FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

TOGETHER IN THE VALLEY

August 2021

As you prepare for the return to school, TVDSB Cares Team of School Mental Health Professionals are available to support students and families Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. Reach us by phone at 548-486-5188 or email at tvdsbcares@tvdsb.ca

We look forward to coming together and reconnecting in-person and online!

We hope you're enjoying the summer break and that your child(ren) are starting to think about re-connecting with friends, peers, school staff, and new learning opportunities.

As summer holidays come to an end we want to recognize that it is common for some young people to have a variety of feelings about the return to school. Check in with your child about a return to school plan.

What is Mental Health?

Mental health and well-being is inspired through "a balance of the mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional" (SMHO).

Mental health is the ability to feel, think, and act in ways that help us:

- get through challenges and stressful situations
- enjoy life
- have hope and purpose
- feel connected to others
- have a sense of belonging

Activities to Support Mental Health

- Watching a movie
- Journaling
- Playing in the park, at a friends, or at the beach/lake
- Visiting friends
- Playing sports or engaging in recreational activities
- Bike riding, running, dancing, or skiing
- Doing art, crafts or painting
- Making a music playlist
- Taking a warm bath or shower

Mental Health Resources

www.TVDSB.ca
www.mindyourmind.ca
www.jack.org
School Mental Health Ontario

TVDSB has school mental health professionals available to help during the school year. Please contact your school administrator about available school mental health services.

Community Resources

If there is a mental health emergency, please visit your local Hospital Emergency Department or call 911

Kids Help Phone: 24/7 crisis support: 1-800-668-6868, text 686868, www.kidshelpphone.ca for web chat

CMHA: (24/7 Walk in support): 648 Huron St. in London (London/Middlesex), 16 yrs +

Wellkin Child & Youth Mental Wellness: 1-877-539-0463 (Oxford/Elgin)

Reach Out Crisis Support: (519) 433-2023 or 1-866-933-2023, www.reachout247.ca for web chat

Tandem: formerly Crisis Intake Team (CIT): 519-433-0334 (London/Middlesex), 0-18 years and caregivers

Underlined text is a hyperlink to more information

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5 Steps to Deal with Back to School Worries

Take Care of the Basics:
Ensure your child is getting enough sleep, eating regular meals and healthy snacks and has daily exercise. When the mind and body are nourished, tackling school worries is easier.

Provide Empathy:
Listen to your child's concerns. There may be good opportunities to simply listen to your child when you are in the car or standing in line at the store. For some kids and teens this "casual" method of talking feels less intense and makes it easier for them to express themselves. For others, a private time with undivided attention feels better.

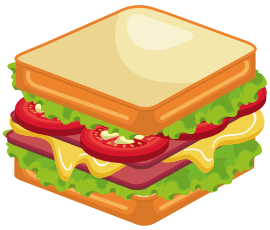
Problem Solve:
Anxious youth often have difficulty solving problems and doubt their ability to cope. Creating an active plan with concrete solutions, can significantly reduce the worry.

Focus on the Positive Aspects:
Encourage your child to re-direct attention away from the worries towards the positives. Ask, "What are three things that you are most excited about on your first day of school?" Most kids can think of something good, even if it's just eating a special snack or going home at the end of the day.

Pay Attention to Your Own Behaviour:
Children take cues from their parents, so the more confidence and calm you can model, the more your child will believe they can handle this new hurdle.

School Preparation Timeline

https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/coping-with-back-to-school-anxiety/

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Aug. 23		Gradually return to a school day sleep and wake routine		Create a list of school supplies and plan to choose them together
Talk about concerns or worries and decide on a coping plan	Make a mood boosting playlist		Ask your child to help plan snacks and lunches for the first week	Visit the school or plan your work space at home
Plan clothing for the next day	Sept. 7	Check in with your child to see how the first couple of days are going		Connect early with the school or teacher if there are any concerns