.org/Medicine-Wheel-and-Seven-Grandfather-Teachings.html>



Source: Circle of Courage -Dr Martin Brokenleg (2002): <http://www.reclaiming.com/content/aboutcircleofcourage>

As illustrated, Mental Health is depicted as an integral part of the whole person: Emotional, Physical and Spiritual Well-Being embedded within their Natural World. If one piece is 'out of place' the whole system is affected.

- **AND.....Even other people identify Mental Health in Relationship to others in their collective community....Your well-being affects and is affected by your community relationships**



*As illustrated above, there are many, many different ways that people, groups and cultures define Mental Health.*

The Bounce Back resource offers only a few of the many ideas about being Mentally Healthy and Strong. But, we recognize that there are many more world views that relate to **YOUR** personal experience and understanding of Mental Health and what it means to ‘**Bounce Back**’.

### **THINK ABOUT IT..**

What is YOUR model of Mental Health?

What are YOUR signs that you are Mentally Healthy?

What or Who has influenced YOUR understanding of Mental Health?



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# Section ONE

School Wide Resources



## ANNOUNCEMENTS - ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>What is Bounce Back?</b>	<b>I Bounce Back</b>	<b>We Bounce Back</b>	<b>You Bounce Back</b>	<b>Bounce Back Stronger – Together</b>
<p>This week across Canada is Mental Health Awareness Week.</p> <p><b>Our focus this year is “Bounce Back...Again”!</b></p> <p>Bounce Back means getting back on your feet after a tough time and being able to do the things that you like again.</p> <p>Can you think of a time you have Bounced Back?</p>	<p>This is Day 2 of Bounce Back Again!</p> <p><b>Bouncing Back is about being proud of yourself.</b></p> <p>Kids say that these are the things that helped them Bounce Back:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for help</li> <li>• Talk it out</li> <li>• Focus on the positive</li> <li>• Get active and have fun</li> <li>• Learn to know how you feel</li> <li>• Try something new</li> <li>• Keep trying</li> </ul> <p>Can you think of someone you know that has Bounced Back after a hard time?</p>	<p>Welcome to Day 3 of Bounce Back Again!</p> <p>Today we acknowledge that:</p> <p><b>We care and We believe in you!</b></p> <p>Today we challenge you to do something nice for someone, to show kindness to another person.</p> <p><i>Remember - Even a smile can brighten someone’s day.</i></p>	<p>Our Bounce Back Again theme for today is:</p> <p><b>You can do it!</b></p> <p>But we can’t do it alone. We all need someone to help us when we are going through a tough time.</p> <p>Remember to ask for help.</p> <p>So, talk to someone you trust and... Don’t give up! Try, Try again</p> <p>Think about one person you can tell things to when you are down.</p>	<p>Our final Bounce Back Again theme is:</p> <p><b>Keep Going!</b></p> <p>We are stronger together!</p> <p>We can help each other to stand tall, to keep going and not give up.</p> <p>Together we can Bounce Back stronger</p> <p>Remember to help friends when they need help.</p>



## ANNOUNCEMENTS - SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>What is Bounce Back?</b>	<b>I Bounce Back</b>	<b>We Bounce Back</b>	<b>You Bounce Back</b>	<b>Bounce Back Stronger – Together</b>
<p>This week across Canada is mental health awareness week.</p> <p><b>Our focus this year is “Bounce Back...Again”!</b></p> <p>Bouncing Back from adversity means being able to move past low points in your life and return to your normal self.</p> <p>Can you think of a time you have Bounced Back?</p>	<p>This is Day 2 of Bounce Back Again!</p> <p><b>Bouncing Back is about being proud of yourself.</b></p> <p>Here are some tips that have helped other youth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek support</li> <li>• Talk it out</li> <li>• Focus on the positive</li> <li>• Get active and have fun</li> <li>• Learn to recognize feelings</li> <li>• Try something new</li> <li>• Keep trying</li> </ul> <p>So, how do you Bounce Back?</p>	<p>Welcome to Day 3 of Bounce Back Again!</p> <p>Today we acknowledge that:</p> <p><b>We care and We believe in you!</b></p> <p>Today we challenge you to reach out and perform a random act of kindness.</p> <p>A caring community is one of the best ways to support each other.</p> <p><i>Remember - Even a smile can brighten someone’s day.</i></p>	<p>Our Bounce Back Again theme for today is:</p> <p><b>You can do it!</b></p> <p>However, you can’t always do it alone. We all need someone to help us when we are going through a tough time.</p> <p>Remember, there is nothing wrong with seeking help.</p> <p>So, talk to someone you trust and...Don’t give up!</p>	<p>Our final Bounce Back Again theme is:</p> <p><b>Keep Going!</b></p> <p>We are stronger together!</p> <p>Bouncing Back is about:</p> <p><b>”Absorbing the hits, focusing on the positive, dealing with the problem and coming back stronger.”</b></p> <p>So...</p> <p>Keep bouncing back, Stay plugged in and Stay connected</p> <p>There may be others who need help with this. Be there for these people and together, we can all BOUNCE BACK!</p>

## SCHOOL WIDE ACTIVITIES

The activities below can be completed as a whole school, division or class.

If you choose to complete activities as a whole school, you may want to choose only 2 or 3.

If you assign specific activities to a division or to several classes, it is very easy to accomplish all of the activities within a week's time.

***However you choose to complete them, your school will be bursting with positive energy throughout the week!!***

### Gratitude Graffiti

Place mural paper around your school walls and ask students to write down things that they are grateful for.

### High-Five Hallways

Encourage students to "high-five" people they pass in the hallways throughout the day as a celebration of the good we see in others.

### "Bounce Back" Butterflies

Provide paper butterflies to students and staff to write kind messages on. Assign each student a person to exchange Bounce Back Butterflies with, or put all butterflies into a hat and have students draw one out.

### "Bounce Back" Battlement

Decorate empty cardboard cartons with resilience messages (see "Exploring Your Resiliency" lesson for details). Build a tower to show that, when we stand together to create awareness about the importance of mental wellness, it can make us strong.

### Cheerful Chains

Cut strips of coloured paper. Have students write one thing that they are good at doing, enjoy or are grateful for. Glue the strips together in a link form and decorate the school with the chain.

### Positive Post-its

Provide students with post-it notes to write positive messages on (primary students can draw happy faces or funny faces), then allow students to post them around the school.

### "Wellness Ways" Wall

Set up a visual tracking system (e.g. mural paper) for students to record activities they do to keep mentally well (e.g. healthy eating, physical activity, listening to music, getting enough sleep, etc.)

# Foundation for Mentally Healthy Schools

# BOUNCE BACK - CREATING CHANGE IN MY SCHOOL

## For Student Leaders

Mental health is **important to everyone**, and there are things you can do right now to keep yourself well and promote change for yourself, your friends, your school and your community. What can YOU do to create change and promote mental health in your school?

### GET INFORMED!!

**What do you know and understand about mental health? How is mental health relevant to everyone? What are the issues related to stigma about mental health? What messages and information is needed in your school?**

### Where to Get Information

#### Websites:

- [mindyourmind.ca](http://mindyourmind.ca)
- [Teenmentalhealth.org](http://Teenmentalhealth.org)
- [Camh.ca](http://Camh.ca)

#### Talk to School Staff

- Your Guidance Counselor
- Student Success Teacher
- Resource Teacher
- Administration (Principal/Vice-Principal)
- Psychology Staff
- Social Worker/School Support Counselor
- Public Health Nurse

#### You Tube Videos:

- Anything from the mindyourmind YouTube channel
- Change Mental Health
- It's Time to Talk (TVAd) – 1:00 min
- Walk This Way Together
- Change the View (student- made films)



## WHAT CAN I DO IN MY SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

### Increase Awareness....

- **Create posters** with QR codes leading students to mental health resources, mental health information and/ or positive messages.
- Speak to school administrators about using Social Media to create an online space for mental health promotion or to **de-bunk myths about mental illnesses**.
- Arrange to have **guest speakers** in your school or in your classes who can speak about mental health (BUT...be sure that there are school staff and plans for follow-up after the speaker)
- Organize **mental health promotion activities** that help students understand about positive mental health care (e.g. a puppy room, yoga instructors, mindfulness experts, mental health professionals, advocates for mental health etc.)
- Arrange for community partners to come in for a health fair or information session for students and staff.

## Talking About Mental Health is **MORE THAN** just Talking about Diagnoses!! Promote Wellness and Resiliency...

- Arrange to do daily or weekly **mental health tips** over the announcements. Have your school's social media coordinator share the tips via Twitter or your school's facebook page.
- **Create activities** at lunch that students can do that promote mental health (yoga, intra-mural sports or challenges, drop-in art or music activities, etc.)
- Ask your school administrators about the possibility of creating a **dedicated room or space** in your school for students to **de-stress** and how that might work in your school.

### Get Others Involved...

- **Create videos, memes, vines, and/or PSA messages** around the topic of mental health and share via social media and/or your school's networks.
- Organize a school-wide contest where **students are challenged to create** a t-shirt design, poster, video etc. around the topic of **positive mental health** and get community partners to donate prizes.
- **Identify caring adults** in the school community who have mental health training or who are identified as being good listeners and **make the school population aware of those people** and how to access them.
- Talk to administrators about creating an **ongoing mental health club or group** in the school, or look into how a peer support/mentor program might work in your school.

### OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Do you need volunteer hours? Are you looking for other ways to become better informed about mental health or to promote mental health in your community? These are some local health organizations that have a volunteer opportunities:

- **Mindyourmind** – [www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)
- **CPRI** – [www.vocpri.ca](http://www.vocpri.ca)
- **Canadian Mental Health Association** – [www.ontario.cmha.ca](http://www.ontario.cmha.ca), click on “Get Involved”
- **St. Joseph's Health Care London** – [www.sjhc.london.on.ca](http://www.sjhc.london.on.ca), click on “volunteer”

## Mental health is a **JOURNEY**, not a **DESTINATION**.

Mental health should be something we talk about all the time, not just during Mental Health Week.

**How can you make mental health a priority year-round, every year in your school?**



# STIGMA REDUCTION IDEAS FOR MY SCHOOL

## Goals:

To help students understand that mental health affects us all and ways to support each other when we are struggling.

To help de-bunk the myths and misunderstanding about mental health and illness.

Develop a **Virtual Scavenger Hunt** to challenge students to explore on-line mental health resources

**CIRCLE  
1 OR 2 IDEAS  
THAT YOU COULD  
GET STARTED  
IN YOUR  
SCHOOL**

Talk to your School Administrator about using **School Website or Facebook Page** to Post Mental Health Tips for Students

Develop a **Wellness Wall** in your school where students can post things they do to keep themselves mentally well. Your Public Health Nurse could help with this.

Talk to your School Administrator about a **Designated Wellness Space** that students can use to de-stress and access mental health resources

**Create Posters with QR codes** linking students to useful online mental health resources

Organize a **Mental Health Self-Care Event** (e.g. puppy room, yoga, community information fair) that promotes relaxation and stress management

Plan to provide **daily mental health tips** on the morning announcements during mental health awareness

**BY  
STARTING THE  
CONVERSATION...  
YOU ARE  
CREATING  
CHANGE!**

With the support of relevant teachers (e.g. guidance, art, English, PHE), develop a school based multi-media Contest that focuses on **WAYS TO PROMOTE POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH**

Organize **Lunch Time Activities** that promote mental health (e.g. quizzes, games for prizes that help students develop stronger awareness).

**OTHER IDEAS?**

Work with your Guidance Staff to **Create a Resource Display Board** that outlines Support Staff at your school and in your community

## ONLINE RESOURCES

There are a number of excellent online resources and You Tube links that promote well-being and resiliency. Here are some ideas to prompt classroom discussion as well as further teaching resources. **Search by the title given to find the appropriate links.**

Where Can I Find....?	Selected Online Resources	Comments
General Information and Community Support	<a href="http://www.mentalhealth4kids.com">www.mentalhealth4kids.com</a> <a href="http://www.kidshelpphone.ca">www.kidshelpphone.ca</a> <a href="http://www.cmha.ca">www.cmha.ca</a> <a href="http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca">www.kidsmentalhealth.ca</a> <a href="http://www.health.gov.on.ca">www.health.gov.on.ca</a> <a href="http://www.healthunit.com">www.healthunit.com</a> <a href="http://kidshealth.org">http://kidshealth.org</a>	Become familiar with these websites as they routinely update information about local events and resources. Your regional public health unit will have a number of resources and workshops as well.
Classroom Resources	<a href="http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Welcome.aspx">www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Welcome.aspx</a> <a href="http://www.anxietybc.com">www.anxietybc.com</a> <a href="http://www.psychologyfoundation.org">www.psychologyfoundation.org</a> <a href="http://www.kidshavestresstoo.org">www.kidshavestresstoo.org</a> <a href="http://www.cymhin.offordcentre.com">www.cymhin.offordcentre.com</a>	A number of excellent, free resources. See especially, " <b>Stress Toolkit</b> " which can be ordered for free from psychology foundation (young elementary level) <b>Cymhin</b> site provides an online copy of the " <b>Making a Difference</b> " teacher's guide.
Resources for Teenagers	<a href="http://www.mindyourmind.ca">www.mindyourmind.ca</a> <a href="http://www.teenmentalhealth.org">www.teenmentalhealth.org</a> <a href="http://www.camh.ca">www.camh.ca</a> <a href="http://www.mindcheck.ca">www.mindcheck.ca</a> <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/elyn_saks_seeing_mental_illness.html">www.ted.com/talks/elyn_saks_seeing_mental_illness.html</a> <a href="http://www.ted.com/talks/vikram_patel_mental_health_for_all_by_involving_all.html">www.ted.com/talks/vikram_patel_mental_health_for_all_by_involving_all.html</a> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEvLL-u2f1w">www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEvLL-u2f1w</a> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiCrniLQGYc">www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiCrniLQGYc</a>	These youth-driven websites provide numerous resources and ideas that can be used by students for both personal and educational purposes. " <b>Mind Your Mind</b> " also provides high school curriculum resources and lesson plans.
Evidence-Based school intervention programs	<a href="http://smh-assist.ca/">http://smh-assist.ca/</a> <a href="http://www.excellenceforchildandadulthood.ca/">www.excellenceforchildandadulthood.ca/</a> <a href="http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/">www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/</a> <a href="http://www.nasponline.org">www.nasponline.org</a> <a href="http://www.promisingpractices.net">www.promisingpractices.net</a> <a href="http://www.reachinginreachingout.com">www.reachinginreachingout.com</a> <a href="http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu">www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu</a>	The first two links are our provincial partners who are continuously working on reviewing and developing school based resources. Each of these sites provides an extensive resource guide on evidence-based practices relevant to the school setting.
Stigma Reduction Ideas	<b>You Tube Videos</b> <i>Change Mental Health</i> <i>It's time to Talk (TV Ad) – 1:00 min</i> <i>Walk This Way Together</i> <i>Bethany Hamilton – Tells Her Story</i> <i>Dynamo – The Magic of Life</i> <i>Jamal Edwards – Opening Doors</i> <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCNCwJloca0">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCNCwJloca0</a>	These You Tube vides would be more appropriate for senior elementary and secondary students.
Optimism and Resiliency	<a href="http://www.kellybear.com">www.kellybear.com</a> <a href="http://www.embracethefuture.org">www.embracethefuture.org</a> <a href="http://www.fishfulthinking.com">www.fishfulthinking.com</a> <a href="http://www.authentic happiness.org">www.authentic happiness.org</a> <a href="http://www.resil.ca">www.resil.ca</a> <a href="http://www.resilnet.uiuc.edu">www.resilnet.uiuc.edu</a> <b>You Tube Videos</b> <b>Review TED.com – Search 'happiness'</b> <i>School A to Z: Building Your Child's Resilience</i> <i>Coping &amp; Resilience – Dr. Sandra Parker</i> <i>Emotional Resiliency Animation</i> <i>Resiliency with Dr. Wayne Hammond</i>	Be sure to search You Tube videos by the <u>full titles given</u> .

## INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC

Music is a great way to express our feelings and promote resiliency and optimism. The following songs have been selected by young people who know what it feels like to have someone believe in them!

### Simple Tips:

Choose a song to start each day. Play it during morning entry or at natural break times (lunch, breaks). Encourage students to think about how they can identify with the lyrics. Invite them to offer other songs that have had personal meaning to them! Many of these songs have excellent YouTube videos (ensure you select the \*clean version when relevant):

**Brave** (Sara Bareilles)  
**Don't Stop Believin'** (Journey)  
**Fall Back Down** (Rancid)  
**Firework** (Katy Perry)  
**Good Life** (One Republic)  
**Hold On** (Good Charlotte)  
**I am Superwoman** (Alicia Keys)  
**I Can** (Nas)  
**I Will Wait** (Mumford and Sons)  
**Invincible** (Hedley)  
**Invisible** (Hunter Hayes)  
**Imagine** (John Lennon)  
**It's A Beautiful Day** (U2)  
**It's My Life** (Bon Jovi)  
**It's Time** (Imagine Dragons)  
**Just Fine** (Mary J. Blige)  
**Lean on Me** (Bill Withers)  
**Let It Go** (Demi Lovato)  
**Let It Be** (Beatles)  
**Life** (Our Lady Peace)  
**Little Things** (One Direction)  
**Mirrors** (Justin Timberlake)  
**One Life** (Hedley)  
**Ordinary Day** (Great Big Sea)  
**People like Us** (Kelly Clarkson)  
**Roar** (Katy Perry)  
**Say** (John Mayer)  
**Silver Lining** (Jessie J)  
**Sky Scaper** (Demi Lovato)  
**Stronger** (Kelly Clarkson)  
**Titanium** (David Guetta ft. Sia)  
**True Colours** (Artists Against Bullying )  
**Try** (Pink)  
**You've got a Friend** (James Taylor)  
**What Colour Are You?** (Danny Michel)



## INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

The following offers a selection of inspirational messages for use in your school. You can use these in any number of ways.

*Some ideas might include:*

**If something is wrong, fix it if you can. But train yourself not to worry.  
Worry never fixes anything.**

(Ernest Hemingway)

**What we achieve inwardly will change our outer reality.**

(Plutarch)

**It is only in sorrow bad weather masters us; in joy we face the storm and defy it.**

(Amelia Barr)

**We can't stop the waves, but we can learn to surf.**

(Jon Kabat-Zinn)

**Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.**

(Ambrose Redmoon)

**Don't let the mind bully your body into believing it must carry the burden of its worries.**

(Astrid Alauda)

**As soon as we stop worrying, a solution pops up.**

(Devid DeNotaris)

**Sometimes the most urgent thing you can do is take a complete rest.**

(Ashleigh Brilliant)

**Every day begins with an act of courage and hope; getting out of bed.**

(Mason Cooley)

**He is able who thinks he is able.**

(Buddha)

**Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.**

(Nido Qubein)

**Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths.**

(Etty Hillesum)

**You. Yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.**

(Buddha)

**Despair says I cannot lift that weight. Happiness says I do not have to.**

(James Richardson)

**Love looks forward, hate looks back, anxiety has eyes all over its head.**

(Mignon McLaughlin)

**Be too big for worry and too noble for anger.**

(Christina D. Larsen)

**It doesn't really matter where you start, only that you start somewhere.**

(Conquer Your Anxiety Success Program)

Encourage students to select their personal favourite or design their own as an art project or cover page.

Encourage your class to develop a classroom display depicting their collective ideas about Bouncing Back.

Promote a school wide display board highlighting positive, bounce back messages.

Select a new quote each day to begin the morning with a positive message.



## THINGS WE CAN LEARN FROM A DOG

Unknown Author

- Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.
- Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.
- Let others know when they have invaded your territory.
- Take naps and stretch before rising.
- Run, romp, and play daily.
- Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.
- Be loyal.
- Never pretend to be something you're not.
- If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
- When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle him or her gently.
- Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
- Avoid biting when a single growl will do.
- On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.
- When you are happy, dance around and wag your entire body.
- No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout; run right back and make friends.
- Delight in the simple joys of a long walk.



NSD Holly at LDCSB

# Section Two

Elementary School  
Resources



## RESILIENCY

### At Home, School and Work

As a teacher, parent, school staff or caring adult, you can influence the ways that young people learn to 'Bounce Back from adversity, stress and challenge.

**Resiliency:** A combination of skills and positive attributes that people gain from their life experiences and relationships. These attributes help them solve problems, cope with challenges and bounce back from disappointments. We can help our young people to develop attributes or "assets" that enable them to be resilient and will help them throughout their lives.

#### **Resilient Assets:**

**Relationships and Reaching Out:** Strong parent-child relationships, social skills and self-confidence, the ability to ask for help, understanding of personal boundaries, belonging to community groups.

**Emotional Skills:** Positive self-esteem, ability to calm oneself, ability to talk about feelings, sense of humour, ability to distract oneself, ability to see hopeful side of problems and challenges, knowing how to act appropriately in various situations.

**Competence:** Goal-setting and planning, problems solving and reasoning skills, practical skills like being able to cook, clean, budget, fix things and find information, the ability to look after oneself and be independent, assertiveness, perseverance, good judgement and critical thinking skills.

**Optimism:** Confidence in ones own skills and abilities, ability to judge risks, positive childhood experiences, supportive family and community, being generous and supportive of others.



**Coping Skills:** The tools we use to reduce stress and deal with difficult situations. Remember, kids have stress too! Young people need to be connected with caring and responsive adults who can help them cope. They need to be taught how to identify their feelings, manage their emotions and break problems down into manageable parts.

#### **How Can You Help Children Build Resiliency:**

- Start with a nurturing and caring relationship
- Add lots of listening and respect for the young person's voice
- Teach skills for self-control and self-discipline
- Believe in their ideas, dreams and abilities
- Model optimistic thinking
- Demonstrate problem-solving skills and ways to handle disappointments



Adapted from the booklet: *Kids Can Cope: Parenting Resilient Children At Home and At School* (CMHA)  
[www.mentalhealthweek.cmha.ca](http://www.mentalhealthweek.cmha.ca)

## THIS IS HOW I BOUNCED BACK

### LESSON PLAN: This is How I Bounced Back

#### OVERVIEW

Stress is a normal part of everyday life and can help motivate us to do our best..

#### KEY POINTS ABOUT STRESS

- Too much stress for too long can become harmful
- Children and youth can benefit from opportunities to reflect on existing coping strategies
- New coping skills can build on these existing strategies to recover from stressful experiences

#### ACTIVITY/PROCESS

- Discuss the concept of stress with students: What is stress? How does it affect us?
- Have students think about how they have managed stress in the past: What worked? What didn't?
- As a group, brainstorm a list of other possible stress-relieving activities
- Distribute "This is How I Bounced Back" template for students to fill out and share their favourite stress relieving activities
- Balls can be posted throughout the school as a way of sharing ideas and strategies for coping with stress and "Bouncing Back!"

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Visit the following website for stress lessons toolkit and more information about ways for kids to cope with stress

- [www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org)
- [www.morethanmedication.com](http://www.morethanmedication.com)



# EXPLORING YOUR RESILIENCY

## LESSON PLAN: Exploring YOUR Resiliency

### OVERVIEW

The key ingredients to resiliency are outlined with an opportunity for students to explore what it means for them personally.

### KEY POINTS ABOUT RESILIENCY

- Seek support
- Talk about It
- Keep a positive focus
- Try something new
- Keep trying, even if it gets tough
- Learn to recognize your feelings

### ACTIVITY/PROCESS

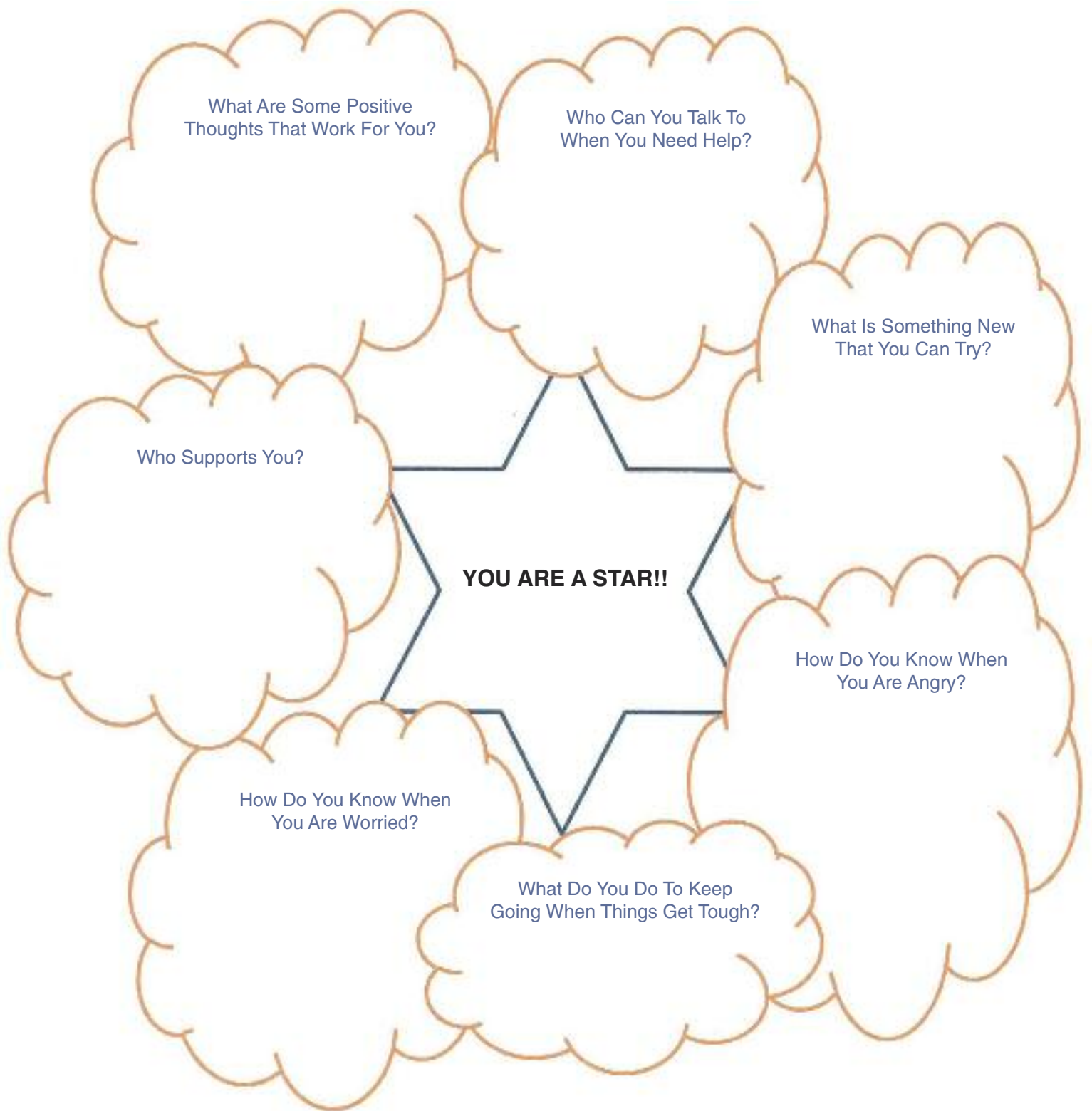
- Provide students with the graphic organizer (*You Are A Star and/or Growing Happy Feelings*) that provides them with a tool to organize their ideas and thoughts about what “**Bouncing Back**” means
- Encourage them to identify their own personal resources
- This visual tool can be used as a cover page or a shared visual classroom display

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Visit the following websites for more information about mental health and ideas for resiliency resources

- [www.resil.ca](http://www.resil.ca)
- [www.resilnet.uiuc.edu](http://www.resilnet.uiuc.edu)
- [www.kidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca)
- [www.psychologyfoundation.org/pdf/publications/ResilienceChildrenBooklet.pdf](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org/pdf/publications/ResilienceChildrenBooklet.pdf)

# EXPLORING YOUR RESILIENCY



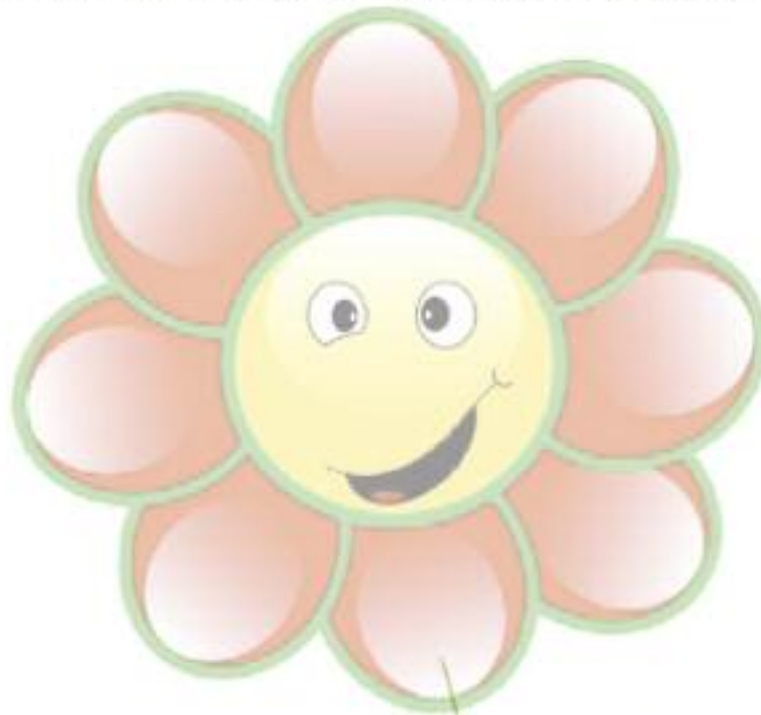
# Growing happy feelings...

Let's imagine that you can grow happy feelings just like you can grow flowers.

Flowers need a lot of looking after to help them to be at their best. Different flowers need different sorts of soil. Some like shade and some like lots of sun.

In the same way, different people would like different things to help them grow happy feelings.

Write down the things that you need for your happy feelings to grow!



[www.sheffkids.co.uk](http://www.sheffkids.co.uk)



# QUIET YOUR MIND EXERCISE

## LESSON PLAN: Quiet Your Mind

### OVERVIEW

Guided relaxation or meditation is a powerful strategy to help relieve stress.

### KEY POINTS ABOUT RELAXATION

- Relaxation techniques can be practiced anytime and almost anywhere to relieve tension, improve concentration and re-energize.
- Like many people, you may be reluctant to try meditation as it may seem mysterious, intimidating or too unusual. Maybe you've tried it and felt silly or it didn't seem to work.
- If you find yourself stressed out, filled with worry, or just not feeling your best, you might want to give it a try...the results may surprise you!
- The essence of meditation is to focus your attention, so that "mental clutter" (everyday thoughts of work, chores or worries) fall away. This can bring a sense of calmness, peacefulness and balance, as well as new insights and clarity. In time, you may find that these results linger with you long after the meditation session has ended.

### ACTIVITY/PROCESS

- Using guided relaxation or meditation will have the greatest benefit if practiced regularly
- Meditation takes only a few minutes to help students learn how to quiet their mind and prepare for the day:
  - Primary: 5 minutes or more
  - Junior: 10 minutes
  - Intermediate: 10 minutes or more
- Continue this practice once per week to allow for more skill building
- Suggest students use this practice if having difficulty with focus or stress
- Suggest students use this practice if having difficulty at home with sleep

### POINTS TO CONSIDER

- Meditation can also hold a place in almost all religious beliefs and practices. In fact, prayer may be thought of as a type of meditation
- There's no right or wrong way to meditate. In fact, there are many different ways of practicing meditation, so try several to find one that suits your needs. Don't be concerned if the mind buzzes with thoughts, or if the students don't feel any different when you're finished. Just keep practicing.
- Everyone will get better at it over time, which means that you'll see the greatest benefit if you do it regularly. For example, you might schedule ten minutes every morning before school starts. Or a few minutes after noon break before starting the afternoon. You could also use meditation techniques whenever you are dealing with a particularly stressful or painful situation.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Visit the following website for sample guided relaxation and meditation resources:

- Sudbury and District Health Unit:  
[www.sdhu.com/content/resources/folder.asp?folder=24183&parent=13&lang=0](http://www.sdhu.com/content/resources/folder.asp?folder=24183&parent=13&lang=0)
- Eli Bay:  
[www.elibay.com/](http://www.elibay.com/)

(Adapted from: [http://www.morethanmedication.ca/en/article/index/meditation\\_techniques](http://www.morethanmedication.ca/en/article/index/meditation_techniques))

## MEDITATION EXERCISE

While the specifics may vary, most meditation sessions follow these basic steps. Encourage the students to do the following:

1. For sitting meditation, have the students **find a comfortable position** cross-legged on the floor (they can also sit in a chair with their feet flat on the floor) and back straight but relaxed.
2. **Rest their hands in their lap**, nesting palms up.
3. **Partially close their eyes and relax their gaze** by staring into the middle distance.
4. **Choose a focal point** to help direct their attention. This could be their breathing, a word that they repeat in their mind, physical sensations (e.g. the temperature of the room; what sounds they hear in the silence), a photograph of a beautiful setting or an image that they picture in their mind, such as light or water.
5. Begin by simply **being aware of their breathing**, and gradually relax their body.
6. Tell the students to **allow their mind to relax**. Don't try to empty the mind or push thoughts away. Just watch them come and go, and gently return your wandering attention to the focus of your meditation session.



## QUICK WAYS TO RELAX

### Kid Cuddle

Standing or sitting, stretch arms out wide, wide, wide. Slowly bring arms forward, cross in front. Each hand holds onto the opposite shoulder. Squeeze, rock and cuddle the kid in your arms.

### Cloud Push (to stretch out tight muscles)

We are going to practice stretching up and pushing the clouds away. Stand tall. Place your hands on your hips. Bring one arm way up over your head and stretch it straight up. Try and reach a cloud and push it away. Push, push, push! Now let your arm fall slowly to your side. Bring the other arm up and push the cloud. Push, push, push! Now let your arm fall slowly to your side. Lift both arms up. Clasp hands together; turn the palms up and push and bounce the cloud. Slowly, slowly let your arms gloat gently back to your sides.



### Who Knows?

Stand at attention, or sit up straight with hands along sides. Raise shoulders up to your ears. Hold. Let shoulders drop. While your shoulders go up, say “Who?” When you drop your shoulders, say “Knows?”. Repeat five times.

### Deep Breathing (to slow down the body and quiet the mind)

Get into a comfortable position, either lying flat on your back or sitting comfortably with both feet flat on the floor and if you like, close your eyes. We are going to practice breathing slowly and deeply. Imagine you have a balloon in your tummy. Place one hand below your belly button. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose to a count of 4. Feel the balloon fill up with air. When the balloon is full, breathe out slowly, using a count of 4 to flatten the balloon. Your hand may rise and fall as the balloon fills and empties.

1. Slowly blow up the balloon....1.....2.....3.....4.....
2. Now, slowly blow out and flatten the balloon.....1.....2.....3.....4....
3. Repeat 5 times and then breathe normally.

**Caution:** Remember to breathe out as slowly as you breathe in. Breathing in deeply without relaxed slow exhalation can lead to dizziness and hyperventilation.

### Go Tight – Go Loose

Stand at attention, hands along sides, fingers pointing down.

Make a fist with each hand, squeeze each hand tight.

Squeeze.....Squeeze....Squeeze...

Relax. Now, while you squeeze your fists again, tighten your arms to squeeze your body.

Squeeze....Squeeze.....Squeeze....Relax.

Now, this time also squeeze your legs together while making a fist and squeezing your arms together.

Squeeze.....Squeeze....Squeeze....Relax. Repeat.

Shake out your hands, arms, and legs.

Enjoy the sense of relaxation.

[www.kidshavestresstoo.org](http://www.kidshavestresstoo.org) ('Kids Have Stress Tool' is a program of the Psychology Foundation of Canada)

# WHAT IS STRESS?

## LESSON PLAN: Learning about Stress

### ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

Worksheets: “**What is Stress?**” (word search), “**What Can I Do About My Stress?**” and “**Letting Go of Worries**”

### OVERVIEW

The goal of this lesson is to help children learn at an early age, that it’s important to recognize and manage stress proactively.

### KEY POINTS

- Stress is a normal part of everyday life. Limited amounts of stress can have a positive influence on motivation and creativity, but excessive stress has an overwhelming and debilitating effect.
- Too much stress can have a dramatic effect on learning and social development. Excessive stress interferes with executive functions such as attention, memory, organization, and integration.
- Stress-related problems may affect student’s performance in school, and many stressors are related directly to the school environment. In order to support student’s learning, teachers can address topics of stress and coping through the curriculum as well as daily classroom management practices.

### ACTIVITY/PROCESS

- Use the discussion guide provided to introduce the topic of stress before showing the video to your class.
- Play the “Lesson 1 Video” (less than 5 min) located at: [www.morethanmedication.ca/en/stress\\_lessons/insiders?educators](http://www.morethanmedication.ca/en/stress_lessons/insiders?educators)
- After watching the video, follow up with a group discussion using the prompts provided.
- Hand out and complete the activity sheets, “**What is Stress**” word search and “**What Can I Do About My Stress?**”. For younger students, you may prefer to use the “**Letting Go of Worries**” worksheet.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- For a more detailed lesson plan, please download or order the **FREE Stress Lessons Classroom Toolkit** at: [www.morethanmedication.ca/en/stress\\_lessons/insiders?educators](http://www.morethanmedication.ca/en/stress_lessons/insiders?educators)

# WHAT IS STRESS?

## Discussion Guide / Talking Points:

### *Review:*

Stress is a normal part of life and essential to a young student's learning and development. But too much stress for too long can be harmful or "toxic." One of the critical ingredients that makes stress tolerable rather than toxic is the presence of supportive adults that help children learn to cope with and recover from difficult experiences.

- Has everyone heard the term - stress?
- What does it mean to you? (List ideas on the board)
- Let's think about our bodies for a minute - has anyone ever had a headache that they think might have been caused by stress?
  - or felt like there's a brick in your stomach, as if you've done something wrong or something bad is going to happen?
  - or butterfly feelings in your stomach if you're excited?
  - felt tense, fidgety and like you need to use the toilet a lot?
  - felt nervous and worried for a long time?
  - felt pressured, hassled, and hurried?
  - felt irritable and moody?
  - had allergic reactions, such as a rash or asthma?
  - had trouble sleeping?
  - felt sad or depressed?
  - felt like you're turning red or feel flushed?
- Those are just a few ways that stress can affect your body as well as your emotions.
- Stress is actually pretty complex. Let's watch this short video to learn a little bit more.

### *After the Video:*

- In the video, we learned that a little stress is necessary to help us function. Just like a violin or guitar string needs to have the right amount of stress or tension to make music, we need some stress in our lives to get us moving and motivate us to be our best.
- Too much stress, though can be dangerous for your physical, mental and emotional health, especially if we feel like it's out of our control or we don't feel like we can deal with it.
- But if we stretch the string too much, it will break. We're kind of like that guitar string: we need just the right amount of stress to perform well and feel good, but too much stress can make us snap!

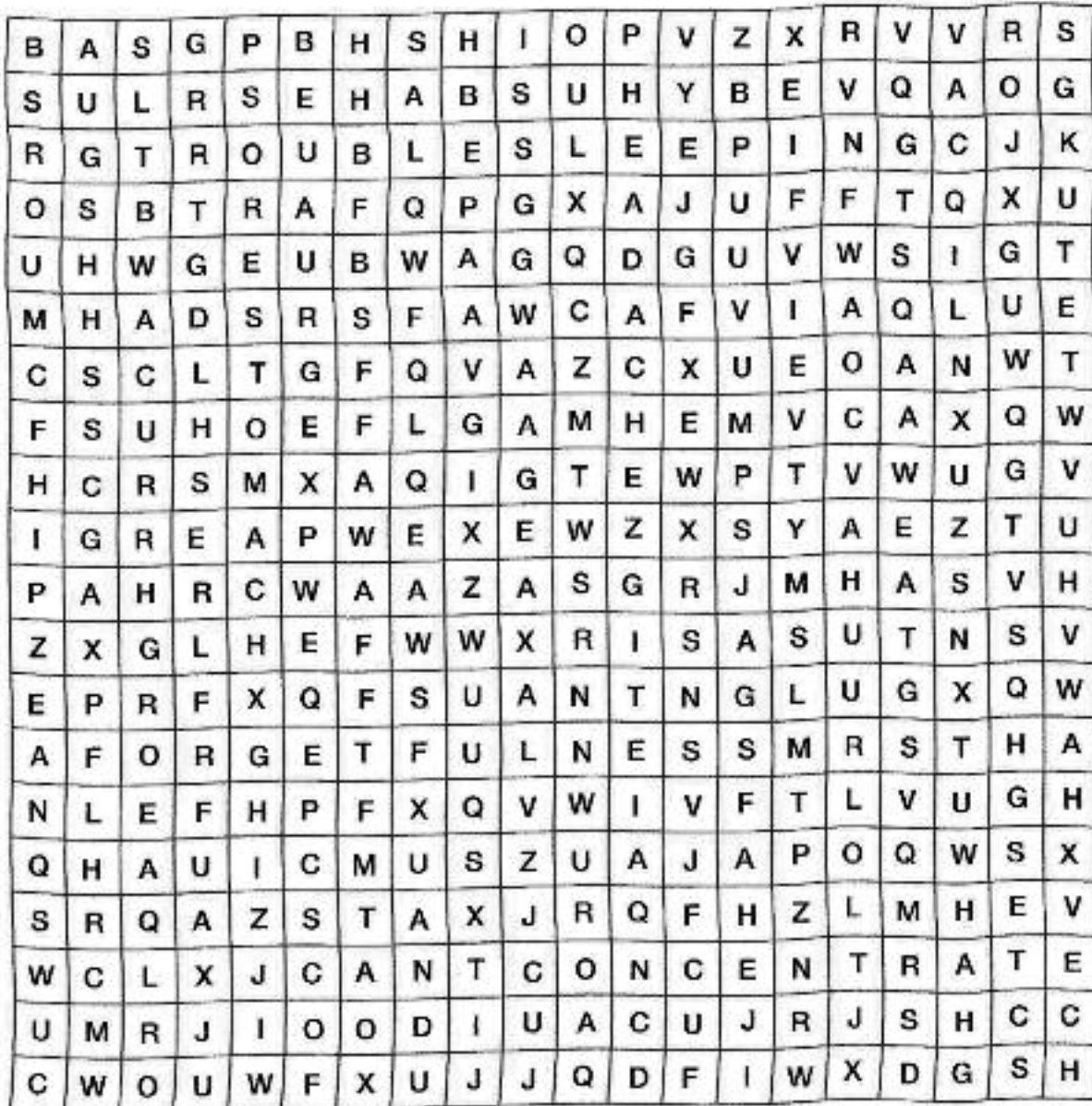
Adapted from the FREE Stress Lessons Toolkit (grade 4-6) created by the Psychology Foundation of Canada in partnership with Pfizer Canada. The complete 7 lesson toolkit can be downloaded online from [www.morethanmedication.ca](http://www.morethanmedication.ca) or [www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org). You are encouraged to review the complete kit, along with the accompanying DVD materials to provide a comprehensive overview for students.

# WHAT IS STRESS?

## How does STRESS affect your body?

Find the common signs of extreme stress in the word search below.

- Sore stomach
- Headache
- Forgetfulness
- Butterflies in stomach
- Can't concentrate
- Trouble sleeping



This is a sample of a resource from the **FREE Stress Lessons Toolkit** (grade 4-6) created by the Psychology Foundation of Canada in partnership with Pfizer Canada. The complete 7 lesson toolkit can be downloaded online from:

[www.morethanmedication.ca](http://www.morethanmedication.ca) or [www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org)

You are encouraged to review the complete kit, along with the accompanying DVD materials to provide a comprehensive overview for students.

## WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT MY STRESS?

You may not always be able to control your physical reactions to stress, but you can decide how you will cope with your stress. What kind of stress-relieving activities help you stay in-tune? Check those that work for you and add your own.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing         | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with my dog/cat/pet              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing sports         | <input type="checkbox"/> Staying on top of my schoolwork/homework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to a friend    | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking to a trusted adult               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to music     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing or drawing     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watching a funny video | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                    |

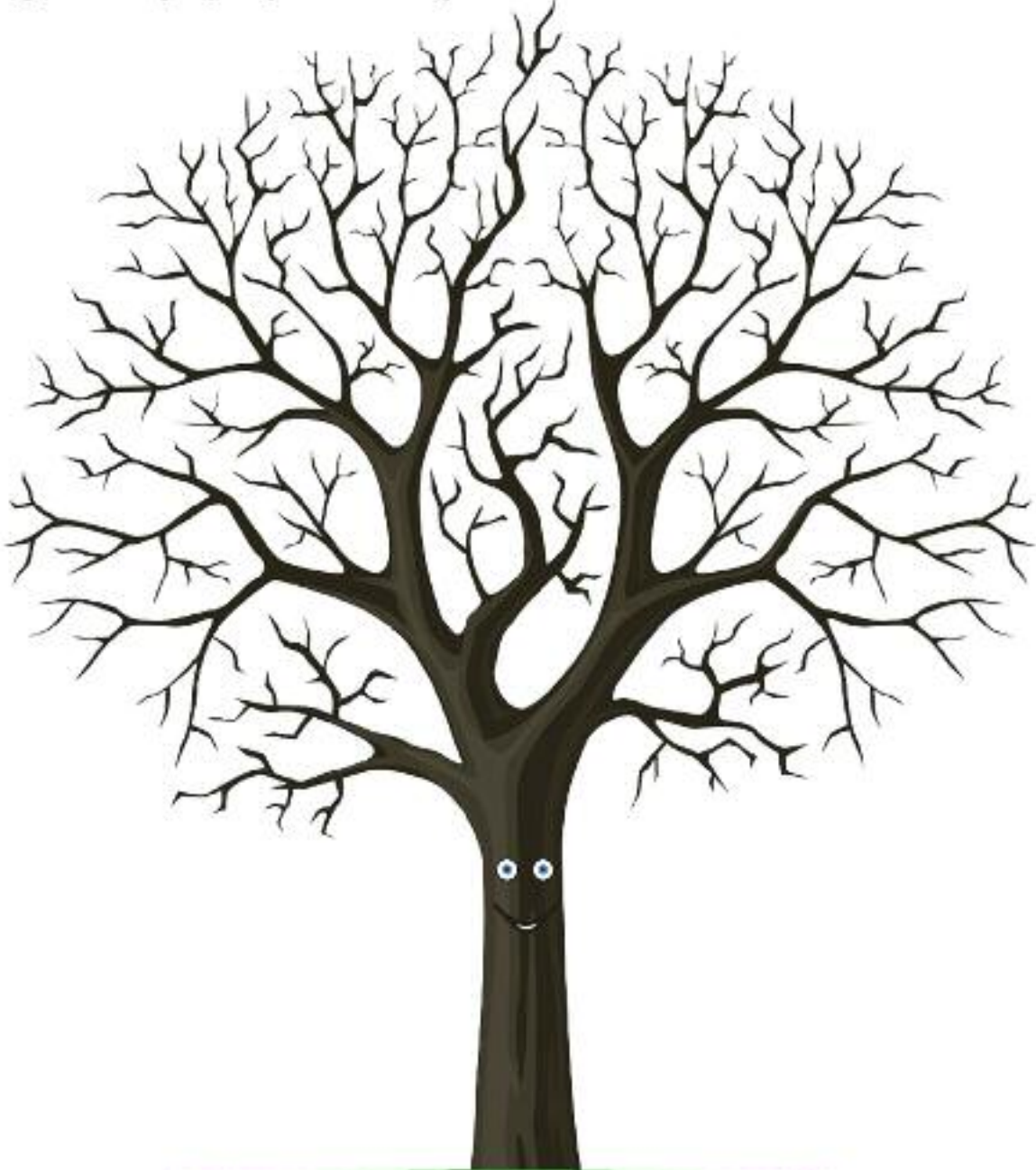
Draw your favourite stress-relieving activity.

This is a sample of a resource from the **FREE Stress Lessons Toolkit** (grade 4-6) created by the Psychology Foundation of Canada in partnership with Pfizer Canada. The complete 7 lesson toolkit can be downloaded online from: [www.morethanmedication.ca](http://www.morethanmedication.ca) or [www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org)

You are encouraged to review the complete kit, along with the accompanying DVD materials to provide a comprehensive overview for students.

# Letting Go Of Worries

Imagine that there is a tree called the **Hug Me** tree. It is so big and has so many branches that it can take away all your worries for you. Draw or write about any worries you might have and stick them on the branches. You can use the Hug Me tree at night to leave your worries behind before you go to sleep...just picture it in your mind!



Imagine yourself giving the **Hug Me** tree a great big hug!

[www.sheffkids.co.uk](http://www.sheffkids.co.uk)



## CHILDREN'S STORYBOOKS THAT PROMOTE RESILIENCE

The themes in these storybooks relate to seven abilities associated with resilience in children. Most of these books are available in public libraries or through online booksellers. The table indicates which of the seven resiliency characteristics are highlighted.

**KEY:** ER = emotional regulation    IC = impulse control    CA = causal analysis    SE = self-efficacy  
 E = empathy    O = optimism    RO = reaching out

Book Title	Author	Synopsis
<b>Feelings</b> ER, IC	Aliki	Pictures, poems, and stories portray various emotions, including jealousy, anger, fear, joy, and excitement.
<b>Moondance</b> ER, IC, O, RO	Asch, Frank	Little Bird helps his friend Bear challenge some negative beliefs and follow his desire to dance with the clouds, the rain, and the moon.
<b>Mr. Magnolia</b> O	Blake, Quentin	Mr. Magnolia's positive attitude helps him cope with having only one boot to wear, as he focuses on all the other things he does have.
<b>Fat, Fat Rose Marie</b> CA, SE, E	Passen, Lisa	A new girl at school gets teased by a classmate, but is able to bounce back because of a friendship she forms with another peer.
<b>Just Because I Am</b> ER, SE	Payne, Lauren Murphy	This colourfully illustrated book provides examples of how children can talk to themselves to encourage self-acceptance and recognition of their feelings.
<b>Three Cheers for Errol!</b> CA, SE, RO	Cole, Babette	Young rat Errol is a talented, persistent athlete who creatively overcomes the mean-spirited competition at the annual ratathlon.
<b>Daydreamers</b> ER, SE, O	Feelings, Tom	Simple poetry voices the benefits of daydreaming to maintain hope, and to develop and mature.
<b>The Short Tree and the Bird that Could Not Sing</b> E, O, RO	Foon, Dennis	A short, lonely tree becomes friends with an out-of-tune songbird when they accept each others' shortcomings and focus on the things they like about each other.
<b>Stay Fang</b> ER, SE	Hazen, Barbara Shook	A young boy learns from his dog how to face disappointment.
<b>Chester's Way</b> RO	Henke, Kevin	Two mouse friends develop flexibility by accepting a new mouse in the neighbourhood even though she does things differently.
<b>I Like Being Me</b> ER, CA, SE, E	Lalli, Judy	A collection of poems about being kind, solving problems, learning from mistakes, telling the truth, dealing with feelings, and more.
<b>Frederick</b> ER, E, O	Lionni, Leo	This story demonstrates acceptance of different people's strengths and contributions, highlighting visualization as a useful coping strategy in times of stress.
<b>Swimmy</b> CA, SE	Lionni, Leo	A school of fish discovers it can defend itself against a bully shark by working together.
<b>Badger's Bad Mood</b> ER, RO	Varley, Susan	Badger's friends help him out when he can't shake his bad mood.

# Section THREE

Secondary School  
Resources



## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING STIGMA AND THE MEDIA

### LESSON PLAN: Stigma Activity – What is Stigma? (75 min)

#### OVERVIEW

Suggested classes: English, Media Studies, Social Science and Humanities, Communications Technology, Health, Drama

**The resources about stigma can be used on their own to engage your class in a discussion about mental illnesses, or as a precursor to the media awareness activity.**

#### Included:

- A cloze note with teacher answers
- A myths and facts quiz
- Extension activities/ journal topics to follow up on the concept of stigma

#### THE SET-UP/MINDS ON

- What is the statistic around how many people will have a mental health issue in their lives? Is it 1 in 50? 1 in 10? 1 in 5?
- Where do young people get their information about mental illnesses? Have you ever taken a class where you've learned at length about mental health, mental illnesses etc?
- Can you think of examples where you've seen/heard about mental illnesses in either entertainment or news media? What does mental illness 'look like' when we see it portrayed in the media?
- How important is it for us to have good information about mental illnesses?

#### WHAT IS STIGMA?

Cloze passage exercise. Students can follow along with the discussion or note by filling in the blanks on their worksheet.

Stigma is a "mark or sign of disgrace". It happens when we think of someone negatively or treat someone differently based on misconceptions, stereotypes, or our limited understanding of them.

#### WHAT DOES STIGMA HAVE TO DO WITH MENTAL ILLNESSES?

Mental health issues and illnesses are pretty misunderstood. We still don't know everything about how or why they happen, they are diagnosed differently than many physical health issues (there is no blood test or CT scan to diagnose someone with a mental illness). They can be tricky to diagnose, hard to define, and while most are treatable, the causes and treatments vary from person to person.

Additionally, there are some misconceptions people have about those who are living with a mental illness. The media often portrays those with mental illnesses in a negative or inaccurate way. The actions and behaviours of some who have a mental illness are sometimes hard to understand. Some of the language associated with mental health issues is used inaccurately or in a negative way ("crazy", "psycho", "Psychotic", "schizo" etc.). Some do not think of mental illnesses as being "real" or "serious", and think that those who have these issues just aren't trying hard enough to get better. Some think those with a mental illness are weak or lack the proper motivation to get better or "snap out of it". As a result, stigma is a reality for those living with a mental illness.

#### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Imagine already having a pretty serious health issue that is making life difficult for yourself and those around you. On top of this, imagine feeling ashamed of having this health issue in the first place. Imagine being afraid to tell anyone, talk about it openly or even seek treatment, because you're worried about how people are going to think of you, or if it will result in losing friends, affect how your family or teachers treat you, or result in losing opportunities like employment or involvement in your community.

Everyone has a right to participate fully in his or her community, but individuals living with a mental illness can find themselves facing a series of rejections and exclusions.

**Fear & Rejection**

**Difficulty Making Friends**

**Denied Support (school, jobs)**

**Avoidance of Asking for Help**

**Negative Self-Worth**

**Feelings of embarrassment & Shame**

### **ACTIVITY: Myths and Facts Review**

Self marking quiz. Students can take the quiz and then the class can take it up, or this can be done as a note taking activity.

- People with mental illnesses are violent and dangerous. The truth is that, as a group, mentally ill people are no more violent than any other group. In fact, they are far more likely to be the victims of violence than to be violent themselves.
- People with mental illnesses are poor and/or less intelligent. Many studies show that most mentally ill people have average or above-average intelligence. Mental illness, like physical illness, can affect anyone regardless of intelligence, social class or income level.
- Mental illnesses are caused by a personal weakness. A mental illness is not a character flaw. It is an illness, and it has nothing to do with being weak or lacking will-power. Although people with mental illness can play a big part in their own recovery, they did not choose to become ill, and they are not lazy because they cannot just 'snap out of it.'
- Mental illnesses are a single, rare disorder. Mental illness is not a single disease but a broad classification for many disorders. Anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, personality disorders, eating disorders and organic brain disorders can cause misery, tears and missed opportunities for thousands of Canadians.
- People with mental illnesses are usually homeless. While many homeless people have mental health or addiction issues, not all people with mental illnesses are homeless. Many people living with mental illness have jobs, go to school, have families and lead average lives.
- If you get diagnosed with a mental illness, you'll have to spend time in the hospital and be on medication forever. While some people with serious mental illnesses may have to use medication to manage their illness (not unlike someone with type 1 diabetes may need insulin for their whole lives), for many, medication is a temporary measure, or not part of the treatment plan at all. Hospitalization can be, but is often not, part of a person's life when diagnosed with a mental illness. Many treatment plans, like counselling or therapy, are done on an outpatient basis.

### **ACTIVITY: Media Brainstorm**

Divide students into groups and give each group a piece of chart paper and some markers.

#### **Challenge:**

In your groups, you will think of examples of entertainment media (TV shows, movies, video games, social media/websites etc.) where any of the above myths are addressed, either in a positive or negative way.

**Think:** Where have I seen examples in entertainment media (characters, images, language, plot lines etc.) of mental illness? Are they positive or negative examples? From what I know about mental illnesses, are the portrayals accurate, or do they contribute to stigma?

You will record your information using a graphic organizer of your choice, and should explain in point form, each of your examples.

You will present your findings to the class when you are done, and note similarities and differences in examples, and discuss where opinion differs.

## DEBRIEFING DISCUSSION

Any of these ideas can be adapted to be a journal assignment, class discussion questions, small group discussion questions or as a jumping off point for a homework assignment or assignment.

- What can be done to combat stigma? (think about what you've learned already about language, media, myths, information etc. ) Use these prompts to answer:
  - As an individual, I can reduce stigma by...
  - As a class, we can reduce stigma by...
  - As a school community, we can reduce stigma by...
  - Our society can reduce stigma by...
- Think of some of the media examples we discussed in class. Pick one TV show or movie you've seen and write a journal about it. What is your chosen example? What type of mental illness does it portray? To your knowledge, does it portray mental illness in an accurate way? Does it reinforce some of the myths or facts we've discussed about mental illnesses? If you're not sure, go to [www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca), and click on "**mental illnesses**" to find out more about specific mental health issues.

## MOVIE REVIEW

Pick one of the following movies to either watch in class, or invite students to watch at home, and review the content as it relates to stigma and mental illness.

- What About Bob (1991)
- It's Kind of a Funny Story (2012)
- A Beautiful Mind (2001)
- Lars and the Real Girl (2007)
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower (2012)

### *Things to consider while watching:*

- What specific mental illness is being portrayed?
- Does it fit with a "real life" experience?
- What kinds of support did the character (s) seek out for their mental health issue, if any?
- How did the family/friends of the character respond to the character with the mental illness?
- Were they helpful?
- Was this portrayal reinforcing any of the myths we discussed in class about mental illnesses, or did the film address these myths or highlight a new way of understanding the mental illness?

## FURTHER EXTENSION

- Invite students to talk about or present a positive way that they cope or de-stress when they're having a tough time.
- Challenge students to create a poster, video, photo essay, poem etc. that is about good mental health or resilience, or that challenges stigma and the myths about mental illness.
- Give students the "Bounce Back: Creating Change in my School" handout and invite them to think about things they can do moving forward to create a mentally healthy school.

## What is Stigma?

**Cloze Activity:** As you discuss the issue of stigma in class, fill in the blanks below for your notes.

Stigma is a “mark or sign of disgrace”. It happens when we think of someone \_\_\_\_\_ or treat someone \_\_\_\_\_ based on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or our \_\_\_\_\_ of them.

### **What does stigma have to do with mental illnesses?**

Mental health issues and illnesses are pretty \_\_\_\_\_. We still don't know everything about how or why they happen, they are \_\_\_\_\_ differently than many \_\_\_\_\_ issues (there is no blood test or CT scan to diagnose someone with a mental illness!). They can be tricky to diagnose, hard to define, and while most are \_\_\_\_\_, the causes and treatments \_\_\_\_\_ from person to person.

On top of this, there are some weird \_\_\_\_\_ people have about those who are living with a mental illness. The \_\_\_\_\_ often portrays those with mental illnesses in a \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ way. The actions and behaviours of some who have a mental illness are sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ to understand. Some of the \_\_\_\_\_ associated with mental health issues is used inaccurately or in a negative way (“crazy”, “psycho”, “Psychotic”, “schizo” etc.). Some do not think of mental illnesses as being “\_\_\_\_\_” or “\_\_\_\_\_”, and think that those who have these issues just aren't trying hard enough to \_\_\_\_\_. Some think those with a mental illness are \_\_\_\_\_ or lack the proper \_\_\_\_\_ to get better or “snap out of it”.

As a result, \_\_\_\_\_ is a reality for those living with a mental illness.

### **What does this mean?**

Imagine already having a pretty serious health issue that is making life difficult for yourself and those around you. On top of this, imagine feeling \_\_\_\_\_ of having this health issue in the first place. Imagine being \_\_\_\_\_ to tell anyone, talk about it \_\_\_\_\_ or even \_\_\_\_\_, because you're worried about how people are going to \_\_\_\_\_ of you, or if it will result in \_\_\_\_\_, affect how your family or teachers \_\_\_\_\_ you, or result in \_\_\_\_\_ like employment or involvement in your \_\_\_\_\_.

Everyone has a right to participate fully in his or her community, but individuals living with a mental illness can find themselves facing a series of rejections and exclusions.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## True or False?

*Take the quiz, and make jot notes about your answers as you take it up.*

1) People with mental illnesses are violent and dangerous. T F

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2) People with mental illnesses are poor and/or less intelligent. T F

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3) Mental illnesses are caused by a personal weakness. T F

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4) Mental illnesses are a single, rare disorder. T F

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5) People with mental illnesses are usually homeless. T F

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6) If you get diagnosed with a mental illness, you'll have to spend time in the hospital and be on medication forever. T F

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### Group Activity

Think of examples of entertainment media (TV shows, movies, video games, social media/websites etc.) where any of the above myths are addressed, either in a positive or negative way. You will **record your information using a graphic** organizer of your choice, and explain each of your answers in point form.

**Think:** *Where have I seen examples in entertainment media (characters, images, language, plot lines etc.) of mental illness? Are they **positive** or **negative** examples? From what I know about mental illnesses, are the portrayals **accurate**, or do they **contribute to stigma**?*



## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: ONLINE EXPLORATION

### LESSON PLAN: Online Exploration (20-30 mins)

#### OVERVIEW

Suggested classes: English, Media Studies, Social Science and Humanities, Communications Technology, Health, Science

**This activity could be teacher-led, using a projector/screen, or student-led in a computer lab or laptop accessible classroom.**

#### THE SET-UP/MINDS ON

##### Ask students:

- What is the statistic around how many people will have a mental health issue in their lives? Is it 1 in 50? 1 in 10? 1 in 5?
- Where do young people get their information about mental illnesses? Have you ever taken a class where you've learned at length about mental health, mental illnesses etc?
- How important is it for us to have this information?
- Do you think most young people know where to go or what to do if they are worried about themselves or a friend?

Mental health issues will affect **1 in 5 people**. Many mental health issues **surface during adolescence/early adulthood**, and yet many students do not know basic information about mental health, what they should do if there's a problem, where to go for help, or how to help a friend.

**mindyourmind.ca** is a youth mental health program which partners with youth and young adults to create mostly online resources that young people can access to get information. While some of the information on the website is in text form, much of the information is in the form of interactive tools, videos and games.

**Today, we're going to take a look at some of these resources.** While we explore these, you should be asking yourself: What is the aim of this tool? What is the "message"? Is this information important? What might a young person do differently after using this tool/watching this video?

**EXPLORING THE TOOLS** - The website is [www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)

Under the tab **"Interactives"**, you will find tools that are designed to inform, help you plan, get "unstuck", or that are stress busters.

##### Get Informed:

- Reach Out (a quiz game about all things mental health)
- Getting Help (two interactive activities about how to get help when you or a friend is in crisis)
- Anatomy of a Panic Attack (an interactive about what a panic attack feels like and how to get through it)

##### Stress Busters:

- Squish 'Em (Annoying Stress Trogs are on the loose! Squish 'em, and get some stress tips along the way)
- What? (An interactive art piece sharing positive messages)



### Get Unstuck:

- Coping Kit (You're not in crisis now, but what will happen when you are? Use this tool to plan ahead for hard times.)
- Galaxy (Explore your universe to identify support sources and decide what might need to change!)

Under the tab **"Get Involved"** you'll find **mindyourmind** PSAs . (these can also be found on **mindyourmind's** YouTube channel)

### Suggested PSAs:

- Define Hope
- IGetReal
- Change the View contest videos

### DEBRIEFING DISCUSSION

#### Class discussion and/or journal topics:

- Was any of this information new to you?
- What might you do differently after having seen these tools/videos?
- Was it helpful to have information presented this way? Why or why not?
- How might some of the messages/concepts in these tools or videos be used to promote better mental health in your home, classroom, school and/or community?
- What could you do as an individual to better support your own mental health and the mental health of your friends/family?
- What could students or staff do to better promote good mental health in the school?

### FURTHER EXTENSION

- Invite students to talk about or present a positive way that they cope or de-stress when they're having a tough time.
- Challenge students to create a poster, video, photo essay, poem etc. that is about good mental health or resilience. Have them submit it to [mindyourmind.ca](http://mindyourmind.ca).
- Have students explore [mindyourmind.ca](http://mindyourmind.ca) further, and write a review on their favourite tool or video.
- Give students the "Bounce Back: Creating Change in my School" handout and invite them to think about things they can do moving forward to create a mentally healthy school.

### FOR THE TEACHER

- Familiarize yourself with [mindyourmind's](http://mindyourmind.ca) help pages, and keep resources on hand in case you see a student who might be struggling.
- Print posters, cards etc. from [mindyourmind.ca](http://mindyourmind.ca) (Under "Get Involved" and "printouts") for your class room or for distribution

### Additional Resources:

[www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)

[www.mindyourmindpro.ca](http://www.mindyourmindpro.ca)

[www.teenmentalhealth.org](http://www.teenmentalhealth.org)

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

[www.london.cmha.ca](http://www.london.cmha.ca)

## WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Definitions of mental health are changing. It used to be that a person was considered to have good mental health simply if they showed no signs or symptoms of a mental illness. But in recent years, there has been a shift towards a more holistic approach to mental health.

**KEEPING AN  
OPTIMISTIC  
OUTLOOK**

**ABILITY TO  
IDENTIFY YOUR  
OWN STRENGTHS  
AND  
WEAKNESSES  
REALISTICALLY**

**ABILITY TO ENJOY  
LIFE – LEARNING  
TO LIVE ‘IN THE  
MOMENT’**

**BALANCING ALL  
ASPECTS OF  
YOUR LIFE**

**FLEXIBILITY IN  
HANDLING  
DIFFERENT  
EMOTIONS AND  
STRESSORS**

You can gauge your mental health by thinking about how you coped with a recent difficulty. Did you feel that there was no way out of the problem or that your life would never be ‘normal’ again? Were you unable to carry on with work or school? With time, focus and practice, you were able to enjoy your life, family and friendships.

***How did YOU regain your balance and ability to look forward to the future?***

## REFLECTING ON YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Review the pages that outline the aspects of Mental Health & Resiliency. Think about each of these areas as they relate to YOUR mental health. In a format of your choice (journal, art, music), illustrate the unique features of your mental health by reflecting on the following questions:

**Optimism:** What is your view about your future? Are you hopeful? What are your hopes and goals? Do you have a habit of thinking negatively about things or people? What would it be like to change your view to a positive perspective?

**Strengths & Weaknesses:** Are you able to take an honest appraisal of your strengths and weaknesses? Can you remember a time when you were not successful at something, and how you coped with that challenge? What did you learn about your own strengths? What areas of weakness do you want to change? Or maybe learning to live with weakness is a realistic choice? How do you share your strengths with others?

**Balance:** Is your life in 'balance'? Are you able to manage time for school, work, friends and family? What do you do to relieve tension and relax? Are you able to set manageable goals that lead to feelings of confidence and pride?

**Enjoy Life:** How do you enjoy life? By yourself or with others? Do you have any interests or hobbies that allow you to explore your creative side and free you from distractions or worries?

### KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

Pain is part of growing

Everything in life is temporary

Worrying and complaining changes nothing

Your scars are symbols of your strength

Every little struggle is a step forward

Other people's negativity is not your problem

What's meant to be will eventually, BE

The best thing you can do is to keep going

***Just Keep Being YOU...Keep Growing....Keep Going....***

Adapted from: [www.marcandangel.com](http://www.marcandangel.com) (twitter: @marcandangel)



## HOW DO YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

**Set personal goals** – Goals don't have to be ambitious. You might decide to finish that book you started three years ago; to take a walk around the block every day; to call your friends instead of waiting for the phone to ring. Whatever goal you set, reaching it will build confidence and a sense of satisfaction.

**BALANCING  
ALL ASPECTS  
OF YOUR  
LIFE**

**ABLE TO  
IDENTIFY YOUR  
OWN STRENGTHS  
AND  
WEAKNESSES  
REALISTICALLY**

**Treat yourself well** – Cook yourself a good meal. Have a bubble bath. See a movie. Call a friend or relative you haven't talked to in ages. Sit on a park bench and breathe in the fragrance of flowers and grass. Whatever it is, do it just for you.

**Keep a journal (or even talk to the wall!)** – Expressing yourself after a stressful day can help you gain perspective, release tension and even boost your body's resistance to illness.

**Volunteer** – Volunteering is called the "win-win" activity because helping others makes us feel good about ourselves. At the same time, it widens our social network, provides us with new learning experiences and can bring balance to our lives.

**Exercise** – Regular physical activity improves psychological well-being and can reduce depression and anxiety. Joining an exercise group can reduce loneliness since it connects you with a new set of people sharing a common interest.

**FLEXIBILITY  
IN HANDLING  
DIFFERENT  
EMOTIONS  
AND  
STRESSORS**

**"Collect" positive emotional moments** – Make it a point to recall times when you have experienced pleasure, comfort, tenderness, confidence, or other positive emotions.

**ABILITY TO  
ENJOY LIFE –  
LEARNING TO LIVE  
'IN THE  
MOMENT'**

**Daydream** – Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a dream location. Breathe slowly and deeply. Whether it's a beach, a mountaintop, a hushed forest or a favourite room from your past, let the comforting environment wrap you in a sensation of peace

**Enjoy hobbies** – Taking up a hobby brings balance to your life by allowing you to do something you enjoy because you want to do it, free of the pressure of everyday tasks. It also keeps your brain active

**Do one thing at a time** – For example, when you are out for a walk or spending time with friends, turn off your cell phone and stop making that mental “to do” list. Take in all the sights, sounds and smells you encounter

**KEEPING AN  
OPTIMISTIC  
OUTLOOK**

**Share humour** – Life often gets too serious, so when you hear or see something that makes you smile or laugh, share it with someone you know. A little humour can go a long way to keeping us mentally fit!

**Learn ways to cope with negative thoughts** – Negative thoughts can be insistent and loud. Learn to interrupt them. Don't try to block them (that never works), but don't let them take over. Try distracting yourself or comforting yourself, if you can't solve the problem right away.

## CONTROL STRESS - DON'T LET IT CONTROL YOU

*Stress is a fact of life. No matter how much we might long for a stress-free existence, the fact is, stress is actually necessary. It's how we respond to stress that can negatively affect our lives*

Stress involves change and learning new ways to adapt. Stressors can include both difficult life events (bereavement, illness) and positive changes. Getting a new job or going on vacation are certainly perceived to be happy occurrences but they can also be stressful changes that require some adaptation.

Learning to effectively cope with stress can ease our bodies and our minds. Meditation and other relaxation methods, exercise and visualization are all helpful techniques for reducing the negative impact of stress.

Stress can be beneficial – in moderation. That's because short episodes of stress trigger chemicals that improve memory, increase energy levels and enhance alertness and productivity. But chronic stress has debilitating effects on our overall health. Physically, it can contribute to migraines, ulcers, muscle tension and fatigue. Persistent stress also affects us emotionally and intellectually, and can cause:

- Decreased concentration and memory
- Confusion – Feeling overwhelmed
- Loss of sense of humour
- Constant worry
- Unexplained anger
- Frequent irritability



### Managing Stress

First, it's important to **recognize the source(s) of your stress**. Events such as the death of a loved one, starting a new job or changing schools are certainly stressful.

However, **much of our stress comes from within us**. How we interpret things – a conversation, a performance review, even a look – determines whether something becomes a stressor. Negative self-talk, where we focus on self-criticism and pessimistic over-analysis, can turn an innocent remark into a major source of stress.

**Understanding where your stress originates** can help you decide on a course of action. External stressors, like school changes or a poor grade, can be managed over time and with the support of family and friends. Internal stressors, caused by our own negative interpretation, require changes in attitude and behaviour.

The goal of managing stress is to cue the “**relaxation response**”. This is the physiological and psychological calming process our body goes through when we perceive that the danger, or stressful event, has passed.

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING STRESS AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

## LESSON PLAN: Understanding Stress (75 mins)

### OVERVIEW

Suggested classes: English, Social Science and Humanities, Communications Technology, Health, Science  
 The resources about stress can be used on their own to engage your class in a discussion about stress, or as a precursor to managing stress activity. Setting the stage for discussion – Check out: [www.sdu.com](http://www.sdu.com) (Educator Resources for Secondary Schools – Video: Can you feel it?)

### THE SET-UP/CONCEPT ATTAINMENT EXERCISES

**Concept 1: Stress is a fact of life. No matter how much we might long for a stress-free existence, the fact is, stress is actually necessary. It's how we respond to stress that can negatively affect our lives.**

#### Positive Attributes (Moderate Stress)

- Increased energy levels
- Triggers chemicals that improve memory
- Enhances alertness
- Enhances productivity
- Sign of positive change occurring

#### Negative Attributes (Chronic Stress)

- Decreased concentration and memory
- Confusion – Feeling overwhelmed
- Constant worry
- Unexplained anger and irritability
- Loss of sense of humour
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities

#### Concept Attainment Exercise

- Designate one area with both positive and negative attributes on display in no particular order on chalk board (Adaptation: on a Smart Board, chart paper, projector, with whole class or small groups)
- Set up a chart on the chalkboard with two columns – one marked POSITIVE and the other marked NEGATIVE
- Teacher presents one positive attribute, and places it under the appropriate column
- Teacher then presents one negative attribute, and places it under the appropriate column
- Repeat process one more time
- Ask the class to look at the two examples under the POSITIVE column and discuss how they are alike “what do they have in common?”
- For the next two attributes, ask the students to decide if the attributes go under POSITIVE or NEGATIVE
- At this point several students will have identified the concept but it is important that they do not shout it out to the class. The students who have attained the concept already can show they have attained it by giving examples of their own for each column. Students who have not yet defined the concept are still busy trying to see the similarities of the POSITIVE examples.
- Place the remainder of the attributes that are generated by the student.
- Discuss the process with the class. Once most students have caught on, they can define the concept in class.

**EXTENSION ACTIVITY:** Ask the class to individually or in a group setting, create their own T-chart of Helpful and Unhelpful Stress Management Techniques OR concept attainment exercise.

**Concept 2: It's how we respond to stress that can negatively affect our lives.**

**Ask students to identify unhelpful or unhealthy ways that people sometimes use to handle stress.**

#### Ideas might include:

- Substance Use/Abuse
- Isolation
- Negative Self-talk
- Holding feelings inside
- Physical violence
- Not sleeping

#### DEBRIEFING DISCUSSION:

Review the List of Tips for Controlling Stress: Ask Students to Identify which tips would work best for them or that they might want to try.

## TIPS FOR CONTROLLING STRESS

### Set Realistic Goals

Learning to say no is essential for some people. Assess your schedule and identify tasks or activities that you can or should let go. Don't automatically volunteer to do something until you've considered whether it is feasible and healthy for you to do so.

### Exercise

You don't have to train for a marathon, but regular, moderate exercise helps ease tension, improves sleep and self esteem. Making exercise a habit is key.

### Enjoy Yourself

Taking the time for a favourite hobby is a great way of connecting with and nurturing your creative self.

### Visualization

Athletes achieve results by picturing themselves crossing the finish line first. Use the same technique to practice "seeing" yourself succeed in whatever situation is uppermost in your mind.

### Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle

A good diet is often the first thing to go when we're feeling stressed. Making a meal instead of buying one ready-made may seem like a challenge, but it will be probably cheaper and certainly better for you and the simple action of doing something good for yourself can soothe stressful feelings. Get a good night's sleep. We know that over time your body will wear down with poor sleep habits.



### Talk About it

Sharing your troubles with a friend may help you to put things in perspective and to feel that you're not alone. You may also learn some other ways to manage stress effectively.

### Learn Relaxation Techniques

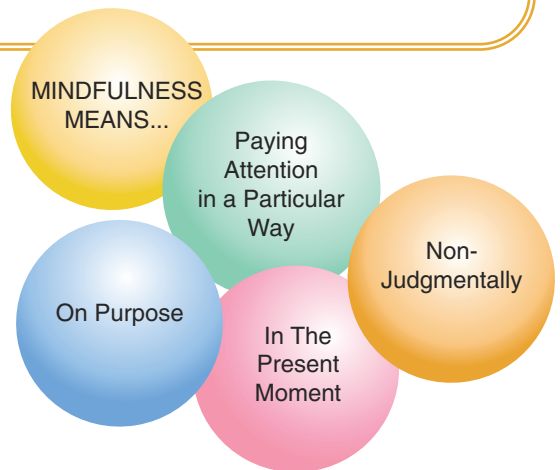
Practicing meditation or breathing awareness every day can relieve chronic stress and realign your outlook in a more positive way. Good breathing habits alone can improve both your psychological and physical well-being.



## INTRODUCTORY IDEAS ON MINDFULNESS

**Note to Teacher or Parent:** These are very basic ideas on how to practice mindfulness. Older students can be provided this resource to think about it themselves. Younger children may need more guidance to practice some of these ideas. These tips can be useful ways to calm a classroom of students or help a young person settle to sleep for the night.

Our world is so fast-paced that knowing how to ‘ground’ ourselves in the present moment is essential to make sense of the world and to continue growing, learning and contributing. Pausing to think, feel and notice what is happening **right now** is the essence of living a mindful life. But this skill takes awareness and practice. Mindfulness has been shown to help build compassion, empathy, self-awareness, impulse control and self-regulation. It also helps develop better self-control and self-regulation. So, why not try a few exercises below to help you learn to slow down and move out of automatic pilot mode to bring attention to everything you do?



### Take a Mindful Moment

Pause to focus only on your breathing. Just notice any thoughts or body sensations that you are having. Choose a time – perhaps at the beginning of the day, or after a break, or just before you start a test, to practice focusing only on your breathing for a couple of minutes. Incorporate this simple pause into EACH day so that it becomes a part of your daily routine.

### Sounds of Silence

Take a silent moment between classes or activities. Listen to the sounds in your environment, inside the room, outside the room but in the building, outside the building. Listen to the sound of your own breath, the sound of your heart beating. Just observe and notice without labeling or judging them.

### The Five Senses

Become aware of each of your five senses – hearing, seeing, smell, taste and touch. Take a walk outside and focus on ONE of these senses, or choose one thing to notice and observe it with all of your senses.

### Mindful Eating

With any small snack food (e.g. smarties, raisins, nuts), observe the object as if you had never seen it before. What does it look like? How does it smell? What does it feel like? Place the food item in your mouth and eat it as slowly as you possibly can so that you can focus on its texture and taste. How would you describe this to someone who had never before tasted this food?

### Calming Space

Find a quiet, calming spot in your home or school environment where you can go if you are feeling overwhelmed. Practice mindful ideas or calming activities (e.g. listening to music, drawing, doodling) in this space as a way to regenerate your energy and refocus your thoughts.



Mind Full, or Mindful?

Adapted from: Dr. Jared Berman & Dr. Carly Schecter, CPRI- Child and Parent Resource Institute  
More ideas can be found at: [www.everyday-mindfulness.org](http://www.everyday-mindfulness.org)

## REAL LIFE STORIES

### The Practice of Mental Health Fitness

There are so many ways to practice mental fitness. Here are some real-life stories.

As a student, I don't have a lot of time to spare. I like to spend time with my dog, take long walks through the river valley system and make certain to go to the gym at least 3 times a week. I love to paint and that is part of my downtime on the week-end. When I am stressed, nothing beats long bubble baths and a hot cup of tea. I like to curl up with a good book and drift into a little afternoon nap. It gives me a lift like nothing else. Once a month, I go for a deep muscle massage. Works like a charm.— Lina

Give thanks everyday for your health. Make time to do the things that you enjoy doing (walking, exercising, traveling to a favourite location- park or city). Make a commitment to looking after yourself – only you can do this!- Anonymous

“To me, there is nothing in this world like music,” says Cassandra, an artist. “More than painting, more than movies and books, I think music and singing reach into your soul.” So when she's feeling low, Cassandra puts on a favourite CD and sings her heart out. Or she listens to a piece of music that moves her profoundly. “Even if the music moves me to tears, it's such a tribute to humanity. It makes me believe that great things can be done

Listen to Other  
Real Life Stories on:  
[www.teenmentalhealth.org](http://www.teenmentalhealth.org) or  
[www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)

When my moods get low I walk my two dogs in the beautiful parks near my home. Watching the way they run and play and enjoy themselves makes me feel better. I also enjoy being in nature and the exercise and fresh air does wonders for me as well. — Lynn

I wake up each day and feel grateful to have another lovely day. Whenever things get rough, I remember TTSP (this too shall pass) & find opportunity to help someone.  
-AG

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



## TIPS FOR SEEKING HELP

### WHERE DO I START?

Start by talking to a **trusted adult** (eg. teacher or guidance counsellor) in your school. They will be able to help you with next steps.

Sometimes, despite your best effort, you might feel that you are so overwhelmed that you can't handle it by yourself. Asking for help from a **trusted adult is an important first step**

### WHAT DO I SAY?

The better that you are able to describe and explain your concerns, the more likely that the right kind of help can be found. Think about explaining your needs by describing:

- **What do you want to be different?**
- **What are the most serious challenges that you are facing right now?**
- **What or who has helped you in the past?**
- **What would be one thing that, if it changed, could make a positive difference for you?**

### WHAT KIND OF HELP IS THERE?

All schools have access to support staff whose primary job is to help students who are struggling. Also, many community agencies exist that provide free, confidential support for young people.

There are many different kinds of counselors, therapists and therapies. Asking for help is an important first step towards finding the right fit for you!

### WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF HELP I NEED

That's okay. Once you have shared your concerns with a trusted adult, it will be their responsibility to help you find the right kind of support. Sometimes, you might work with a team of 2 or 3 adults to make sure that your personal and school needs are considered. But most importantly, you won't be left to deal with things **ON YOUR OWN** anymore.

### Contact KidsHelp at:

- KidsHelpPhone.ca
- 1-800-668-6868

# Section FOLDER

**Resources for  
Parents, Caregivers &  
School Community**

*Please  
feel free to  
copy and distribute  
the resources in  
this section*



## RAISING RESILIENT KIDS – Letter for Home

### Dear Parent/Guardian,

At our school, we have been learning about ways to think positively, feel strong and be resilient. Resilience is the ability to **'bounce back'** from adversity and stress and is important to our students in order to be successful learners.

To help us learn about resilience, we have been doing some activities in the classroom and in the school as a whole. It is important that parents, guardians and caring adults are also aware of ideas and skills that can be useful to promote resiliency in all children. We are offering you this information for your interest as you help your child grow to be mentally healthy and resilient.

### *Ways to help your child develop resilience could include:*

#### Encourage Helpful & Positive Thinking- Teach your children to:

- Look on the bright side of things
- Laugh at their mistakes
- Not exaggerate problems or jump to conclusions

#### Plan Ahead

- Encourage your child to practice stopping when excited
- Encourage your child to think before they do something
- Praise your child when they stick at something (even when it gets tough)
- Praise your child when they are resourceful and solve problems in tricky situations
- Help your child predict difficult situations and plan fun events

#### Reading Emotions

- Clearly describe and name your feelings for your child and encourage them to do the same to you
- Help your child identify situations that make them feel angry, worried or upset
- Talk about ways of dealing with strong feelings
- Teach your child how to recognize what others (e.g. siblings, friends) might be feeling

#### Seeking Help

- Encourage your child to talk to you about their problems
- Be reassuring and talk about alternative solutions to problems
- Clearly explain to your child that feelings like anger, fear and sadness are normal and okay
- Remember to give your child a break when upset in a quiet place so they can learn self-control and ways to calm themselves before solving the problem

#### Courage

- Praise your child when they have done things you know are outside their comfort zone
- Encourage your child for trying even if they have not succeeded
- Encourage your child to speak up for themselves in tricky situations
- Encourage diverse interests and to take a risk at trying something different or new

Adapted from <http://www.det.wa.edu.au>

#### Additional resources:

[www.healthunit.com/parenting-videos](http://www.healthunit.com/parenting-videos)

[www.authentic happiness.org](http://www.authentic happiness.org)

[www.reachinginreachingout.com](http://www.reachinginreachingout.com)

[www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com)

[www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org)


[www.kidshavestresstoo.org](http://www.kidshavestresstoo.org)


[www.mentalhealth4kids.ca](http://www.mentalhealth4kids.ca) (See this website for the complete Bounce Back resource and local services near you.)


*We hope you find some of these ideas helpful and hopeful. We are pleased to be able to share them with you.*


## HELPFUL THINKING



 Accepts that everyone makes mistakes – it's normal.


Concentrates on the funny or good bits in a problem.
 



 Accepts that unhappy or bad things happen to everyone – not just you (i.e. normalises things).

Accepts the things you can't change in a problem.
 



 Focuses on future abilities to solve the problem.


Understands if something bad happens once, it might not ever happen again.
 



 Does a reality check to work out the likelihood of something really happening.


Accepts that you sometimes need to talk to others to get the facts about a situation.
 


## UNHELPFUL THINKING



 Believes mistakes and failures mean you are dumb or stupid.


Just focuses on the bad bits in a problem.
 



 Believes that bad things happen to just you because you are you (i.e. personalises things).

Does not accept the things you can't change.
 


 Tries to go back and undo something that has already happened.

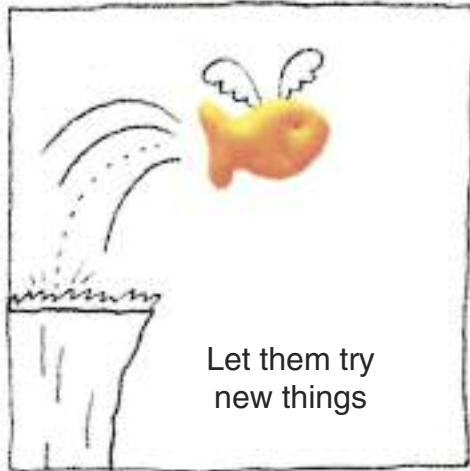
Thinks that if something bad has happened once, it will happen again and again.
 


 Exaggerates the problem and thinks about the worst thing that could happen and assumes it will happen.

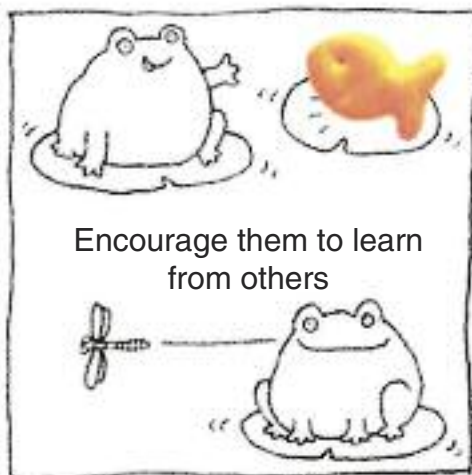
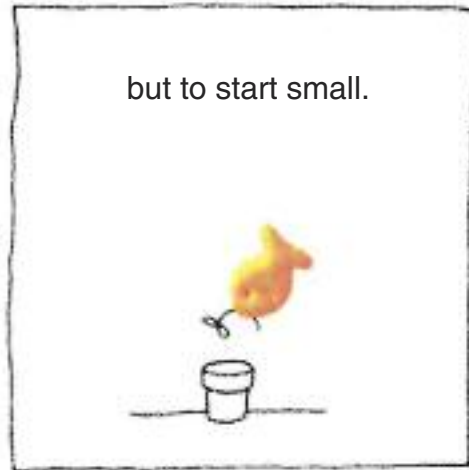
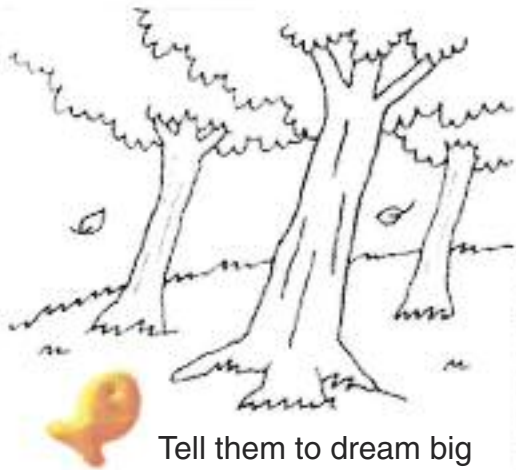
Focuses on 'mind reading' how people are feeling and thinking in a situation instead of asking them.
 

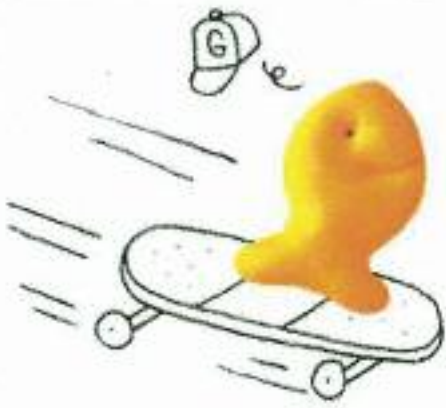
Adapted resource from [www.det.wa.edu.au](http://www.det.wa.edu.au)

# FISHFUL THINKING

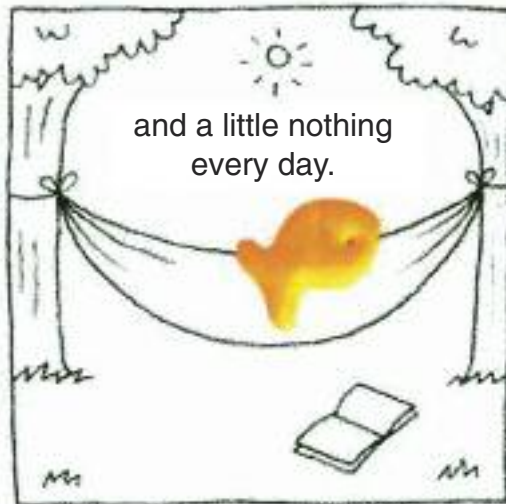


even if they don't always work out.

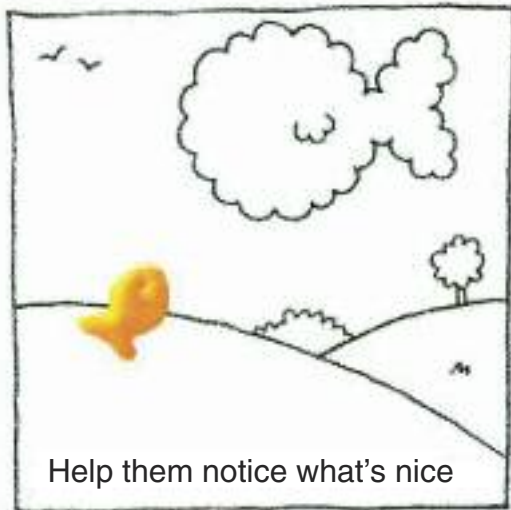




Make sure they do a little something every day



and a little nothing every day.



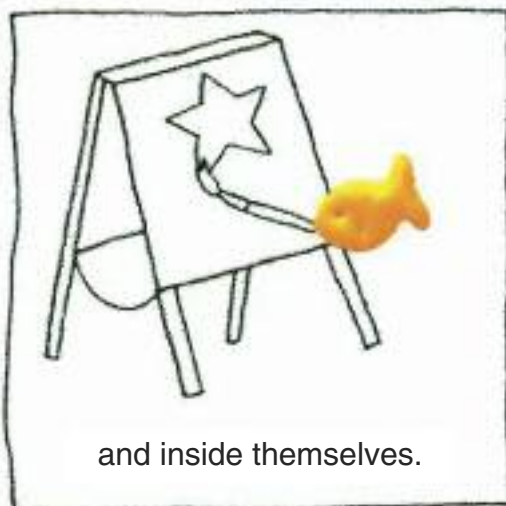
Help them notice what's nice



and to deal with what's not.



Encourage them to look outside themselves



and inside themselves.



## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD'S STRESS

Stress affects children in different ways and all children handle stress differently. Stress can be positive as well as negative. There are many factors that influence how your child might handle stress.

<b>SOURCES OF STRESS</b>	
<b>At School</b>	<b>Other Sources of Stress</b>
Fear of wetting themselves or of using the bathroom	Major Family Change (divorce, move, death of family member)
Being away from home and missing caregivers	Parents Fighting
Worry about changing bodies	Loss of family pet
Worry about getting lost in school hallways	Move to a new city
Fear of teacher discipline or disappointment	Move between schools
Worry about friends	Serious Illness
Worry about school work	Worry about money
Worry about tests and exams	Worry about food
Worry about being the last chosen on a team	Worry about housing
Worry about being embarrassed	Anything Else for YOUR Family?
Any Others?	

### Signs of Stress:

- Physical – Headaches, stomach aches, vomiting, bed-wetting
- Emotional – Sadness, irritability, fear
- Behavioural – Losing temper, nervous tics, crying, avoidance, unexplained anger or extreme sadness
- Problems Interacting with Others – Teasing or bullying, shyness, withdrawal

## Ways to Promote Resilience at Home

- Encourage your child to talk about what is bothering them. Take car rides to talk
- Avoid asking them, 'What's wrong?' Instead ask, 'How are things at...?'
- Spend one-on-one time with your child and find hobbies you can do together
- Encourage healthy eating
- Establish regular bedtime routines and times
- Have a clear morning routine (use simple picture as reminders for your child)
- Give back rubs and hugs
- Show them that mistakes are ok
- Be clear about rules and consequences
- Role play and talk through difficult situations
- Be a positive role model (learn how to manage your stress, take care of yourself)
- Get professional help if necessary
- Explore ways to teach simple relaxation skills

## Here are Some Suggestions for Seeking Help for your Child

- Write down your questions
- Identify your social support network
- Recognize the strengths of your family
- Gather information on the services and agencies available to you (these may include your family doctor, school counselors, community health services, children's mental health centres)

## Other Online Resources

[www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com)

[www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org)

[www.kidshavestresstoo.org](http://www.kidshavestresstoo.org)

[www.morethanmedication.ca](http://www.morethanmedication.ca)

[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

[www.pcmg.ca](http://www.pcmg.ca)

[www.elibary.com](http://www.elibary.com)



## SELECTED BOOKS ON RESILIENCY

These are a selection of books on building resiliency and optimism in children. Many can be found at your local library, favourite book store or online book resource.

Book Title	Author	Synopsis
<b>Freeing Your Child From Negative Thinking</b>	Chansky, Tamar E. (2008)	Powerful, practical strategies to build a lifetime of resilience, flexibility and happiness
<b>Growing Up Resilient</b>	Available online at CAMH.ca	Offers a variety of ways to build resilience in children and youth
<b>Kids Can Cope</b>	<a href="http://www.psychologyfoundation.org">www.psychologyfoundation.org</a>	Children's booklet on parenting resilient children at home and at school
<b>Ready, Set, Relax</b>	Allen, Jeffrey S., Klein, Roger J. (1996)	A research-based program of relaxation, learning and self-esteem for children
<b>The Optimistic Child</b>	Seligman, Martin E. P. (2007)	A proven program to safeguard children against depression and build lifelong resilience
<b>Drop the Worry Ball</b>	Russell, Alex & Falconer, Tim (2013)	How to avoid being a helicopter parent--and raise well adjusted, truly independent children. This book offers a refreshing approach to raising well-adjusted children--who are unafraid to make mistakes.
<b>Raising Resilient Children: Fostering Strength, Hope and Optimism in Your Child</b>	Brooks, R. & Goldstein, S (2002)	Top psychologists offer expert insight and practical advice for raising strong kids in today's complicated world
<b>1000+ things Happy Successful People Do Differently</b>	Chernoff, Marc & Angel (2013) <a href="http://www.marcandangel.com">www.marcandangel.com</a>	A collection of articles, short stories and quotes to inspire a happy and productive life
<b>Building Resilience in Children and Youth: Giving Kids Roots and Wings</b>	Ginsburg, Kenneth (2011)	This guide offers coping strategies for facing the combined elements of academic performance, high achievement standards, media messages, peer pressure, and family tension.
<b>Mindsets in the Classroom: Building a Culture of Success and Student Achievement in Schools</b>	Ricci, Mary Cay (2013)	When students believe that dedication and hard work can change their performance in school, they grow to become resilient, successful students. This book provides ways to challenge students to change their thinking about their abilities and potential
<b>Kids are Worth It: Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline</b>	Colorso, Barbara (2002)	This bestselling guide rejects "quick-fix" solutions and focuses on helping kids develop their own self-discipline by owning up to their mistakes, thinking through solutions, and correcting their misdeeds while leaving their dignity intact.



Oxford, Elgin, London/Middlesex

**STUDENT SUPPORT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE**

