



Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter

March 2023

YRDSB Mental Health services are provided by YRDSB psychology and social work personnel

Taking a Break To Pause

Dear Families,

In this edition we will focus on finding smaller and bigger ways to take a pause as well as activities to help your family stay engaged through the Mid-Winter break.

At this time, we invite parents and caregivers to consider pausing. Pause to rest, pause to play, pause to listen, pause to paint, pause to reflect, pause to read, pause to engage in identity-affirming activities, pause to nourish, pause to connect.

A pause may feel unattainable and unrealistic, which is understandable, given the many realities of parents & caregivers. Yet, recognizing the benefits of pausing, we encourage you to consider what a “pause” may look like for you and your family. Even a few minutes a day can be helpful and restoring; it goes a long way in managing daily stress.

Helpful Strategies for taking a break:

Finding time for mindful practices can feel challenging. [Kids Help Phone](#) provides ways that mindfulness can be found in smaller moments throughout the day and that bringing intentional attention to our activities can create calm in the business of the day. You can try using these [audio transcripts](#) that can walk you through different mindful activities, and share the science behind why taking these moments is so helpful.

Movies like [Turning Red](#) and [Inside Out](#) are ways to expand mental health literacy at home and are entertaining on these March Break Days!



YRDSB Mental Health

The Canadian Mental Health Association also offers suggestions for ways to [take 15 minutes for you](#), to focus on an area of your health. This resource shares ways to take time to connect socially to the people in your lives, or taking time to do tasks like organising space in your home.

Keeping Busy Over March Break:

We recognize that not everyone has plans for the March Break week, and this can create uneasiness for some families when trying to figure out how to fill the time while your children are home from school for a week. It can also be hard on your children to have a change in routine and schedule. To combat this, here are some free activities you can do with your child(ren) during the March Break if you are looking for ways to stay engaged:

[Richmond Hills Skating Trail](#): the trail is open daily from 10am to 10pm, is lighted for evening skating, and has heated washrooms and change rooms. For other [outdoor skating rinks](#) in York Region, scroll down to find the York Region category, then find the location closest to you.

[Tobogganing](#): Get out and enjoy the snow with some tubing or tobogganing. Click on the title to view some hills that are great for tobogganing.

[Sibbald Point](#) and [Bruce's Mill Conservation Park](#) are still great places to go in the winter to enjoy hiking and more!

[All About Ice](#): This staff-led program will include ice-themed experiments and a craft while experiencing science through ice.

[Winter Science Experiments](#): Want to get creative? Here are some fun experiments that you can do with your child(ren) using things you likely have around the house (e.g. ice cubes or snow outside). You can also find more [science experiments](#) that can be done indoors with common household items. [Pinterest](#) is also a great way to find creative art projects using things from your home.

Each of these activities provides the opportunity to connect with nature, connect with your child(ren), connect with the moment and take a pause from the busyness outside these moments.



YRDSB Mental Health

Supportive Resources:

[YorkHills Here to Help Line](#) (905-503-9561)

The Here to Help Line is a free service available to children/youth (0-18 years) and their parents/caregiver/adult supporters. Monday to Thursday from 2:00pm-7:00p.m

[Family Services York Region](#) (905-895-2371)

Virtual walk in is operated on a first come, first serve basis, and can be accessed once per month. Virtual appointments can be 15 minutes to 1.5 hours long depending on your specific needs. Monday, Tuesday, Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

[YRDSB Mental Health Resource Page](#)

Continue to check out the [YRDSB website](#) for updated information as well as the Twitter account [@YRDSB](#)

Follow YRDSB Mental Health on Twitter [@MH_YRDSB](#)

Free Community events:

[International Women's Day \(IWD\)](#): March 8, 2023

- Break the Bias: International Women's Day Live Discussion.
 - 7-10pm, March 8, 2023. [Online Registration](#)

[Persian New Year](#)

- [Aga Khan, New Year, New Bloom](#): March 20, 2:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Canadian Mental Health Association Webinar: March 2, 12:00 p.m

- More than just a text: Having a conversation with your kids about mental health. [Online Registration](#)

York Hills Centre for Children, Youth and Families

- March 6, 6:30 p.m - 8:30 p.m, [Teen Triple P Seminar #1 - Raising Responsible Teenagers](#)
- March 7, 6:30 p.m - 8:00 p.m, [Cultivating a Balance in the Family](#)
- March 20, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, [Teen Triple P Seminar #2 - Raising Competent Teenagers](#)
- March 23, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, [Promoting Resiliency in Teens](#)
- March 27, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, [Teen Triple P Seminar #3 - Getting Teenagers Connected](#)
- March 30, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, [Building Relations with Our Teens](#)



YRDSB Mental Health

PFlag

- [Coffee Night](#), held every second Monday of the month, is a safe space where members of the LGBTQ2 community, their friends, family or allies can come together. [Online Registration](#)

This edition of the Newsletter was written by the Student Mental Health and Addictions Strategy Implementation Team 2022-2023, inclusive of YRDSB School Social Workers Afsaneh Zafarani, Kate Phillips, and Nicole Gough.

Patricia Marra-Stapleton, M.Sc., C. Psych. Assoc.

Mental Health Lead

patricia.marra-stapleton@yrdsb.ca

Hoshana Calliste, M.S.W., R.S.W.

Assistant Coordinator of Mental Health

hoshana.calliste@yrdsb.ca

Paula Vicente M.S.W., R.S.W.

Assistant Coordinator of Mental Health

paula.vicente@yrdsb.ca