

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK: UNMASKING MENTAL HEALTH



ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS AND FAMILIES

This week we celebrate Mental Health Week with the theme “Unmasking Mental Health.” Many people wear “masks” to feel safe in social situations, hiding parts of themselves. When someone struggles with mental health, they might feel they need to wear a mask to feel safe.

It’s important to look beyond the surface and to see the whole person. *Unmasking Mental Health* asks us all to take off our masks and help others feel safe to do the same. Hiding who we are can be tiring and lonely, and it can stop people from getting the help they need. When we can be ourselves, we create deeper connections, leading to better mental health and self-esteem. Open and honest conversations can connect us all.

SELF CARE & SUPPORTING OTHERS



Encourage your child to think about self-care and get to know themselves. This helps build a strong sense of themselves, while hiding can make this harder.

Talk to your kids: Use the “Say, Don’t Say” cards can be to have meaningful conversations about mental health.

It is OK to ask for help: Support your child in learning how to ask for help. Use the No Problem Too Big or Too Small: A student help-seeking resource.

SCREEN TIME: HOW MUCH IS OK?



Too much screen time can affect sleep, mood, and focus. Here are the recommended limits:

- Ages 5–17: No more than 2 hours of recreational screen time per day.
- Turn off screens at least 1 hour before bedtime.
- Share screen time by watching together and talking about it.

TIP: Use screens for connection, not just distraction.

SLEEP: HOW MUCH DO KIDS NEED?

Everybody needs to have a sleep routine – kids, parents/ caregivers! Sleep impacts mental health and helps us to reduce stress and manage our emotions. Help your child to get enough sleep:

- **Children** (Ages 5–13): 9 to 11 hours
- **Teens** (Ages 14–17): 8 to 10 hours



Learn more about getting better sleep and [tips for building a mentally healthy nighttime routine](#).

BE ACTIVE: KEEP MOVING!

Being active is good for our mental health. Support your child in being active to improve their mental health and decrease anxiety. Being active connects us to better health, a positive self-image, better school grades, and improved social well-being.



- Kids and teens should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- It can be walking, biking, dancing, or playing tag.
- Moving together is more fun!

Learn more about the [Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines](#) to keep your family active.

FUEL UP FOR A HEALTHY MIND



Food affects how we feel and think.

- Choose whole foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein (meat, beans, eggs).
- Make water the drink of choice.
- Don't skip meals—especially breakfast!
- Try to eat meals together as a family, when possible.

LOOKING FOR SUPPORT AND RESOURCES?



Talking about feelings, spending time together, and making small changes to support mental health can make a big difference. Let's help our kids grow up feeling seen, safe, and supported. Here are more options for help:

- Find local services by viewing the [Windsor-Essex Youth Services Card](#).
- [WEConnect Kids](#) (Coordinated Access): Call 519-257-KIDS (5437)- A free, confidential mental health service for children, youth, and families who live in Windsor-Essex.
- [Youth Wellness Hub](#): Provides mental health counselling in a one-on-one setting, allowing youth 12 to 25 years old to drop in as needed.
- [Kids Help Phone](#), 24-hour help line: Call 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868, services available in English or French.
- [One Stop Talk - 24 hours](#): Virtual or Call 1-855-416-TALK (8255) A free, confidential service that lets kids and youth under 18 years of age get immediate mental health support with a registered therapist.