



Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter March 2022

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

March Break: Taking Time to Pause

Dear families and caregivers,

The past two school years have been school years like no other. “Something none of us prepared for,” [School Mental Health Ontario](#). March 12th, 2022, marks two years since the first Ontario school closure announcement due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The school closure followed March break, and for some, this was referred to as the “[March break that never ends](#).” We have faced many Covid-19 related challenges over the past two years. Ontario students, families, and caregivers have displayed hope, resilience, growth, and triumph despite the many ongoing challenges.

Check out [A YRDSB Story: Brian Park, Noah Bryan](#), and many more in the [YRDSB Newsroom](#) to view some positive past and present highlights that display the triumphs, growth and excellence of YRDSB students.

This newsletter edition shares ways to take a “pause” and maintain mental wellness during the March break and beyond.

March break signifies an opportunity to break from academic expectations and school-related commitments for many students, families, and caregivers. The time off permits students to focus on things outside of the day-to-day school routines. However, this is not true for all students, families, and caregivers. The reality is March break can look different for each student/household.

We recognize that not all households will be “taking a break.” Some students, caregivers, and families are simply trying to figure out how to get through the March break and manage the shift in routine and predictability of the school day. [Children’s](#)



[Mental Health Ontario](#) offers helpful tips on creating routine and predictability as well as supporting mental wellness over the March break.

No matter what your March break entails, finding time to pause can be helpful. "A pause is an opening; it acts as a portal to other options and choices." —Robert Poynton.

A pause can be a few minutes, hours or even days. Taking time to pause and reflect can help us develop an awareness of our physical and mental states. For some, a pause can be connected to faith/religion, culture and or an individual/family or group's unique way of being (existing) in the world. Each person's way of pausing may look different. Taking a pause can help us rest, reset, reflect and simply catch our breath. Pausing can help us avoid becoming overwhelmed in stressful situations; it aids us in slowing down in times when we feel rushed or under pressure.

Over the March break, 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.

School Mental Health Ontario offers some helpful ways to [Pause and reflect](#). These resources can help you, and your child(ren) make time to pause.

Additional Resources:

[YRDSB Mental Health Resource Page](#)

[SMHO Parent/Family Page](#)

Upcoming Workshops:

[Being a Parent](#) - Wed, Mar 16, 2022 12:00 PM EDT

For more additional workshops visit [York Hills Centre for Children, Youth and Families website](#). We look forward to creating pathways for caring connections and meaningful relationships with parents, caregivers, and families. Share your voice by using this [feedback form](#), and let's pave the path forward together.

Mental Health COVID-19 Page

COVID-19 has presented unprecedented issues and concerns for our community, our country and the world. As we focus on keeping ourselves healthy and containing the spread of COVID-19, we must also keep ourselves mentally well.

The link below is dedicated to supporting student mental health during this Pandemic. Resources for students, parents/guardians as well as community resources are listed. In addition, there are various links to YRDSB mental health support as well as community support. Please consider taking some time to familiarize yourself with the supports found on the [COVID-19 Mental Health Supports for Students and Families](#) webpage.

Continue to check out the [YRDSB website](#) for updated information as well as the Twitter accounts @YRDSB and @YRDSB_SS.

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