



Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter

May 2023

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

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

Dear Families,

Every year in Ontario, the first week in May is acknowledged as [Children's Mental Health Awareness Week](#); this year it will fall on May 1-5, 2023. In recognition of this important week, the YRDSB is planning a variety of classroom daily activities, increasing awareness through our social media platforms, providing schools with a resource toolkit, as well as working with our community partners to build awareness about children and youth mental wellness through webinars. We are also offering evening programming to parents during this week. You will be informed by your schools, and you will be able to find information about the events and the Family Toolkit on our twitter account, @MH_YRDSB, as well as through the [YRDSB Mental Health Webpage](#).

Webinars will be provided online and will take place during school hours for students, as well as after school for students and parents. Webinars will vary in time and content. They will provide students with a variety of themes related to children's mental health. The goal of these webinars is to raise awareness of mental health, reduce stigma, and bring attention to resources in the community.

Mental health can be understood in different ways. School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) explains mental health as a [dual continuum](#). Similar to our physical health, there are days where we might not feel mentally well. This can include our children, families and communities. The [Canadian Mental Health Association](#) reports that 70% of people indicated their first mental health concerns began when they were a child or an adolescent. Each year, [one in five Canadian children and youth](#) experience



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significant mental health challenges. Think of the average class size, this may mean many students can have mental health impacts in which support can be beneficial.

We continue to strive towards foundations laid out in the [Director's Action Plan](#), which highlights the goal of building safe, healthy and inclusive learning and working environments where all feel they matter and belong. Our [YRDSB Student Mental Health Strategy](#) is centered on a holistic approach to mental health which places identity affirmation and healing centered engagement at the core. We strive to build on the notion of Acknowledging, Bridging and Connecting ([ABCs of mental health](#)), and create actions to support a holistic approach to mental health.

Additional information about Children's Mental Health Awareness Week can be found by visiting the [CMHA Mental Health Week](#) website. You can also visit our [website](#) to learn more about CMHAW.

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:

Parents

York Hills Centre for Children, Youth and Families

- May 2, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm- [Speaking of Social Skills](#)
- May 3, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm- [Addressing Mental Health Challenges for Children and Youth with ASD](#)
- May 11, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm- [Triple P Seminar #3 - Raising Resilient Children](#)
- May 17, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm- [Exploring and Understanding the Inattentive Brain](#)



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- May 25, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm – [Teen Triple P Seminar #1 – Raising Responsible Teenagers](#)
- May 29, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm – [Many Faces of Anxiety](#)

Students

York Support Services Network

- [Ramp Up Group– Self Care– Taking Care of the Body and Soul](#)
 - Ages 16 +
 - May 30, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm
- [Transition Resource Day](#)
 - May 5, 10, 19, 24 All Day, Book an 1 hour session.
 - Need help understanding the developmental services system and transition planning? Does your child have an IEP? Book a free, 1 hour session, with a transitional planner to discuss and ask important questions.
 - Discuss the differences between elementary and high school, share tips and strategies to help you and your child prepare for life in high school, fill out forms and applications (e.g. ODSP, SSAH, Mobility Transit, etc.), find resources, build on skills, share options for after high school and adult life.
 - Registration can be done through emailing cmacdonald@yssn.ca or calling: 905-953-8354 or 1-833-953-8354 ext. 2245.

Aurora Public Library

- May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:00– 8:00 p.m.
 - [Game Night | Events](#)

Families

York Support Services Network

- Single Session Counselling
 - [Tuesdays in May – 9:30am-10:30am](#)
 - [Tuesdays in May- 11:00am – 12:00pm](#)
 - [Thursdays in May- 11:00am – 12:00pm](#)
 - [Thursdays in May- 12:30pm -1:30pm](#)

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.



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- [Online Registration](#) can be found here

Family Services of York Region

- [Free to be](#)
 - Free virtual group for parents/caregivers of gender diverse children, regardless of age which meets once a month.
 - Second Tuesday of each month
 - 6:30 to 8:00 p.m

York Hills Centre for Children, Youth and Families

- May 1, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm- In Person Screening of the [Connecting the Dots Film](#)

Aurora Public Library

- Saturday May 27, Yonge St. Tour: [Aurora Walking Tours](#)

Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum and Community Centre

- Saturday, May 20, 12:00- 4:00
- Discover what's new at your museum as we explore and celebrate Stouffville's local heritage at this [free event](#) in celebration of International Museum Day

Robinson Creek, Castlemore Ave and Stonebridge Dr

- Saturday, May 27, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
- [Community Tree Planting Event in the Rouge River](#)
- Register By: Wednesday, May 24, 2023

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, Peter Reid, and Nicole Gough.

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