



Seeds to grow **MENTAL HEALTH**

Living with Our Emotions

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS VOLUME 4

INTRODUCTION

In our [last newsletter](#), we introduced three life skills to help us manage our emotions when we feel stressed. The skills act as tools that we can use when we have an emotional emergency. They help us to get through hard times without acting on our impulses and making things worse.

This newsletter will focus on three new skills that can be used to help protect and improve our mental health.



The first skill is Self-Care. Self-Care reminds us to take time everyday to improve our physical and mental well-being. By doing this, we will be better able to deal with our emotions and our FIZZ when it is high.



The second skill is Listen. The Listen skill helps us pay attention to what others are saying and shows we are actively listening. By practicing this skill, we can prevent many misunderstandings.



The final skill is Respect. Respect reminds us to treat ourselves and others with respect. Even if we don't feel respected, we can still show respect. Showing respect helps to improve our self-respect.
Respect is hard to define but we all know what it feels like and looks like. Respect also involves being open-minded and accepting of others, including their differences.

By working on the ways we express ourselves and communicate with others, we can improve our coping skills and confidence. This will help us to better deal with stress.



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SELF-CARE



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SELF-CARE IS A SKILL THAT WE SHOULD PRACTICE DAILY.

When we practice self-care, it helps us feel better both physically and mentally. As parents and caregivers, we often spend a lot of time taking care of others. It's very important to remember to take care of ourselves. Self-care is important because it helps us handle the challenges of life. Just like we charge our phone batteries, we need to keep ourselves energized by taking care of ourselves. When we practice self-care, it becomes easier to respond when your FIZZ is high.

The word **SELF** in self-care can remind us to do things regularly that can recharge our own battery:

We wear helmets to help protect us when riding a bike or entering a construction site. Practicing self-care every day is like wearing a helmet. It will help to protect us BEFORE we face our next challenge.

SLEEP

EATING AND EXERCISE

LOOK AT what are our challenges, what is bothering/upsetting us the most.

FIND something fun to do everyday.

Self-care looks different for every person. Make it a priority and do at least one thing for yourself everyday.

SELF-CARE IDEAS

Be kind to yourself

- Use positive self-talk.
- Treat yourself the way you would treat a friend in the same situation.

Take up a hobby and/or learn a new skill

- This will increase your confidence and your interests.
- You can meet new people.

Help others

- Help out a community project.
- Volunteer in your community.
- Helping others, helps ourselves feel better.
- Give a compliment daily.

Have some fun and /or be creative

- Paint or colour.
- Play a board game.
- Do something that makes you laugh.
- Enjoy yourself!

Exercise regularly

- Be active. Get outside, explore a green space.
- Find an activity you enjoy doing and just do it.

Eat mindfully

- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Drink more water.
- Eat with others.
- Cook your favourite meal.

Relax

- Make time for yourself.
- Find what works for you.
- Read, mediate, yoga.

Balance sleep

- Create a bedtime routine.
- Decrease social screen time.
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time everyday.

LISTEN



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LISTENING IS AN IMPORTANT SKILL WHERE WE FOCUS ON WHAT THE OTHER PERSON IS SAYING.

Sometimes, we get distracted by things going on around us, technology, or even our own thoughts. When we don't pay attention, it can lead to mistakes and misunderstandings. This can make our FIZZ go up.

A helpful tip for using the LISTEN skill is to remember that we have TWO ears and ONE mouth. So, we need to listen twice as much as we speak.

How can we show others that we are *really* listening to them?

***Note: It is important to remember that signs of active listening can vary across cultures.*



Eye contact.



Smiling.



Leaning in toward the person/
facing the person.



Nodding.



Verbal replies or comments:
"Yes", "OK", "Uh-Huh".



Show interest:

- Ask questions.
- Ask for more information.
- Repeat back what the speaker says to show you have understood.



Do not interrupt or change the subject.



Respect the other person's point of view.



Answer respectfully and be honest.



Treat others like you would want to be treated.

Next time you talk to someone, remember to use these skills.

RESPECT



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RESPECT IS ABOUT VALUING AND ACKNOWLEDGING OTHER PEOPLE AND THEIR OPINIONS.

It is also important that we respect ourselves. When we treat others with respect, they are more likely to treat us with respect. As we earn respect from others and show respect to them, our own self-respect grows.

GIVE RESPECT ↔ GET RESPECT



R respect self, others, and the environment.
E equality and esteem.
S say please, thank you and sorry.
P polite, kind, and considerate.
E ears to listen.
C clear, calm communication.
T treat others as we want to be treated.

Understanding and appreciating the similarities and differences among people is important. By recognizing and celebrating diversity, we can learn to respect and care for one another.

Celebrating how we are different and what we have in common with others is important. It can help us to better understand others and can teach us how to respect and care for each other.

Examples of Respect

Being kind to ourselves and others.
Being honest without excuses or exaggerating.
Being reliable and on time.
Treating others, the way we want to be treated.
Recycling and reducing waste.

Examples of Disrespect

Being critical or sarcastic.
Lying or gossiping about people.
Insulting or hurting the feelings of others.
Being selfish and putting ourselves above others.
Being wasteful, not caring for the environment.

School Mental Health Ontario



School
Mental Health
Ontario

It can be helpful to practice Self-Care, Listen, and Respect skills at home. Working on these skills can make it easier for your child to use them when they are having a stressful time.

Below are some examples of activities you can do at home with your child. More activities can be found at [School Mental Health Ontario](https://www.schoolmentalhealthontario.ca/).

SELF-CARE

<u>Self-Care 101 for Students</u>	A tip sheet for your child that helps them find ways to feel good and recharge. When difficult situations happen, they will have the energy, resources, and strategies to help them get through it!
<u>Take Care of Yourself</u>	A tip sheet for parents/caregivers that offers basic self-care reminders that may be helpful when facing challenges.
<u>Deep Belly Breathing</u>	A breathing practice that can help develop a deep mind/body connection that can help with managing emotions.
<u>Imaginary Walk</u>	Teaches children a way to calm themselves when they feel worried or stressed.
<u>Gratitude Journal</u>	This activity will help children notice the good in their day and to shift their thinking to positive thoughts.

LISTEN

The following games can be played at home to practice listening skills:

<u>The Telephone Game</u>	It can be played anytime with 3 or more family members.
<u>Simon Says</u>	A great game for your child to practice paying attention and listening to instructions.
<u>Red Light, Green Light</u>	A great game to practice listening skills while being active. When they hear “green light!” they need to run, and when they hear “red light” they should try to stop as quickly as they possibly can.
<u>Read Aloud Books</u>	Listen to stories using Read Aloud Books from School Mental Health Ontario or read a book together.

School Mental Health Ontario



RESPECT

<p><u>Notice the Positive</u> <u>(adapted from SMHO)</u></p>	<p>Teach your child to see the positive that happens on a daily basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have your child decorate a basket, jar, or bin that will be used to put “positive messages” in.• Encourage your child to write or draw positive acts or things they notice other people doing or saying (you may need to first explain or model to your child examples of what these are).• Fill the container during the week with each family member’s comments or drawings of positive acts or comments they notice or hear.• Read the positive messages that were collected when everyone is together and discuss how they are showing respect.• The next week, have family members write or draw what they did that was respectful to others or themselves.
<p><u>The Kindness Jar</u></p>	<p>Using a clear container have family members add a bean/pasta/marble for every act of kindness by a family member that someone else notices. Encouraging acts of kindness helps to develop respectful behaviour.</p>
<p><u>Kindness at Home</u> <u>(Random Acts of Kindness Foundation)</u></p>	<p>This is a free program that provides quick kindness activities for families of all ages, discussion topics (including one on Respect), and journal prompts.</p>



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SERIES WRAP-UP

This is the last volume of the Seeds to Grow Mental Health Newsletter series. This series was made to help parents/caregivers and children learn how to better understand and deal with their emotions, especially during stressful times. The newsletters talk about different skills and activities that can be done at home to keep working on these skills.

If you want to read the whole series of Seeds to Grow Mental Health Newsletters, you can find them on our [website](#).