

MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE

June 2022

Mental health is everyone's business, and we all have a role to play. Parents, guardians and other caregivers have a special role in supporting child and youth mental health beginning with supporting their own child(ren) and helping them to grow into mentally healthy, resilient adults. Knowing the signs of struggle and intervening early is important, but **how do you know if you should be concerned about your child/teen's mental health and wellbeing? And what can you do to help?** [School Mental Health Ontario's Tip Sheet for Parents and Care Givers: We Care](#) may provide some answers.

Want to learn more about **how to promote wellness for children and youth in your home or class room?** Explore these [Grab and Go Tools](#) offered by School Mental Health Ontario.

[Kids Help Phone](#)
1-800-668-6868
Text 686868

[LGBT Youth Line](#)
1-800-268-9688
Text 647-694-4275

[Open Doors for Lanark Children and Youth](#)
1-877-232-8260

[Children's Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville](#)
1-800-809-2494

[Cornwall Community Hospital SD&G](#)
1-844-361-6363

[Child Youth and Family Crisis Line of Eastern Ontario](#)
1-877-377-7775

[Valois Prescott-Russell](#)
1-800-675-6168

[Hope for Wellness Helpline](#)
1-855-242-3310

[Ontario 211 Community and Social Services Helpline](#)
Call 211
1-877-330-3213
TTY: 844-483-9835



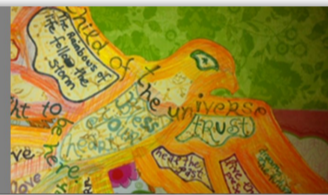
Grab & Go Tools



Simple learning activities to use as part of your everyday mental health practices at home and in the classroom.

Do you wonder about your child's eating or think they might have an Eating Disorder?

UNDERSTANDING EATING DISORDERS IN ADOLESCENCE



About 1 in 5 youth report use of Cannabis in the past year
(SMHO, 2019)



This [Cannabis and Mental Health Course](#), created by youth and made for youth, can help to **equip your child with knowledge and understanding about Cannabis and Mental Health.**

Being in nature is shown to reduce stress and improve wellness. Be sure to **make the most of summer with the outdoor activities suggested below.**

Looking for great summer reads? **Review the book selections below for yourself and your children.**

GET THE KIDS OUTSIDE

5 THINGS TO DO OUTSIDE IN THE RAIN

YOU'RE AN ENGINEER: Find where water is flowing in your yard. Gather your construction materials: mud, sticks, leaves, rocks. Decide if you'd like to redirect the water, collect the flow, or stop it entirely. Then get to work, test out different techniques and show off your engineering skills! (When finished, please disassemble.)

YOU'RE A METEOROLOGIST: Observe the weather. How would you describe the wind? Is there much wind? Does the wind affect the rain? Record a rain gauge and estimate how much will fall today.

YOU'RE AN ARTIST: Before heading outside, do a drawing using watercolors or washable markers. Do different sections: grass, leaves, ground, sidewalk. Next, take your artwork into the rain. Set a timer for 10 minutes, then check to see how they've changed.

YOU'RE A BIOLOGIST: Go for a nature walk in your yard, neighborhood or local park. What insects or other creatures do you see? Look for signs: burrows, tracks, worms, or you don't see any. Hold out after the rain to check again.

YOU'RE A MUSICIAN: With permission, gather some materials: metal bowls, tin foil, jump sticks, leaves, rocks, etc. Listen to the sounds of the creatures on different materials and decide which sound you like the best. Then fill your cups and bowls with water at different levels. Hit on them with sticks, see how the sound changes depending on the level of water.

GET THE KIDS OUTSIDE

THE BENEFITS OF GARDENING FOR KIDS

Gardening is a valuable activity for children and benefits them in many different ways.

PHYSICALLY

- Helps develop locomotor skills, fine motor skills, object control skills
- encourages fresh air and exercise
- provides sensory stimulation

INTELLECTUALLY

- encourages scientific observation and questioning
- helps develop organization and planning skills

EMOTIONALLY

- teaches responsibility
- helps improve mood, lessen anxiety
- teaches patience

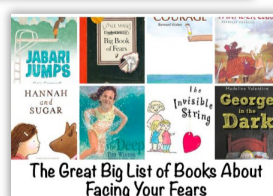
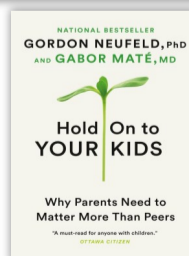
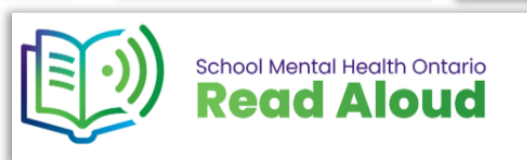
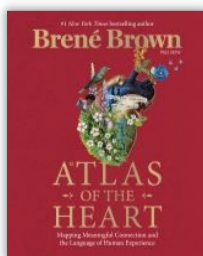
DIGGING IN THE DIRT AND WATCHING THINGS GROW IS FUN!

GET THE KIDS OUTSIDE

PLAYING with kids OUTSIDE AFTER DARK*

- **FLASHLIGHT TAG:** Play tag with flashlights. The person who is "it" tries to tag players with their flashlight beam. Reaction: Sit in a circle with the person who is "it" in the middle. Blindfolded, with a flashlight. Players creep forwards and get as close as possible before being tagged by the flashlight. The person who gets closest is the winner.
- **GLOW IN THE DARK TREASURE HUNT:** Use glowsticks or battery-powered candles in your yard ahead of time, then go out together to find them. Tell your children the boundaries and let them find the way to see how many they can find.
- **FLASHLIGHT NATURE WALK:** Give each person a flashlight, hold hands and set off into nature (or just your backyard). What can you see when you look up? When you look down? What happens when you turn off your flashlight? (Use your little one's imagination!)
- **STOP & LISTEN:** Head outside and find a comfortable place to sit. Ask everyone to stay quiet for several minutes, taking note of everything that they hear. When the time is right, share your observations. Then repeat the process to see if you hear anything different the second time.
- **STAR GAZING:** On a clear night, take a blanket outside, lie back and gaze at the stars. How many stars do they see? Ask a constellation or planet? Research ahead of time to see which ones might be visible, or consider using a star-gazing app.

*Always wear child's comfort belt with darkness and make your activities accordingly.



Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers
"A must-read for anyone with children."
—JENNIFER CRITCHEL