



# Children's Mental Health Awareness Week 2025!

## Within, Between & Around Us

2025 Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, May 5th- 9th, and Beyond Toolkit

### Check

Dear Families and Caregivers,

As we move through the school year's remaining months, we pause to acknowledge the many realities that impact our day-to-day experiences and mental health. We acknowledge that many feel a sense of feeling tired and busy, among other feelings. These realities, thoughts and feelings are valid and important. As such, this resource has been carefully created to complement your existing routines and at-home wellness practices. We collaborated with York Region Public Health, Healthy Schools, and Staff Wellness to create a resource that we hope will create opportunities for joy and wellness. Be sure to also check out our Student Mental Health and Addictions [Newsletter](#) for additional resources.

The YRDSB [Student Mental Health and Addictions Strategy](#) highlights a holistic approach to Mental Health including many factors, but not limited to, mental and physical health. [How we think and feel about ourselves and the world can directly impact our physical and mental health.](#) To care for ourselves, our children and our families, we must center and incorporate wellness and health practices that speak to who we are and our identity. There are many ways to be healthy and promote mental health. This toolkit aims to provide resources and opportunities that support positive mental health through **small and intentional actions**.

We encourage you to use the hashtags below to share how your family is acknowledging Children's Mental Health Awareness Week or using the toolkit:

**#withinbetweenaround, #YRDSB, #CMHAW2025 #MHYRDSB, Share with us on [X](#) and [Instagram](#) @MH\_YRDSB**



### **This toolkit includes:**

Five themes that include various resources that support health/mental health and well-being while promoting **Within, Between & Around Us** and **small** and **intentional** actions that support positive mental health.

### **Themes:**

- [Mindful Mondays](#)
- [Thoughtful Tuesdays](#)
- [Wellness Wednesdays](#)
- [Take Care Thursdays](#)
- [Focus Fridays](#)

We invite you to consider how to use these resources to best support you and your family.

### **Helpful considerations include:**

- We encourage you to consider how this resource may fit into your day-to-day routines or help create new ones
- Make this calendar and the accompanying resources your own. Use what works on the days that best fit. For example, if a resource for Wednesday better suits Monday, then use it on Monday.

### **Toolkit Instructions**

Included are five themes supported by ready-to-use activities that can be practiced at home and in other environments. These activities promote positive mental health through **small** and **intentional** actions. Each theme and accompanying resource can be tailored to fit the needs of you and your circle of care or family.



## Virtual and On-Demand Presentations for Parents/Caregivers

Date and Time	Presentation Topic	Links	Feedback Forms We'd love to hear your feedback!
May 8th 2025 6:00-7:00 PM	<p><u>Dr. Gillian White:</u> <b>Turning Stress into Success</b></p> <p>This virtual presentation explores the nature of stress, how our minds and bodies respond to it, and ways to reshape our relationship with stress. It introduces lifestyle strategies like sleep, exercise, and nutrition to build resilience and offers practical tools for setting goals and implementing change.</p>	<a href="#">Registration Link</a>	<a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
Recorded/On Demand YRDSB Learning About Mental health Presentation Series (LAMPS)  Access at a time	<p><b>Supporting Emotional Regulation at Home and at School</b></p> <p>This on-demand presentation covers coregulation, transitions, social skills, communication, and collaboration with the school board.</p>	<a href="#">Supporting Emotion Regulation at Home and at School- A Presentation for the Caregivers of</a>	<a href="#">Feedback Form</a>



that is best for you!		<a href="#">Kindergartners</a>	
	<b>Anxiety in School-aged Youth</b> This on-demand presentation covers "What is anxiety", signs and symptoms in your children, coping skills to build and provides resources for further support	<a href="#">Anxiety in School Aged Youth</a>	<a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
	<b>Technology and Mental Health</b> This on-demand presentation explores the impact of technology on the mental health and well-being of school-aged youth. Topics may include understanding the benefits and challenges of technology use, setting boundaries, and promoting balanced screen time.	<a href="#">Technology and Mental Health</a>	<a href="#">Feedback Form</a>
	<b>Social Media &amp; Mental Health</b> Some topics covered in this on-demand presentation may include understanding what social media is, the risks and benefits of social media use, some strategies to help youth manage their social media use, and resources. There will be time for questions	<a href="#">Social Media and Mental Health</a>	Scan the QR Code in the Presentation to access the Feedback Form!



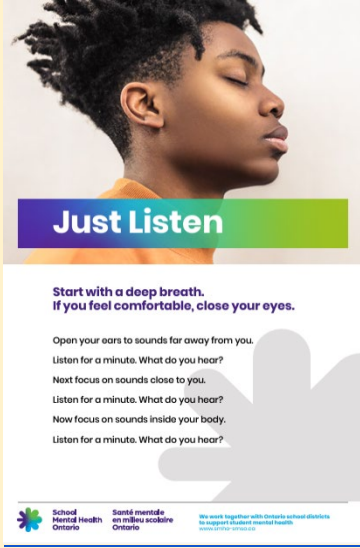

	and answers at the end of the presentation		
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## Mindful Mondays

**Mindfulness  
means paying  
attention in a  
particular way:  
on purpose, in  
the present  
moment, and  
non-judgmentally.**

*Jon Kabat-Zinn*

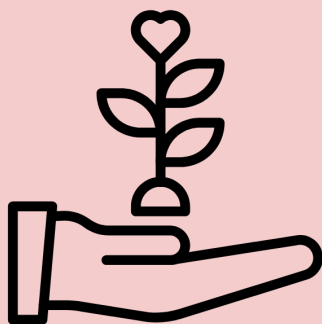


Mindful Mondays	Resources to Explore	Conversation Starters
<p>During Mindful Mondays; we invite you to do <b>One Small Thing</b> – Practice being mindful or in the moment. Slow things down by pausing, reflecting and being present in the moment. Being mindful looks different for each of us.</p>	<p>More about Mindfulness <a href="#">Mindfulness – CMHA National</a></p> <p>Being mindful can be as simple as just listening. You and your child can practice mindfulness together by using this <a href="#">poster</a> from School Mental Health Ontario. Follow the prompts and just listen!</p> 	<p>The below <a href="#">image</a> can provide a great conversation starter when speaking to your child(ren)</p>  <p>Check out this tip sheet on <a href="#">Conversation Starters about Mental Health</a> from <a href="#">School Mental Health Ontario</a></p>

# Thoughtful Tuesdays

## Thoughtful Tuesdays

Thoughtful Tuesdays invite us to be thoughtful about gratitude. Taking the time to remember the everyday things we have to be grateful for can help boost our mood! We all have different things and people to be grateful for and will practice gratitude in different ways.



Created by SAM Designs  
from Noun Project

## Resources to Explore

Check out these [gratitude activities](#) from School Mental Health Ontario. Try doing these activities together as a family!

Try this [gratitude activity!](#)

**GRATITUDE NOTES**

1. Find yourself a journal or some blank pieces of paper.
2. Every morning, write one thing you are thankful for.
3. Every evening, re-read what you've written that day and in the days before.

There are many things, big and small to be thankful for in our lives. Try and hold onto these.

**You're doing great.**

Find out more at: [jack.org/covid](#) | School Mental Health Ontario | Social media and online resources

## Conversation Starters

The below [image](#) can provide a great conversation starter when speaking to your child(ren) about gratitude.

**SPREADING GRATITUDE**




With friends and family, **make a commitment** to send each other one message a day to keep yourselves connected.

This can be as simple as **sending a friend** a meme, an encouraging message or a funny video, once every day or two.

Find out more at: [jack.org/covid](#) | School Mental Health Ontario | Social media and online resources



## Wellness Wednesdays

Wellness Wednesdays	Resources to Explore	Conversation Starters
<p>Wellness Wednesdays invite us to consider what helps us feel well. Wellness looks different for each of us. Our wellness can be connected to who we are and the things we enjoy. It can also be connected to our experiences, culture, beliefs and many other pieces that shape our identity.</p> <p>Engaging in activities that connect mind and body is a great way to enhance the wellness of ALL children and youth.</p>	<p>Check out this <a href="#">exercise video for kids</a>. You can follow along with all of the video or just some of it. Try together as a family!</p>  <p>Check out this <a href="#">five minute boxing fitness for teens</a>. Try together as a family!</p>  <p>There are many ways to move your body, here are some you can do from a seated position – <a href="#">Stretch in your chair</a>, or follow this video <a href="#">Seated Yoga – Movement Break</a></p>	<p>The below <a href="#">image</a> can provide a great conversation starter to encourage wellness movement and breaks.</p> 



## Take Care Thursdays

### Take Care Thursdays

Take Care Thursdays invites us to consider how we take care of ourselves and those around us. Taking moments each day to take care of ourselves and each other is important.

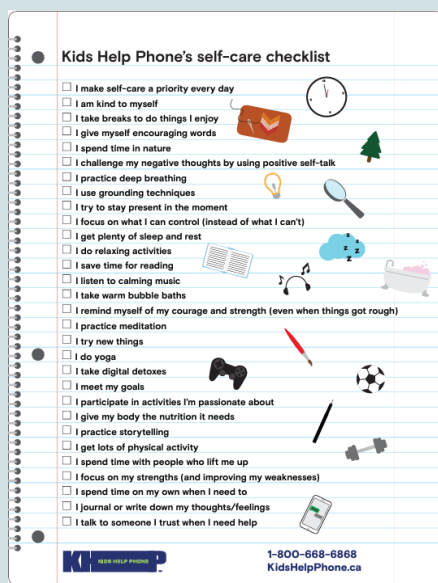
Equipping ourselves and our child(ren) with the tools needed to Take Care and enhance positive mental health can be a great way to promote overall wellness. Self-care looks different for everyone!

Check out this resource [on Taking Care of Yourself](#) and this resource [Caring for Self while Caring for Others](#)

### Resources to Explore

Check out these [self-care tips from other youth](#)

Check out this [self-care checklist](#) from Kids Help Phone.



**Kids Help Phone's self-care checklist**

- ☐ I make self-care a priority every day
- ☐ I am kind to myself
- ☐ I take breaks to do things I enjoy
- ☐ I give myself encouraging words
- ☐ I spend time in nature
- ☐ I challenge my negative thoughts by using positive self-talk
- ☐ I practice deep breathing
- ☐ I use grounding techniques
- ☐ I try to stay present in the moment
- ☐ I focus on what I can control (instead of what I can't)
- ☐ I get plenty of sleep and rest
- ☐ I do relaxing activities
- ☐ I save time for reading
- ☐ I listen to calming music
- ☐ I take warm bubble baths
- ☐ I remind myself of my courage and strength (even when things got rough)
- ☐ I practice meditation
- ☐ I try new things
- ☐ I do yoga
- ☐ I take digital detoxes
- ☐ I meet my goals
- ☐ I participate in activities I'm passionate about
- ☐ I give my body the nutrition it needs
- ☐ I practice storytelling
- ☐ I get lots of physical activity
- ☐ I spend time with people who lift me up
- ☐ I focus on my strengths (and improving my weaknesses)
- ☐ I spend time on my own when I need to
- ☐ I journal or write down my thoughts/feelings
- ☐ I talk to someone I trust when I need help

**Kids Help Phone** 1-800-668-6868 KidsHelpPhone.ca

### Conversation Starters

The below [image](#) can be a great conversation starter to help you child(ren) think about why self-care is important and some ways we may practice self-care.



**WHY SELF-CARE?**

Self-care is like saving up for a rainy day! It's about nurturing yourself so that when difficult situations happen, you will have the energy and strategies to help you get through it! It can feel hard to practice all of the self-care tips that we know are important, pick a few to focus on, congratulate yourself on what you're able to accomplish and continue to set goals for yourself.

• Tip: Try this quiz to find out if you're practicing enough self-care

For more ideas to help you recharge, check out Kids Help Phone's self-care checklist!

**PAUSE** Take sure to take time for yourself during the day, to listen to music, take a few deep breaths, meditate, write in the gratitude journal.

• Tip: There are lots of different apps and sites out there for breathing exercises or check out "How to calm down when you're stressed"

**REFLECT** Take time to think about what's important to you. It can be easy to get caught up in the negative messages, instead look for kindness and positivity. This can come in different forms like people doing good things for others or positive posts on social media.

• Tip: Practicing gratitude on a regular basis can improve our sense of well-being and happiness! Journal about gratitude: every night write down three good things about your day. They don't have to be major (i.e. a great lunch, talking to a friend, finishing a task).

**REPEAT** Did you know that trying a new skill, habit, or routine for 21 days in a row will increase the likelihood of maintaining this new practice?

• Tip: Try having a partner to hold you accountable during the first few weeks; this strategy has been shown to enhance your success rate of maintaining your new practice.

**CONNECT** Strong social connections are one of the most powerful influences on our mood and mental health. Spending time with friends and family help to increase your levels of happiness.

• Tip: Getting involved in something bigger than yourself or doing nice things for others can give you a mental health boost. If you can't see the people you care about every day, send them a text or make a phone call, it will make their day and yours!

**RECOGNIZE** Be mindful of your thoughts and feelings, both positive and negative, as part of your self-care. Finding a healthy outlet to process your emotions and positive self-talk, although always important, is super important during stressful times.

• Tip: When thinking, ask yourself: Is this helpful/true? If not, challenge yourself to find a positive/true alternative. Remember to speak kindly to yourself, everyone has good and bad days. Don't be too hard on yourself!




**If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency department.**

**You can also reach out to Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or by texting CONNECT to 686868.**

**School Mental Health Ontario** Santé mentale en milieu scolaire Ontario

**www.smho-smso.ca**

## Focus Fridays

Focus Fridays	Resources to Explore	Conversation Starters
<p>Focus Fridays invites us to pause and reflect. Considering situations in an intentional way can offer insight and clarity.</p> <p>Consider the following reflection questions to share with your child(ren).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What went well today/this week? (Small things matter!)</li> <li>2) Did you have any challenging or difficult moments? How did you deal with these moments?</li> <li>3) With the introduction of <a href="#">PPM 128</a>, how do you think putting your phone away during class will help you focus?</li> </ol>	<p>Check out this <a href="#">guided reflection meditation</a> for kids.</p>  <p>Check out this <a href="#">meditation</a> for teens on taking a moment to notice our thoughts.</p> 	<p>The below <a href="#">image</a> can provide a great conversation starter to help your child(ren) explore how they might practice re-focusing.</p>  <p>Listen to the <a href="#">YRDSB Podcast on Social Media and Mental Health</a> with your teen and have a conversation about social media.</p>

## Looking for additional resources?

Check out School Mental Health Ontario's [By Your Side Toolkit for Parents/and Caregivers](#). The toolkit features [resources](#) on topics like:

- Understanding mental health
- Mental health at home
- Stress and anxiety management
- Substance use prevention
- Navigating digital technology
- Reaching out for help





## One Small Thing is...

Anything that helps you to feel positive and hopeful!

Here is some examples of small things shared by students and parents:

- **“ When my daughter shares funny Tik Tok videos with me after work”** Parent
- **“Being brave when I feel nervous”** – Student
- **“Taking homemade lunches to school ”** – Student
- **“Feeling accepted”** – Student
- **“My family & friends”** – Student



Many identities, languages and expressions of wellness are missing, how do you and your family express **Within**,  
**Between & Around** (holistic mental health)?

Share with us on social media @MH\_YRDSB ([X](#) (formerly Twitter) and [Instagram](#))







## Within Between & Around in action through the ABCs of Mental Health

- Within, Between and Around factors can include the relationships we have with others that support our mental health. Meaningful relationships and conversations can improve your child's mental health and create a sense of value in knowing that they are heard, listened to and **acknowledged**.
- **Bridge:** The qualities "Within" us can include our gifts, strengths and assets. Noticing and acknowledging your child's strengths tells them they are valued. For example you could say: "I noticed you really tried with your homework," or "I love the way you think outside the box! You are so creative!"
- **Connection:** A simple check-in can build connections and support positive mental health: "How was your day? What was the highlight of your day? "You seem quiet. Is everything okay?" Checking in regarding what's happening "Around" your child can help inform what kinds of questions or support they may need. For example: "Exams are coming up, how are you feeling about that?"



## **Thank you for using the Family/Caregiver toolkit!**

We hope you and your family were able to use some of the resources and registered for the webinars!

Please use the hashtags below to share how your family is acknowledging Children's Mental Health Awareness Week or using the toolkit:

**#withinbetweenaround, #YRDSB, #CMHAW2025 #MHYRDSB, Share with us on [X](#) and [Instagram](#) @MH\_YRDSB**

