

Mental Health Boosters

As COVID-19 alters our regular routines, including attending school, a few tips can help us to support positive mental health. These include:

1. Structure your day:

Although our regular routines may be altered it can still be helpful to try to set up a regular structure to your child's day. Try to keep their bedtime/wakeup time within an hour of their usual time. Schedule time for your child's school work, and for other activities.

2. Limit News intake

There is a lot going on in the world right now and it is hard not to feel inundated by minute to minute updates. Although it is important to keep informed it can be helpful to limit how often and when the news is on. Your child may also need some reassurance about information they have heard. Be factual and try to keep information at their developmental level.

3. Exercise

Regular exercise helps to boost our immune system and helps to alleviate feelings of stress and anxiety. Exercise does not need to be intense, a simple ten minute walk a couple of times a day can be effective.

4. Sleep

Your child needs up to ten to twelve hours of sleep per night. Maintaining a consistent bedtime, limiting screen time before bed, and supporting activities that help them to feel relaxed and calm will help to optimize the opportunity for restful sleep.

5. Eat healthy

When our routines are altered sometimes our good eating habits also fall by the wayside. Planning for and preparing healthy meals helps to support your child's health.

6. Daily relaxation time

With school out there may be more time to include hobbies as part of your routine. Activities such as puzzles, crafts, games, crochet, can all help to reduce stress while being fun at the same time. There are also some great on-line options to help with relaxation. A few suggestions include:

A quick relaxation video: <https://youtu.be/p-aFWI27TCM>

A 30 minute video for kids yoga: <https://youtu.be/X655B4ISakq>

Yoga for teens: <https://youtu.be/7kqZnJqzNaU>

10 minute guided meditation: <https://youtu.be/SkAMaCZtXUI>

7. Go outside

Science supports spending time outside as an effective way to help boost our immune system. Noticing the seasonal changes that are starting to occur can be a natural way of connecting with the life affirming signs of nature.

8. Talk

Your child may need extra care and attention from you. They may have questions and knowing that you are available to listen can help. It can also be helpful to ‘reframe’ the experience by thinking on the things the time allows us to do, rather than the things that the child may have had to stop (swim lessons, hockey, band trip, etc.).

9. Additional resources

If you are looking for additional resources, the following links may be helpful:

- National Association of School Psychologists has put out a resource related to how to talk to your child about COVID-19:

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

- Child Mind has also put out a good resource on how to talk to your child about COVID-19

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

- Anxiety Canada has some great resources

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/what-to-do-if-you-are-anxious-or-worried-about-coronavirus-covid-19/>

- PBS has a good resource for younger children

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about->

[coronavirus?utm_source=LINKEDIN_COMPANY&utm_medium=social&utm_term=20200310&utm_content=3190319287&utm_campaign=WGBH](https://www.linkedin.com/company/wgbh/coronavirus?utm_source=LINKEDIN_COMPANY&utm_medium=social&utm_term=20200310&utm_content=3190319287&utm_campaign=WGBH)

10.Apps

The following Apps may be of interest to assist with feelings of stress/anxiety:

Insight timer

Nature Sounds

Breathe

Lake (colouring)

Calm

Happy Color (colouring)

Settle your Glitter

11.Community contacts/resources:

Kids Help Phone (24/7): 1-800-668-6868 or
text 686868

Klinic (24/7): 204-786-8686

Mobile Crisis (24/7): 204-949-4777

Seven Oaks Teen Clinic 204-938-5900

Norwest Youth Hub 204-615-3117

CFS 204-944-4200

Rainbow Resource Centre 204-474-0212

Youth Resource Shelter 204-477-1804

RAY (Resource Assistance for Youth) 204-783-5617

Winnipeg Harvest: 204-982-3660

