



## Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter December 2019

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

### Setting Realistic Expectations during the Winter Break

The winter break is often a very busy time of year with much planning and activities. While it is enjoyable, we may find ourselves rushing from one event to another without taking the time to enjoy each moment. We encourage students and families to consider the following tips from St. Patrick's Hospital, Dublin, Ireland to enjoy a "well-paced" break.

1. Decide which activities and traditions are most meaningful to you. Only participate in those activities that have significance and decline those that cause stress.
2. Take care of yourself. Eat right, get enough sleep and exercise. Adults can limit the indulgence in high fat and sugary food and alcohol.
3. Recognize signs of stress and use relation techniques when you begin to get irritated or upset such as taking a few deep breaths, going for a walk or taking a break.
4. Have realistic expectations of a family and friends.
5. Make time for yourself. This time does not need to cost anything and can include going for a walk or read a book. Schedule time for yourself.
6. Delegate tasks when busy and ask for help if needed. Communicate openly and remember its ok to say "no".
7. If you or your child experiences persistent low mood or anxiety, consider professional help. Our social work and psychology staff members can help students in the schools. In addition, our [CRES Community Partners](#) are also happy to assist with supporting our students. For more information on our community partners and the process of requesting support please speak to your school principal.

# Release of the YRDSB Student Suicide Intervention Protocol



York Region District School Board is committed to student well-being and mental health. YRDSB has developed a Student Suicide Intervention Protocol to help keep students safe in the event of suicidal thoughts or actions. The Student Suicide Intervention Protocol will be implemented starting Fall 2019. Youth suicide is a complex, emotionally-charged and sadly a real problem in Canada. It is the second leading cause of death amongst young people. It's important to recognize that those who struggle with mental health have personal strength and resilience and the potential to overcome difficulties to ultimately thrive.

The YRDSB Student Suicide Intervention Protocol is designed to address the six steps involved when responding to current and present thoughts of suicide, as well as actions related to suicide. In addition, the Protocol is governed by a set of guiding principles which are underpinned by a culturally responsive and reflective practice.

Suicide is not culturally neutral. Our cultural and ethnic backgrounds will inform how each of us understands suicide. To see all the guiding principles, refer to the print version of the protocol on the on the board website [YRDSB-Student Suicide Intervention Protocol](#). If you have any questions about the Student Suicide Intervention Protocol, please contact your school principal.

**Patricia Marra-Stapleton, M.Sc., C. Psych. Assoc.**  
Mental Health Lead  
patricia.marra-stapleton@yrdsb.ca

**Gisella Ragno, MSW, RSW**  
Assistant Coordinator of Mental Health  
gisella.ragno@yrdsb.ca