



Healthy Living... It's in Everyone

A guide to healthy living for families who have a child or youth living with mental health challenges

ENHANCING YOUR FAMILY'S LIFE THROUGH

Healthy Eating

Being Active Together

Managing Stress

Developing Healthy Sleep Habits

This toolkit can be found online at: keltymentalhealth.ca

Acknowledgements

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keltymentalhealth.ca/toolkits

Toolkit Feedback

This toolkit is a work in progress. We value your input on how we can make sure it meets the needs of families. We want to hear from you!

1. Was there anything that was unclear or confusing?
2. What other topics would you like to see included?
3. Do you have any tips you'd like to share with families on healthy living?
4. Please share your story of how this toolkit helped your family.

Send your feedback to:

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Vancouver, B.C., Canada

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INTRODUCTION

B.C. families are committed to making sure their children live a healthy lifestyle. For children and youth with mental health challenges, getting a good night's sleep, being physically active, eating healthy and managing stress can have a positive impact on both their physical and mental health.

This toolkit has been created to help your family live a healthy lifestyle by:

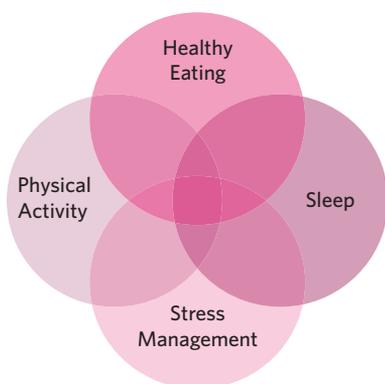
- › Looking at what you are already doing that is contributing to good health
- › Identifying your goals: Figuring out what you would like to work on and taking small steps that will lead to the changes you want
- › Hearing from other families about strategies they have used to promote healthy living in their family

A Suggested Approach to Using this Toolkit

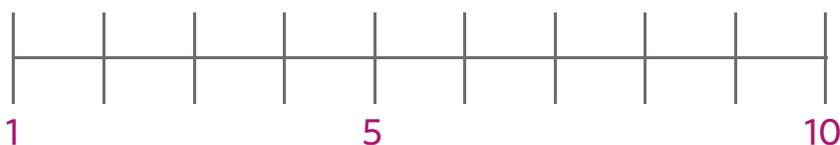
1. Assess your family's current lifestyle
2. Choose a goal and decide on a small change towards it
3. Make sure your goal is a S.M.A.R.T. one
4. Celebrate your family's success!

1. Assess your family's current lifestyle

Families already have what it takes to live healthy. In order to explore your strengths, take a look at your current healthy living practices. Invite your whole family to participate.



On a scale of 1 to 10, where would you rate your family in each of these healthy living areas? Which area would get the highest rating? Which area could use the most improvement?



(Note: 1 = could use the most improvement, 10 = your family does this very well already)

Think about your family's strengths, skills and talents. Do this for each member of your family, as well as for your family as a whole.

Examples of strengths:

- › What you currently know about your child's mental health challenges
- › Each family member's interests, hobbies and activities
- › Support people around your family (e.g. friends, relatives, school)
- › Items that you already have (e.g. bicycles, weights, Wii Fit)
- › Activities your family enjoys together

2. Choose a goal and decide on a small change towards it

Choose one of the healthy living areas. Decide on a goal that you and your family would like to work towards.

Based on where your family rated themselves on the scale (from 1 to 10), think together about a small change that could be made that would move you up on the scale, even if it's just one notch – for example, from a 5 to a 6.

Making changes is more likely to be successful when it is done in small steps and when your child is involved in the process.

3. Make sure your goal is a S.M.A.R.T. one

Think about the goal that you have identified – is it a S.M.A.R.T. goal? “S.M.A.R.T.” is an acronym that stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction Plan, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime to Review. Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals can help you achieve the changes you want to make.

S

Specific

Describe what your family would like to achieve.

Example: To increase physical activity by walking or biking more often

M

Measurable

Decide on a quantity you want to reach, such as the duration (how long you will do the activity for) or frequency (how often you will do the activity).

Example: We will walk or ride bikes 2 days a week

A

Action Plan

How will your family achieve this goal?

Example: We will walk or ride bikes to school on Mondays and Wednesdays

R

Realistic

Is this goal “do-able”? On a scale of 1 – 10 (10 being very likely), how likely is it that your family will be willing and able to do this?

Example: 9/10 – Very likely, because we have bikes and enjoy bike riding

T

Time to Review

When will your family start? When will you reassess?

Example: We'll start next Monday and re-assess in one month

It might be useful to think of your family's or child's long term goals as a series of small S.M.A.R.T. goals. In the example below, each step on the ladder represents a smaller goal that will help you reach your ultimate goal.

To help with setting goals, we have included an activity sheet (*My Healthy Living Pinwheel*) in the 'Tools & Resources' section of this toolkit.



ULTIMATE GOAL:

Be active 3 or more days/week

SMART GOAL #3:

Go to the park or for a hike with my family 1 day/week

SMART GOAL #2:

Walk or ride my bike to school
2 days/week

SMART GOAL #1:

Walk or ride my bike to school
1 day/week

4. Celebrate your family's success!



Tips for Working Towards a Healthy Lifestyle

1. Think small and simple steps

Focusing on healthy living doesn't mean you have to change all of your family's daily habits at once. Making one new change at a time will help you reach your long term goals. Even one small healthy change should be viewed as a success.

Moving towards a healthier lifestyle may be easier if you gradually change rather than start with the ultimate goal right away.

2. Think about times when you've been successful

Think about what works now and what has worked in the past. When have you been able to help your child try a new food? Or help them get to sleep by their bedtime? What was different about that time? What were they doing? Who was involved? How did it happen?

3. Pick your battles

Promoting healthy living should be a positive experience for everyone. It makes sense to decide what behaviours are worth being firm about, what behaviours are worth encouraging or discouraging, and what behaviours are worth leaving alone.

In his book *The Explosive Child*, psychologist Ross Greene recommends prioritizing behaviours into three symbolic baskets:

Basket A:
Non-negotiable issues



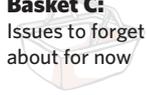
Basket A holds the non-negotiable issues that you always enforce. An example may be going to bed at a specific time.

Basket B:
Negotiable issues



Basket B holds the behaviours or issues that you are willing to compromise on. An example might be an agreement to let your child choose the meal one or two nights a week.

Basket C:
Issues to forget about for now



Basket C holds all the behaviours that you will forget about for now. For example, it's not worth arguing about sleeping on the floor instead of the bed if it means your child will go to sleep

4. Build on strengths

When you notice your child doing something right, encourage them to do it more often. Find opportunities to highlight good behaviour or accomplishments. Watch and come to know when and where your child has the most energy or enthusiasm. The 'Tools & Resources' section has links to websites that can help you identify your child's strengths (look for 'Able-Differently' under 'Other').

5. Make it a Family Affair

Hold a family meeting and introduce the ideas presented in this toolkit. What is your family doing right now to promote healthy living? What else would you like to add to your healthy lifestyle? Talk with your child about what area of healthy living they would like to focus on. Let them decide on their own goals, and make it fun!

Family activity: Create a photo album of your healthy living journey. Include photos of your family being active, pictures from recipes, or any positive changes your family makes. Photos can also be used as screen savers or put in areas where everyone can see them.





Module 01:

HEALTHY EATING

Module 01:

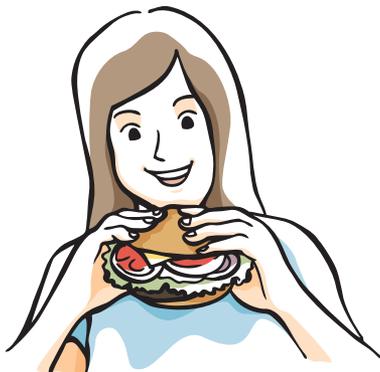
HEALTHY EATING

This module includes the following sections:

- › Key Messages
 - › An Easy Approach to Using Canada's Food Guide
 - › Effects of Medication on Appetite and Eating Habits
 - › Tips from Families for Healthy Eating
 - › Activities to Increase Healthy Eating
-

Good nutrition is important for healthy brain development and can help children and youth:

- › Do better in school
- › Feel better about themselves, their bodies, and their abilities
- › Cope with stress and manage their emotions better



Key Messages

1.

Families that eat together, eat better

Eating meals together as a family has many positive effects, such as higher nutrient intake and improved mental health.



Remember:

You are a role model – you influence the relationship your child will have with food!

2.

Eat breakfast



Children and youth who eat breakfast stay at a healthier weight. They also do better in school and have a higher intake of many nutrients, vitamins and minerals.

3.

Dieting doesn't work: Make small, achievable changes

Children and youth who diet gain more weight than those who don't. Dieting has also been shown to increase the chance of developing an eating disorder.



Remember:

You can help your children make healthier choices by having fruits and veggies readily available at home

4.

Drink water, milk and only a small amount of 100% fruit juice and stay away from sugar sweetened beverages

Sugar sweetened beverages such as pop and fruit drinks contribute to obesity and the development of type 2 diabetes.

**5.**

Roles in feeding and eating: You shouldn't have to eat your vegetables to get dessert

Children are born with the ability to know how much to eat. They eat when they are hungry and stop when they are full. As a parent, try not to interfere with your child's eating. Your role is to provide food at appropriate times (i.e. 3 meals/day and 2-3 snacks/day). Your child's role is to choose what to eat from what you provide. If they don't eat, it's okay, there's always another meal or snack in 2-4 hours.



NOTE: Some children do not respond to hunger and fullness cues (for example, those on specific medications or those who have often ignored these cues). For these children, individual nutrition counselling by a dietitian may be required.

For more information:

www.ellynsatter.com/ellyn-satters-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding-i-80.html

6.

Treat with love, not sweets



When children do something well and are rewarded with food, or hurt themselves and get a cookie to make them feel better, they link these times with food. This link can continue with them through life. So later, when they are sad or anxious or even happy, they'll want to eat. Try to find other ways to reward children that don't involve food.

A link to a handout with ideas can be found in the 'Tools & Resources' section (look for 'National Heart Foundation of Australia' under 'Healthy Eating').

An Easy Approach to Using Canada's Food Guide

Using Canada's Food Guide is easy! Canada's Food Guide is a useful tool to make sure your family gets all the nutrients (carbohydrates, protein and fat), vitamins and minerals they need for their physical and mental health.

Follow the steps below to see what Canada's Food Guide recommends for your family:

Number of Food			
Children		Teens	
4-8	9-13	14-18	
Girls and Boys		Females	Males

1.
Find your age and sex.

	Children				Teens			
	4-8	9-13	14-18	14-18	14-18	14-18	14-18	14-18
Grain Products	3	4	6	6	6	6	6	6
Milk and Alternatives	2	2	3-4	3	3	3	3	3

2.
Find how many servings of each food group are recommended for your age and sex.

Recommendation	Number of Food Guide Servings per Day							
	Children				Teens			
	2-3	4-8	9-13	14-18	14-18	14-18	14-18	14-18
Vegetables and Fruit	4	5	6	7	8	7-8	8-10	7
Grain Products	3	4	6	6	7	6-7	8	6
Milk and Alternatives	2	2	3-4	3-4	3-4	2	2	3
Meat and Alternatives	1	1	1-2	2	3	2	3	2

The chart above shows how many Food Guide Servings you need from each of the four food groups every day.

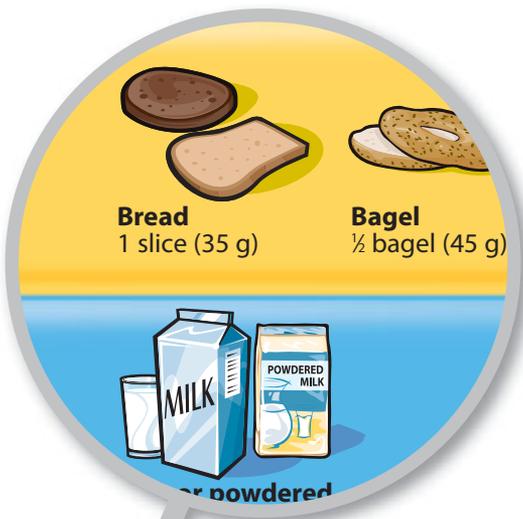
Having the amount and type of food recommended and following the tips in Canada's Food Guide will help:

- Meet your needs for vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.
- Reduce your risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, certain types of cancer and osteoporosis.
- Contribute to your overall health and vitality.

Get your copy of Canada's Food Guide:

Online: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

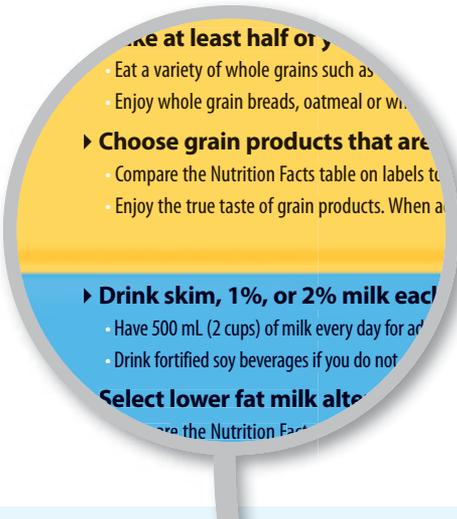
Print copy: Order free of charge by calling 1-866-225-0709



3.

Find out what a serving size is (e.g. 1 slice of bread = 1 grain serving).

NOTE: A serving size doesn't always mean a portion size. For example, a sandwich has 2 slices of bread, which is equal to 2 servings of grain.



- Eat at least half of your grain products as whole grains.
- Enjoy a variety of whole grains such as wheat, barley, and oats.
- Enjoy whole grain breads, oatmeal or whole grain cereals.
- ▶ **Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar and salt.**
 - Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels to help you choose.
 - Enjoy the true taste of grain products. When a recipe calls for a grain product, try using a different one.
- ▶ **Drink skim, 1%, or 2% milk each day.**
 - Have 500 mL (2 cups) of milk every day for adults and children.
 - Drink fortified soy beverages if you do not drink milk.
- ▶ **Select lower fat milk alternatives.**
 - Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels to help you choose.

4.

Choose foods described here most often. The type of food you eat is as important as the amount that you eat.

What is the Food Guide Serving?
Look at the serving sizes on the labels.

Vegetables and fruits 1 cup (250 mL)	Grain products 1 slice of bread (35 g) 1/2 bagel (45 g) 1/2 cup of cereal (30 g)	Protein foods 1 slice of meat (30 g) 1 egg (50 g) 1/2 cup of beans (1/2 cup)	Dairy and alternatives 1 cup of milk (250 mL) 1/2 cup of yogurt (125 mL) 1/2 cup of cheese (125 mL)	Other 1/2 cup of nuts (1/2 cup) 1/2 cup of seeds (1/2 cup)
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Make each Food Guide Serving count... wherever you are - at home, at school, at work or when eating out!

- Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day. Get more vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes and winter squash. Get more vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes and winter squash.
- Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt. If you must use dressing, sauce or hot sauce, use it sparingly.
- Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

Take at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.
A variety of whole grains such as barley, brown rice, oat, wild rice and millets.

- Choose whole grain bread, whole or whole wheat pasta.
- Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt. Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels to help you choose.
- If you must use dressing, sauce or hot sauce, use it sparingly. When adding sauce or spreads, use small amounts.

Drink skim, 1% or 2% milk each day.
Have 500 mL (2 cups) of milk every day for adults and children.

- Drink fortified soy beverages if you do not drink milk.
- Select lower fat milk alternatives. Compare the Nutrition Facts table on labels to help you choose to make wise choices.

Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.

“Eat at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week.”
Don't eat fish such as blue, herring, shark, salmon, swordfish and tuna.

- Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt. Don't eat foods that are fried, sautéed or sautéed.
- Use cooking methods such as roasting, baking or poaching that require little or no added fat. If you eat between meals, choose or prepare ready, choose those lower in salt (sodium) and fat.

Oils and fats
Include a small amount - 30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 Tbsp) - of unsaturated fat each day. This includes oil used for cooking, salad dressings, margarine and mayonnaise.

- Use vegetable oils such as canola, olive and soybean.
- Choose soft margarine that will have no saturated and trans fats.
- Limit butter, hard margarine, lard and shortening.

Enjoy a variety of foods from the four food groups.

Satisfy your thirst with water!
Drink water regularly. It's a calorie-free way to quench your thirst. Drink more water in hot weather or when you are very active.

* Health Canada provides advice for eating together to help you meet the objectives of the Food Guide to www.healthycanada.gc.ca for the latest information.

Have trouble thinking of meal ideas? Check out the *Meal Planning* activity sheet in the 'Tools & Resources' section of the toolkit.

Effects of Medication on Appetite and Eating Habits

Some medications can affect your child's eating habits. This means your child might feel less hungry or more hungry. With some medications, weight gain is a particular concern. These medications include mood stabilizing medications (e.g. Lithium) and second generation antipsychotics (SGAs) (e.g. Olanzapine, Risperidone, Quetiapine).

NOTE: SGAs are also sometimes known as atypical antipsychotics (AAPs).

It is important to talk to your family doctor, pharmacist or dietitian if you feel your child is not getting the nutrients he or she needs. Also, monitoring by your family doctor is extremely important when your child is on medications. Your doctor should take baseline measurements, such as height and weight, before your child starts the medication. Your child should then be monitored on a regular basis. In addition to medical monitoring by your doctor, as a family you can also observe and note any changes that you find concerning.

Tips for addressing appetite challenges due to medications that some families have found helpful can be found in the 'Tips from Families' section of this module.

More information on medications can be found on the following websites:

kelymentalhealth.ca

www.bcchildrens.ca/psychmeds



Tips from Families for Healthy Eating

These tips have been developed by families, for families through a series of focus groups across B.C. Keep in mind that not all tips are appropriate for all families – if you have questions about a specific concern, talk to your family doctor or other health care professional.

General strategies

- › Model healthy eating. Demonstrate a positive attitude to trying new foods and provide choices of healthy foods
- › Introduce a wide variety of foods early on
- › Build on your child's strengths. For example, if your child is creative, allow them to help decorate a dish you have made

Getting them involved and interested in food

- › Involve your child in the grocery shopping
- › Let your child make the menus for the week or plan a meal (see the "Tools & Resources" section of this toolkit for a *Meal Planning* activity sheet)
- › Let your child choose a few items to go into their lunch or meal

Maximizing healthy foods

- › Have nutritious snacks easily available – for example, have veggies precut in the fridge
- › Allow your child to have one treat a day (e.g. a small bag of potato chips)

ALTERNATIVES TO SOFT DRINKS

- › Mixing sparkling water with a small amount of juice
- › Mixing Club Soda and lemon juice
- › Using fancy ice cubes and a straw can make drinks seem more special



Introducing new foods

- › Let your child read food magazines
- › Try something new every week
- › Ask your child to try a food more than once; if they don't like it, they don't have to eat it. Explain to your child that "taste buds grow up" – this may encourage them to try again another time
- › Use plates that have separated sections
- › Let your child know that it's okay not to finish everything on their plate
- › Have a friend come over who isn't fussy; your child or youth may be more likely to eat foods they normally would not

Textures and foods

Some children and youth with mental health challenges may have trouble eating foods with certain textures, colours, smells or temperatures. Here are some strategies families have found helpful:

- › Build on what your child knows and accepts. Make a list of the foods and liquids that your child currently likes. Organize these into categories such as taste, texture, colour, or smell. For example, does your child eat mostly foods that are crisp or crunchy? Foods that have a strong taste?
- › Use your child's likes as a way to introduce other healthy foods. For example, if your child likes crunchy food, try finding other healthy foods that are crunchy (e.g. a salad with nuts, crunchy noodles, or raw vegetables)

NOTE: Children with sensory issues around the texture of foods, or who have severe food aversions would benefit from seeing an occupational therapist or speech language pathologist if it is impacting their ability to eat a healthy diet.

Encouraging healthy eating outside the home

- › Suggest going somewhere where your child or youth can choose what goes into their food (e.g. Subway®)
- › Don't stress about what your child eats outside the home. Everything is okay in moderation
- › Pack healthy snacks when on the go. A *Great Snack Ideas* resource sheet can be found in the 'Tools & Resources' section

Appetite Challenges Due to Medications

Little or no appetite:

- › Make sure that your child eats regularly. Small meals or snacks every few hours may be helpful for some children
- › If your child needs to eat more, take them grocery shopping with you – it might help stimulate their appetite
- › If your child is on stimulant medications, they could try not drinking before or during a meal. This way they will fill up on food instead of liquids

NOTE: Sometimes meal replacements like Ensure, Pediasure, or Instant Breakfast might be useful. These meal replacements should only be used under the guidance of your health care professional. If you feel these might benefit your child, speak to your health care professional.

Increased appetite:

- › One parent found that it was helpful to explain to their child that, “this medicine doesn’t let you know when you’re full, so we have to be your stomach until you can tell for yourself”
- › Give your child a glass of water before meals to fill up their stomach
- › Play with your child to take their mind off food
- › If your child is on a second generation antipsychotic (SGA) medication, give them grains that are high in fibre. These will allow your child to feel more full. For example, Mini Wheats® with 5g fibre/serving will help your child feel more full than a bowl of Cheerios® with 2g fibre/serving



HAVE A HEALTHY EATING QUESTION?

Call 8-1-1 (BC Health Line)
to speak with a Registered Dietitian

Activities to Increase Healthy Eating

A good way to get children and youth to eat healthy is by getting them involved in the process. Your child can get involved in any or all aspects of the family meals, such as choosing recipes, shopping, growing some of the ingredients, or helping prepare the food. Here are some ideas for activities that you can do as a family:

1. Make a Recipe Together

This might be done in an afternoon or it might take a couple weeks to complete – have fun!

- 1.** Start by looking at pictures in recipe books and magazines. See where the ingredients fit in Canada's Food Guide
- 2.** Have your child choose a recipe that you can make together
- 3.** Check the kitchen together to gather the ingredients. Have fun playing detectives as you search the fridge and cupboards. Ask your child to write a grocery list for the missing items
- 4.** Go together to the grocery store. Give your child as much independence as possible by pushing the cart, finding food on the list, picking up the new items, and paying for them
- 5.** Let your child help prepare the recipe as much as they are comfortable
- 6.** Share the dish with the family – celebrate!

HOW CHILDREN OR YOUTH CAN HELP WITH MEALS

- › Writing the grocery list
- › Reading recipes
- › Judging pan sizes
- › Dividing up even portions for serving
- › Measuring dry and liquid ingredients
- › Programming the microwave
- › Rinsing bottles for recycling

3. Introduce a New 'Food of the Week'

Introduce a new 'food of the week' so that there is variety in your food choices. Your whole family can go to the grocery store or farmer's market and choose one new fruit or vegetable to try. Have fun taste testing at home!

2. Grow Your Own Food

Start a veggie or fruit garden at home. Even apartments can have a small potted vegetable garden (e.g. tomatoes or a herb garden).

Let your child have a say in what is planted. Also, give them some gardening responsibilities like watering, weeding or planting seeds. Let them help you take care of the garden. Finally, let your child help decide how to use the fruits and veggies that are grown. They might be more likely to try vegetables that they grew themselves than vegetables bought from the store. This is also a great way to fit some activity into your day and to get outside!





Module 02:
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

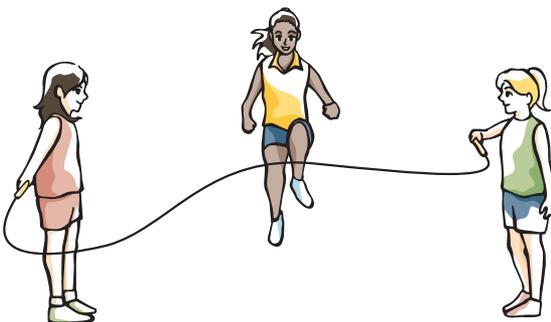
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This module includes the following sections:

- › Key Messages
- › Types of Physical Activity
- › Barriers to Being Physically Active
- › Tips from Families for Being Physically Active
- › Physical Activity Ideas for Your Family

Physical activity has many benefits for children and youth. Physical activity can:

Emotional/Mental	Social	Physical
Improve self-esteem	Help children become part of a group or team	Improve flexibility, muscle strength, coordination and balance
Help burn off energy	Help children meet new people	Develop and improve motor skills
Build confidence	Increase family time	Reduce the risk of some health problems (e.g. diabetes, heart disease)
Relieve stress	Help children spend time with friends	Support normal growth and development
Increase enjoyment and fun	Improve social skills	Promote a healthy weight



Key Messages

1.

Physical activity can have physical, social, emotional and mental health benefits

Being more physically active can increase energy, improve sleep, and lead to better health.

2.

Start with your child's ideas



Ask your child to list their favourite activities and anything new that they would like to try. Suggest they consider activities that they can do on their own, or with friends or family. Remember that many activities don't have to cost anything at all and don't have to be traditional exercise or sports. There is a resource sheet in the 'Tools & Resources' section with a list of many different activities your family can try.

3.

Find the starting point and build on it



Look at your child or family's starting point when deciding on a change. Remember that changes should be made gradually, and goals should be S.M.A.R.T. ones. For more information on setting S.M.A.R.T. goals, see the 'Introduction' section of this toolkit.

4.

Move beyond barriers to meet goals



Talk about what might be limiting your child from participating in physical activity and go from there. What is stopping them from trying a new sport? From riding their bike to school? A number of barriers are discussed later in this module. Remember that physical activity should be fun, not a punishment or a consequence.

5.

Be a role model and play



Model the behaviours you want to see and get out and play, walk, run, dance, etc. with your child.

Types of Physical Activity

The three main types of activity to keep the body fit are:

Aerobic/ Endurance/ Cardio:



Any activity that makes the heart, lungs, and large muscle groups use oxygen. By repeatedly doing this type of activity, you make your heart stronger, get health benefits and are able to last longer at sports and activities. Examples include running, skating, swimming and biking.

Flexibility:



Activities that take muscles through their full range to keep them stretched out and keep joints moving freely. Examples include stretching and doing yoga.

Strength:



Activities that help build strong bones and muscles by making them work harder than they are used to. Examples include weight training, going across monkey bars, or using your body weight like when doing push ups.

Most activities require a combination of all three types of activity, as well as balance and agility. Examples of activities that require all three types of activity include: climbing, carrying backpacks, vacuuming, playing on a play structure, and sports.

Barriers to Being Physically Active

There are a number of ways that a child or youth's physical activity can be affected by their mental health challenges. Listed below are some of the obstacles families in B.C. have faced with their children. In the 'Tips from Families' section of this module, you'll find some possible solutions suggested by B.C. families.

- › Difficulties socializing with other children
- › Other children refusing to include or teasing
- › Lack of interest in going outside/would rather play video games or watch T.V.
- › Lack of energy
- › Sore muscles
- › Balance and coordination problems
- › Weight gain (can make exercise more difficult)



Tips from Families for Being Physically Active

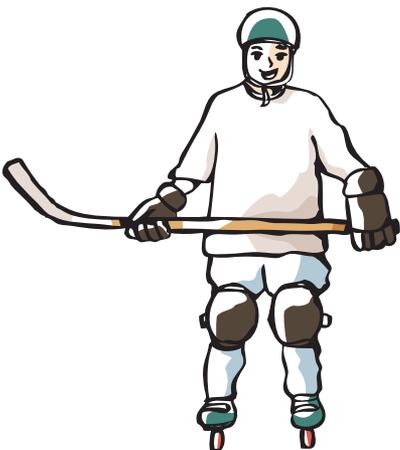
These tips have been developed by families, for families through a series of focus groups across B.C. Keep in mind that not all tips are appropriate for all families – if you have questions about a specific concern, talk to your family doctor or other health care professional.

Building on your child's interests and strengths

- › Find a sport that fits with your child's personality or interests
- › Have your child teach you how to play a sport/game
- › For a list of activities that your family can try, see the resource sheet in the 'Tools & Resources' section

Supporting a child who has difficulty socializing or following rules

- › If your child is on a sports team, talk to the coach about the challenges your child experiences and give specific suggestions about how to help them (e.g. who your child should sit next to)
- › Scouting, guiding and cadets are groups that include everyone and have physical activity opportunities
- › Check to see if your community offers fitness centre orientation programs for teenagers
- › Find activities that your child can do that are non-competitive. For example:
 - Individual activities like swimming, walking, running, or biking
 - One-on-one personal training or exercise; talk to the trainer about starting small
 - Free play time in an open space. Let the equipment determine your child's play
 - Use daily tasks like going to the grocery store as a way to be active



Encouraging activity in children and youth who prefer the computer or T.V.

- › Gradually decrease screen time by small amounts, and set time limits
- › Have your child use an exercise ball instead of a chair when they are at the computer or watching T.V. Sitting on the ball helps to strengthen core muscles and encourages good posture
- › Encourage regular movement breaks. Children can get up and stretch, run in place, walk around the house, or do another activity they enjoy for a few minutes every half hour or so
- › Wii Fit or similar games can be a starting point

DECREASE SCREEN TIME, INCREASE ACTIVE TIME

Ask your child to think about including activities of daily living such as walking or biking to school or household chores to increase active time; all these minutes add up.

Lack of energy

- › Start small – try short bursts of energy instead of an ‘all or nothing’ approach
- › Explain that you need to use energy to get energy

Pain or sore muscles

- › You may need to see a health care professional to see if there is a physical reason for the pain. If there is not, reassure your child they are safe to take part in activity

Weight gain makes physical activity more difficult

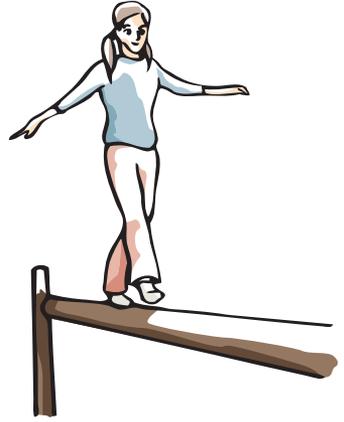
- › Try starting with non weight-bearing activities (e.g. stationary or road bike, water exercises, resistance training)

Physical Activity Ideas for Your Family

1. Create an Obstacle Course

Obstacle courses are a great way to exercise and to develop your child's sense of touch, coordination, gross motor skills, and balance.

An obstacle course can be set up outdoors or indoors when the weather is bad. More detailed information on how to set up an obstacle course can be found in the 'Tools & Resources' section (on the *Activities Your Family Can Try* resource sheet).



2. Go on a nature walk

Make family walks around the neighbourhood or nearby parks a regular event. Try playing different games and activities while you walk. For example:

- › Play "I spy". This helps encourage children to really look around and take in their surroundings
- › Point out things. When you see something that interests you, point it out to your child
- › Take pictures and let your child take some too. Taking pictures is always a fun way to remember something
- › Tell stories while you walk. When you're out walking, there can be less distractions and your child may listen a bit better
- › Ask your child questions about trees, plants or animals that you see

Adapted with permission from: Nature walk ideas, C.E. Higgins (2008). Family Nature Walk: 15 Fun and Interesting Ideas





3. Explore Your Community Resources

Find out what activities your community has to offer. This could include community recreation centres, swimming pools, parks, or nature walks that are offered through your district. Your child may also enjoy a program or class, like dance, aerobics or martial arts.

NOTE: Some families may encounter challenges getting their children to use community recreation centres, or their children may be unable to use them due to some previous problems at the centres – if this is the case, try out some of the other activities discussed in the toolkit.

For a list of many other activities your family can try, see the resource in the ‘Tools & Resources’ section



Module 03:

STRESS MANAGEMENT

STRESS MANAGEMENT

This module includes the following sections:

- › Key Messages
 - › Helping Your Child Recognize Stress
 - › Tips from Families for Managing Stress
 - › Activities for Managing Stress
-

Every child and youth experiences stressful events in their lives. While not all stress is bad, it's important to be able to recognize and take action when stress starts to have negative effects on your child's thoughts, feelings, or behaviour. Effective stress management can lead to better physical and mental health for the whole family.



Key Messages

1.

Explore what your stressors are and how you react to stress



It's important for your child to be aware of what makes them feel stressed, and how they react to stress. Once you know this, your family can look for ways to manage the stressful situations. A activity sheet on recognizing stressors (*Stress In My Day*) can be found in the 'Tools & Resources' section.

2.

Different stress management strategies will work for different families



There are many different strategies that your family can try. These include relaxation strategies such as deep breathing or yoga, cognitive strategies like changing the way you think, and behavioural strategies such as problem solving or time management. Explore different strategies to find out what works for your family, and try out the different resources in the 'Tools & Resources' section.

3.

How you think changes the way stress affects you



The way you think about your challenges can make a big difference in how much stress you experience. When you feel stressed, try to 'reframe' the way you think about the situation so that you are thinking about it in a more balanced way.

4.

Stress affects the whole family



As with any illness, taking care of a child or youth with a mental health challenge can be hard on parents/caregivers and other members of the family. It is important that families be sensitive to how stress affects them. Some strategies that parents and caregivers in B.C. have found helpful can be found in the 'Tips from Families' section of this module.

Helping Your Child Recognize Stress

Talk with your child about what it feels like when they are stressed, and what makes them feel stressed. Some younger children might understand words like 'worried' or 'upset' better than 'stress'. You could ask them how stress affects their:

- › Body (e.g. muscles that hurt, headache, upset stomach)
- › Mood (e.g. irritable, bad mood)
- › Thoughts (e.g. negative thoughts, difficulty paying attention)
- › Behaviour (e.g. restlessness)

In the 'Tools & Resources' section, we've included a *Stress in My Day* activity sheet for your child. This can help them keep track of what makes them feel stressed. Once your child knows what makes them stressed and how they feel when they're stressed, your family can look for ways to manage the stress (some ideas and activities can be found in this module).



Tips from Families for Managing Stress

These tips have been developed by families, for families through a series of focus groups across B.C. Keep in mind that not all tips are appropriate for all families – if you have questions about a specific concern, talk to your family doctor or other health care professional.

Tips for Children and Youth

Relaxation strategies

- › Listen to relaxing music
- › Practice relaxation exercises such as deep breathing (see the 'Activities' section in this module for more information)
- › Get out into nature with your family
- › Read a book, or read together as a family



Cognitive strategies (changing the way you think)

- › Try changing your 'red' thoughts to 'green' thoughts (see the 'Activities' section in this module for more information)
- › Try thinking about your strengths and resources (e.g. thinking about a time you did something well or accomplished a task)
- › Think about and write down all of the positives in your life, like people, things or talents. This can stop you from dwelling on negatives

Behavioural strategies (changing what you do)

- › Try not to over schedule activities. Too much activity can be stressful on the whole family
- › Write your worries down in a journal (see the 'Activities' section in this module for more information)
- › Be physically active
- › Practice problem solving (see the 'Tools & Resources' section for a problem solving activity sheet)

Tips for Parents and Caregivers

- › Remind yourself that when your stress level goes down, kids respond positively
- › Give yourself permission to take time for yourself:
 - Take time for a cup of tea
 - Go for a walk or a run
 - Socialize with friends
 - Get back to hobbies
- › Attend support groups for managing stress, or talk to family/friends about your stress
- › Appreciate time spent with your children
- › Spend time reconnecting with your spouse/partner
- › Have consistency across caregivers
- › Loosen expectations of your child – for example, don't feel they need to be on the honour roll at school or participate in every sport
- › Try not to use other children or youth as a standard for measuring your child's successes

Resiliency is the ability to use one's strengths to deal with life's challenges and obstacles.

For more information:

www.able-differently.org/resiliency/resiliency.html

Activities for Managing Stress

1. Reframing Thoughts: Red & Green Thoughts

'Reframing thoughts' means thinking about a stressful situation in a different way to give it new meaning. For example, if we think of "problems" as "challenges", the way we think about the situation can change to something which can be solved.

You can also reframe your thoughts by finding the positives in a situation. Looking for positives doesn't mean you gloss over negatives. You simply notice positive aspects of the situation as well, and add them to your thoughts. It might be helpful to think about your thoughts as 'Red' thoughts and 'Green' thoughts.

Red and Green Thoughts

Red thoughts are thoughts that are worrisome, negative, pessimistic or unhelpful. Red thoughts are all the negative things we think about when faced with an issue or event. Some examples of red thoughts are:

- > 'I can't ...'
- > 'I'm no good at ...'
- > 'Nobody likes me'



Everyone has red thoughts but the idea is to have them less often. Red thoughts can also be changed into green thoughts.

Green thoughts are those thoughts which are helpful, powerful, positive and optimistic. The goal is to help your child think these kinds of thoughts more often. Some examples of green thoughts are:

- > 'I will do my best'
- > 'My teacher can help me'

Green thoughts need to be **realistic**. They do not mean we are lying to ourselves. Green thoughts don't always make you feel **good**, but they can make you feel **better**, especially in difficult situations.

Thinking green thoughts helps children and youth feel more confident. They can also help to manage your child's fears and worries.

Next time you hear your child saying a 'red' thought aloud, ask them to come up with a 'green' thought instead. We have included a *Learning to Think Green Thoughts* activity sheet in the 'Tools & Resources' section.

The 'reframing thoughts' activity is taught in the "FRIENDS for Life" program. This is a school-based program shown to be effective in building resilience and reducing the risk of anxiety disorders in children. It teaches children how to cope with worries and equips them with tools to help manage difficult situations.

For more information about the "FRIENDS for Life" school program, visit: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/friends.htm

There is also a free "FRIENDS For Life Parent Program", which is available online from: www.forcesociety.com

2. Deep Breathing (Relaxation Exercise)

Deep breathing (or 'belly breathing') is one of the easiest and quickest ways to relax, because it can be done anywhere and at anytime. Try explaining deep breathing to your child as a way to relax their brain and muscles.

The best time to try this activity for the first time is when your child is feeling relatively calm. Sit down with your child and explain that you're going to teach them a new type of breathing.

Ask them to put a hand on their stomach and feel their belly move in and out as they breathe. Make sure that they are standing or sitting up straight. Have them take a deep, slow breath, then tell them to slowly breathe it out through their mouth.

Once their breathing has slowed, tell them that you're going to breathe in for a longer time – for the count of six (you can either count for them while they breathe, or you can breathe with them while counting with your fingers). Some younger children may find a count of six too difficult; you can start with a count of three and gradually stretch it out.

After you've practiced this a few times, introduce the last step: slowing your exhale. Kids tend to want to let the air “explode” out after a big inhale. Practice exhaling to a count of six or even eight with them.

Another deep breathing exercise can be found on the *Quick Ways to Relax* resource in the ‘Tools & Resources’ section.

3. Problem Solving

Problem solving can help to decrease stress once it has already happened, and can also help to prevent stress from happening in the first place. Five simple steps to problem solving are:

1. Choosing the problem
2. Understanding the problem
3. Coming up with different solutions
4. Comparing the solutions
5. Finding the best solution and putting it into action

A problem solving activity sheet can be found in the ‘Tools & Resources’ section.



Module 04:

SLEEP

Module 04:

SLEEP

This module includes the following sections:

- › Key Messages
 - › Common Sleep Challenges
 - › Medications and Sleep
 - › Tips from Families for Getting a Good Night's Sleep
 - › Activities for Better Sleep
-

Getting enough sleep is important for good physical and mental health.

Not getting enough sleep can lead to:

- › Sleepiness during the day
- › Irritability
- › Difficulty paying attention or problem solving
- › Hyperactivity
- › Mood changes (e.g. crankiness)
- › Difficulty learning things and remembering
- › Weight gain



Key Messages

1.

The amount of sleep needed is different for everyone



While most children (aged 5-12) need between 10-11 hours of sleep a night and most adolescents need approximately 9-10 hours of sleep a night, the amount of sleep needed is different for everyone.

The most important question is whether your child is feeling well-rested during the day and has enough energy to go about their daily activities. Warning signs that your child is not getting enough sleep include:

- › Feeling tired in the mornings or after lunch
- › Falling asleep in school
- › Having difficulty concentrating or remembering
- › Feeling more irritable than usual
- › Having less energy than usual

2.

The first step to getting a good night's sleep is having good "sleep hygiene" (sleep habits)



The key ingredients of good sleep hygiene are:

- › Going to bed at the same time every night and waking up at the same time every morning. Being consistent is very important
- › Avoiding caffeine (e.g. soda, tea, coffee, chocolate)
- › Using your bedroom only for sleep and not for studying or other activities. The sleep environment should be "boring" and not associated with stimulating activities (T.V., music, computer, work). This "boring" sleep environment sends a signal to the brain to prepare the body for sleep

2. (cont...)



- › Avoiding heavy exercise in the evening
- › Avoiding bright light 1-2 hours before bed. This includes the computer and other screen activities
- › Making sure that the sleep location is comfortable and quiet

A *Sleep Tips for Kids* resource sheet can be found in the 'Tools & Resources' section.

3.

Medications and some mental health conditions can impact sleep

Talk to your health care professional if you have questions about how medications or mental health conditions may be impacting your child's sleep. Some additional information can be found in this module.



Common Sleep Challenges

Sleep difficulties are common in children and youth with mental health challenges. Difficulties can include problems falling and staying asleep, waking up too early, having a decreased need for sleep, nightmares, fear of the dark, and worry.

Many difficulties can be helped by having good sleep hygiene (sleep habits). However, other problems may be related to your child's mental health condition, the medication they are on, or to a medical condition. If this is the case, additional treatment may be required. If your child or youth is having difficulty sleeping, or is complaining of sleepiness during the day, always discuss this with your health care professional.

Nightmares

Nightmares are scary dreams that wake up your child. Here are some things you could try if your child has nightmares:

- › Avoid frightening images before bedtime (e.g. scary stories, movies or T.V. shows)
- › Make sure your child is getting enough sleep. Sometimes sleep loss leads to nightmares
- › If your child gets out of bed, take them back to their bed and briefly comfort them there. Keep further discussion of the nightmare until the morning
- › Reassure your child that 'it was only a dream'
- › Have your child draw a picture of the bad dream and then throw it away. Write the story with a happy ending, or keep a dream journal

Bedtime Struggles

Bedtime struggles include not wanting to go to bed, or not being able to fall asleep without the help of another person, object or situation.

If your family is dealing with bedtime struggles, make sure your child has the same bedtime routine every night. This routine should be short and sweet. It should always move in the direction of your child's bedroom. A picture chart, on which routine activities are listed and then checked off by your child when completed, can be helpful. If bedtime struggles continue, talk with your health care professional.

Adolescents and Sleep

It may be a relief for parents to know that teenager's biological clocks naturally shift towards later times for both falling asleep and waking up. This means that teenagers want to stay up later and sleep in later. Teens may struggle to function on a schedule that is out of sync with their internal clock. As a result, they may be constantly sleepy. Teens naturally want to stay up later and sleep in on the weekend, but this "catch-up" sleep on the weekends can make their sleep cycle even more out of sync.

Here are some specific tips for teenagers who are having difficulty sleeping:



- › Weekday and weekend wake-up times should not be more than 2 hours apart: the later the weekend sleep-in, the harder it will be to fall asleep the next night
- › Discuss with your teen a good way to wake them up in the morning. This can help avoid any conflict in the mornings
- › Avoid all nighters: remind your teen that their memory and concentration will be better when they've had a good night's sleep
- › Using stimulants (e.g. caffeine, nicotine) to fight sleepiness can make it harder to fall asleep
- › Using electronics (e.g. cell phones, video games, T.V.) 1-2 hours before bed time can disrupt sleep
- › Bright light in the morning can help teens become more 'awake', and outdoor light can help reset the body clock

For more information on teens and sleep:

www.slideshare.net/teenmentalhealth/why-teens-need-their-sleep-presentation

Medications and Sleep

Medications used to help treat some mental health conditions can disrupt a child or youth's sleep. Small changes in the time your child takes their medication can be helpful for getting a good night's sleep. Talk to your medical professional if you would like to discuss the effects of your child's medication on sleep.

Melatonin

Melatonin is a neurohormone naturally found in our bodies. It regulates our internal body clock and sleep cycles. For some children and youth, taking melatonin as a part of their treatment plan might help them to get a better night's sleep.

Melatonin is a natural chemical that can help to regulate sleep cycles

For certain mental health conditions, melatonin may reduce the amount of time it takes to fall asleep. It may also lengthen the time one stays asleep, and increase daytime alertness. However, melatonin may not be effective for some children and youth and may interact with certain medications or supplements. Also, based on your child's age and the medication they are on, they may need a specific dose. You should always talk to your medical professional before giving melatonin to your child.

From: Using Melatonin in Children and Adolescents, BC Children's Hospital

For more information on melatonin:

www.bcchildrens.ca/psychmeds

CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE STARTING YOUR CHILD ON MELATONIN

Melatonin can interact with certain medications, and is not helpful for all sleep difficulties. You should always talk to your medical professional before giving melatonin to your child

Tips from Families for Getting a Good Night's Sleep

These tips have been developed by families, for families through a series of focus groups across B.C. Keep in mind that not all tips are appropriate for all families – if you have questions about a specific concern, talk to your family doctor or other health care professional.

Sleep Hygiene

- › Keep a regular sleep schedule
- › If your child is hungry, let them have a snack before bed (e.g. a bowl of cereal with milk)
- › Decrease the amount of stimulating activities at night (e.g. T.V. or computer/internet activities, video games)

Relaxation

- › Teach your child different ways to relax
- › Use relaxation CDs (nature sounds, Zen garden, waterfalls, etc.)
- › Listen to white noise, a fan, radio, or classical music
- › Try meditation or yoga
- › Give your child a foot massage or rub their back

If your child worries at night

- › Have a book by the bed so that your child can write/draw what they were thinking or worrying about. The next day, you and your child can talk about what was written/drawn in the book
- › Have a 'worry' stone in a small soft bag that your child can rub to soothe themselves

Other strategies for specific mental health conditions

- › Some children with autism may benefit from sleeping with a heavier blanket. This may give them the pressure they need to calm down.
NOTE: Talk to your health care professional before trying this, as this may not be suitable for all children
- › 'Sleeping low' (e.g. putting your child's mattress on the floor) may help some children

Activities for Better Sleep



1. Relaxation

Children and youth may not realize how much tension they store in their bodies. Helping them to relax before they go to sleep can help them get a better night's sleep. One way to relax is called visualization. This is when your child imagines themselves in a more relaxed place. We have included quick relaxation activities, including visualization and deep breathing, on the *Quick Ways to Relax* resource sheet in the 'Tools & Resources' section.



2. Talking Through the Worries of the Day

Before your child goes to sleep, take a few minutes to discuss any difficult moments of the day. Try using a bubble blower to blow worries away and then watch the bubbles pop. You can also have your child write down their worries on the *Stress in My Day* activity sheet (found in the 'Tools & Resources' section). After discussing them, have your child crumple up the paper and toss it into the garbage can.



3. Create a bedtime routine chart

As a family, create a chart that has pictures of the bedtime routine (e.g. have a snack, have a bath, brush teeth, read a story) and the days of the week. Try to follow this routine every night. Have your child check off the activities as you complete them.



TOOLS & RESOURCES

Tools & Resources

In this section, you will find healthy living tools and resources. All of the tools and activity sheets included in this section can also be found online in an easy-to-print format at: kelymentalhealth.ca/toolkits

Online Resources:

Healthy Eating

Health Canada

Includes a link to Canada's Food Guide and information on healthy living for families

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/index-eng.php

National Heart Foundation of Australia

Handout with tips on how to reward without food

www.heartfoundation.org.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/InfoFlyers-FoodAsReward.pdf

BC Pediatric Society – Sip Smart

(A parent's guide to healthy drinks for kids)

dotcms.bcpeds.ca/sipsmart/families/

Dietitians of Canada

Resources on healthy eating including an Eating and Activity Tracker and a Virtual Grocery Store Tour

www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health.aspx

Canadian Pediatric Society – Caring for Kids

Tips for parents who have children who are picky eaters

www.caringforkids.cps.ca/healthybodies/FussyEaters.htm

HealthLink BC

Nutrition resources for families in B.C.

www.healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian/

Physical Activity

ActNow BC

Resources for families on physical activity and healthy eating
www.actnowbc.ca/families/healthy_eating_for_families

Kidnetic

Exercise and healthy eating website for children and youth
www.kidnetic.com/

School OT

Sensory “diet” activities that are typically “alerting” or “calming”
school-ot.com/Sensory%20Strategies.html

Sensory Processing and Behaviour

Activities to help with arousal difficulties
www.egfl.org.uk/export/sites/egfl/main/about/meetings/children/primarybehaviour/_docs/2Feb10/sensory-processing-and-behaviour_BridgetBagshawe.pdf

Bright Futures – Tips for Managing Screen Time

www.brightfutures.org/mentalhealth/pdf/families/mc/video_games.pdf

Stress Management

Child and Youth Health

Information on stress written for younger children, including relaxation exercises
www.cyh.com (type in ‘kids and stress’ in the search bar)

MindCheck

Stress management resources for young people
www.mindcheck.ca/act_now/depression_anxiety_stress/learn_more/stress/

The Psychology Foundation of Canada

Downloadable resources for families such as “The Struggle to Juggle: Stress Management Strategies for You and Your Family”
www.psychologyfoundation.org/order_worklife.php

FRIENDS for Life program

A school-based program that teaches children how to cope with worries and equips them with tools to help manage difficult situations. There is also a ‘FRIENDS for Life Parent Program’
www.forcesociety.com or www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/friends.htm

Here to Help

Downloadable stress management resources for adults
www.here-to-help.bc.ca/skills/module2

Sleep

National Sleep Foundation

Website for children that includes fun games to teach about sleep
www.sleepforkids.org/html/learn.html

BC Children's Hospital

Melatonin information sheet for parents
www.bcchildrens.ca/Services/ChildYouthMentalHlth/Medication_Information.htm

Kidzzzsleep

Information for parents on sleep in children and adolescents
www.kidzzzsleep.org

Other

Online Parenting Coach

Information for parents with strong-willed, out-of-control children and adolescents
www.onlineparentingcoach.com/

Able-Differently

Support for families with children who have behaviour and/or learning problems. Helpful handouts include the family strengths assessment (For handouts, go to 'Other Resources – Forms')
www.able-differently.org

Books

Healthy Eating

Satter, E (2005). *Your Child's Weight: Helping without Harming (Birth through Adolescence)*. Wisconsin: Kelcy Press

Satter, E (2008). *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family: How to Eat, How to Raise Good Eaters, How to Cook*. Wisconsin: Kelcy Press

Stress Management

Hipp, E (2008). *Fighting Invisible Tigers: Stress Management for Teens*. Free Spirit Publishing ISBN 1575422824 | Vancouver Public Library

Garland, EJ & Clark, SL (2009). *Taming Worry Dragons: A Manual For Children, Parents, And Other Coaches*. Children's & Women's Health Centre of BC | Family Resource Library: www.bcchildrens.ca/KidsTeensFam/FamilyResourceLibrary/LibraryCatalogue.htm

Dunn Buron, K & Curtis, M (2004). *The Incredible 5-Point Scale – Assisting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses*. www.5pointscale.com

Sleep

Owens, J & Mindell, JA (2005). *Take Charge of Your Child's Sleep*. New York: Marlowe and Company

Other

Greene, R (2001). *The Explosive Child: A New Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children*. New York: Harper Collins.

Williams, MS & Shellenberger, S (1996). *Introduction to How Does Your Engine Run? The Alert Program for Self-Regulation*. Therapy Works Inc: Albuquerque, NM.

An innovative program that supports children and parents to choose appropriate strategies to change or maintain states of alertness

Louv, R (2005). *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Algonquin Books.



My Healthy Living Pinwheel

Goal Setting Tool



kelty mental health
resource centre

Choose a long-term goal that you would like to achieve, and then decide on a short-term SMART goal that will help you to reach your ultimate goal. Your goal can be anything that you feel is important to your health and wellness. Remember to reward yourself when you reach your goals!

Goal: _____

S: _____

M: _____

A: _____

R: _____

T: _____

SMART GOALS ARE:

Specific

Measurable

Action Plan

Realistic

(On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you can reach your goal?)

Time (to review goals)

Goal: _____

S: _____

M: _____

A: _____

R: _____

T: _____

NAME: _____

Goal: _____

S: _____

M: _____

A: _____

R: _____

T: _____

Remember, setting short-term goals can help you reach your long-term goal!

Goal: _____

S: _____

M: _____

A: _____

R: _____

T: _____

My Signature: _____

My Healthy Living Pinwheel

(Example)



kelty mental health
resource centre

Here are some examples of SMART goals. You can choose one of these goals for yourself, or choose anything that you think would make a difference to your health and wellness!

SMART GOALS ARE:

Specific

Measurable

Action Plan

Realistic

(On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you can reach your goal?)

Time (to review goals)

Goal: Managing stress/worries

S: Deep breathing

M: 5 'belly breaths'

A: When I feel stressed/worried

R: 8/10

T: Next week (date)

Goal: Eat healthier

S: Eat more fruit

M: 1 piece/day

A: Buy 7 pieces of fruit/week

R: 7/10

T: Next week (date)

Goal: Be more active

S: Walking

M: 45 minutes on Mon, Wed & Fri

A: At the park, with my mom

R: 8/10

T: By the end of 2 weeks (date)

Pat Smith

NAME:

Remember, setting short-term goals can help you reach your long-term goal!

Goal: Sleeping well

S: 'Wind down' time before bed

M: 30 min before bedtime

A: Do something relaxing (book, music, bath)

R: 7/10

T: By the end of 2 weeks (date)

My Signature:

Pat Smith

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Meal Planning

The best way to make sure your family eats a healthy, home cooked meal is by planning. If you know what is planned for dinner, and you have all of the ingredients, putting a meal together won't seem like such a chore.

Meals should include at least 3 out of the 4 food groups. Remember, the 4 food groups are: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives. Here's an example of a meal and how to determine the food groups:

Meal: Bean and cheese burritos with salad

Beans = Meat and Alternatives

Cheese = Milk and Alternatives

Tortilla = Grain Products

Salad = Fruit and Vegetable

Total Food Groups = 4 out of 4

Try to make sure your meal plans are simple, especially when starting out. Set aside time for meal planning. Involve your child in helping plan meals. Make a shopping list and do all your grocery shopping once a week.



Sample Meal Plan:

Sunday

- › Hamburger
 - › Salad/mixed greens
 - › Glass of milk
- Food Groups
= 4

Monday

- › Baked beans on toast with
grated cheese on top
 - › Steamed broccoli
- Food Groups
= 4

Tuesday

- › Avocado and shrimp with
mozzarella quesadilla
 - › Roasted asparagus
- Food Groups
= 4

Wednesday

- › Shake n' bake chicken and rice
 - › Mixed greens
 - › Glass of milk
- Food Groups
= 4

Thursday

- › Orzo and shredded chicken salad
(with sweet peppers and feta cheese)
 - › Cut up cucumbers and carrots
- Food Groups
= 4

Friday

- › Lentil Dahl with rice and
plain yogurt
 - › Peas and carrots
- Food Groups
= 4

Saturday

- › Tuna pasta casserole
(with cheese)
 - › Roasted vegetables
- Food Groups
= 4

Make your own meal plan. See if you can figure out how many food groups each meal has.

Sunday

Food Groups
=

Monday

Food Groups
=

Tuesday

Food Groups
=

Wednesday

Food Groups
=

Thursday

Food Groups
=

Friday

Food Groups
=

Saturday

Food Groups
=

Here is a list of foods from each of the 4 food groups.
You can also use this as a grocery list.

Fruits and Vegetables

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corn | <input type="checkbox"/> Kale/collards | <input type="checkbox"/> Cherries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peas | <input type="checkbox"/> Yam | <input type="checkbox"/> Grapes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin | <input type="checkbox"/> Mango |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus | <input type="checkbox"/> Zucchini | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edamame | <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspberry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots | <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage | <input type="checkbox"/> Apricot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumber | <input type="checkbox"/> Kohlrabi | <input type="checkbox"/> Avocado |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beets | <input type="checkbox"/> Mushrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> Berries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bok Choy | <input type="checkbox"/> Apple | <input type="checkbox"/> Grapefruit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gai Lan | <input type="checkbox"/> Banana | <input type="checkbox"/> Honeydew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Squash | <input type="checkbox"/> Kiwi | <input type="checkbox"/> Guava |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach | <input type="checkbox"/> Pear | <input type="checkbox"/> Lychee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Peach | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green beans | <input type="checkbox"/> Watermelon | <input type="checkbox"/> Papaya |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Nectarine | <input type="checkbox"/> Pineapple |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce | <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Rhubarb |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet peppers | <input type="checkbox"/> Lemon/Lime | |

Grain Products

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta | <input type="checkbox"/> Barley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers | <input type="checkbox"/> Bannock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bread | <input type="checkbox"/> Congee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pita | <input type="checkbox"/> Cornbread |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tortilla | <input type="checkbox"/> English muffin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Naan | <input type="checkbox"/> Waffle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal | <input type="checkbox"/> Pancake |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couscous | <input type="checkbox"/> Roll |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulgur | <input type="checkbox"/> Rice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quinoa | |

Milk and Alternatives

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buttermilk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cottage cheese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fortified soy beverage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kefir |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paneer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pudding/
Custard (made from milk) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt |

Meat and Alternatives

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deli meat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tofu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hummus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canned fish (salmon, tuna, crab) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh fish (herring, salmon, trout) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lentils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts (shelled) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baked beans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refried beans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken/Beef |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter or nut butters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seeds (shelled) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beef |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bison/Buffalo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Game birds (partridge, grouse) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Game meats (deer, moose, caribou, elk) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ham |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lamb |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eggs |

Activities Your Family Can Try

Ideas for being active, playing and having fun with your family

Kids will be more likely to think being active is fun if you show them that it is fun and that it feels good. Think about activity as something you do together as a family.

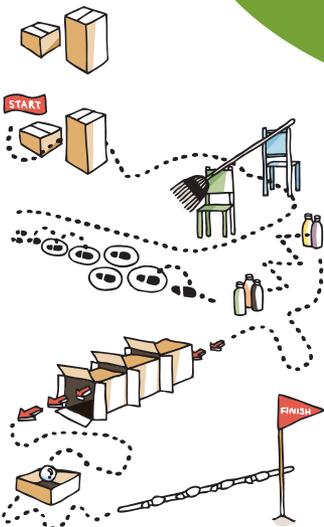
Play at the playground:

Try “follow the leader”. Let your child lead or have them copy you:

- › Climbing on monkey bars
- › Crawling through tunnels
- › Up and down the slide
- › Running and touching all the fences
- › Balancing and walking across logs

Try doing one minute intervals of activities, such as:

- Skipping rope • Hula Hoop
- Throwing a ball at a target
- Core exercises • Squats or lunges
- Bouncing a basketball
- Band/weight exercises
- Jogging on the spot



Set up an obstacle course:

- › Brainstorm with your kids about what you want to put into your obstacle course
- › Think about ways to move: step, walk, creep (on all fours), crawl (on belly), roll, somersault, jump, hop, leap, run, etc.
- › Think about things in your house that you can use, such as: couches, chairs, tables, mattresses, plastic hoops, big blocks, gym mats, cushions, telephone books, rope, etc.

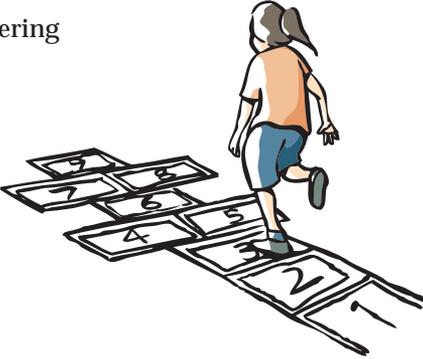
Play in the house:

- › Try taking different exercise videos out of the library. Look for ones geared to your child's/youth's age, such as:
 - Yoga, Pilates or Hip hop dance
 - Silly movement songs/dancing for younger children
- › Keep exercise equipment like free weights (or try using 2 soup cans) or exercise balls in an area you can see them. You can use them during T.V. commercials or when you take built in breaks
- › Adapt outdoor games to inside (e.g. games with balloons or soft balls)



Try outdoor activities:

- › Biking
- › Swimming
- › Rock climbing
- › In line skating
- › Kayaking
- › Walking or hiking
- › Scootering



- › Street hockey
- › Skiing
- › Playing tag
- › Hopscotch
- › Mini golf
- › Snow shoeing
- › Tobogganing/tubing
- › Skateboarding
- › Running through the sprinkler



Work activity into your day:

- › Ride your bike, walk, or scooter to school, the park, etc.
- › Help carrying groceries or taking out the garbage/recycling
- › Rake the lawn, help with gardening and planting, shovel snow
- › Take the dog for a walk or run
- › Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- › Try to work 10,000 steps into your day (can use a pedometer to track steps)
- › Get off the bus a stop early and walk the rest of the way



Rainy day activities:

Be prepared for the rain; have rain gear ready and you can still do a lot, even if you are getting wet. But if you really can't be outside:

- › Bowling
- › Ice skating or indoor climbing
- › Open gyms at community centre
- › Put on music and dance around your living room
- › Try a drop in dance or yoga class



Other activities:

- › Take part in a charity walk/run and train for it as a family (many community centres offer training programs)
- › Attend community events
- › Have a friendly competition with your kids (e.g. jumping rope)
- › Use parties as a way to promote activities (like skating or bowling)



Stress In My Day

When	What is stressing me	How it makes me feel	What I can do	How adults can help
 Before School				
 In School				
 After School				
 In the Evening				
 On the Weekend				

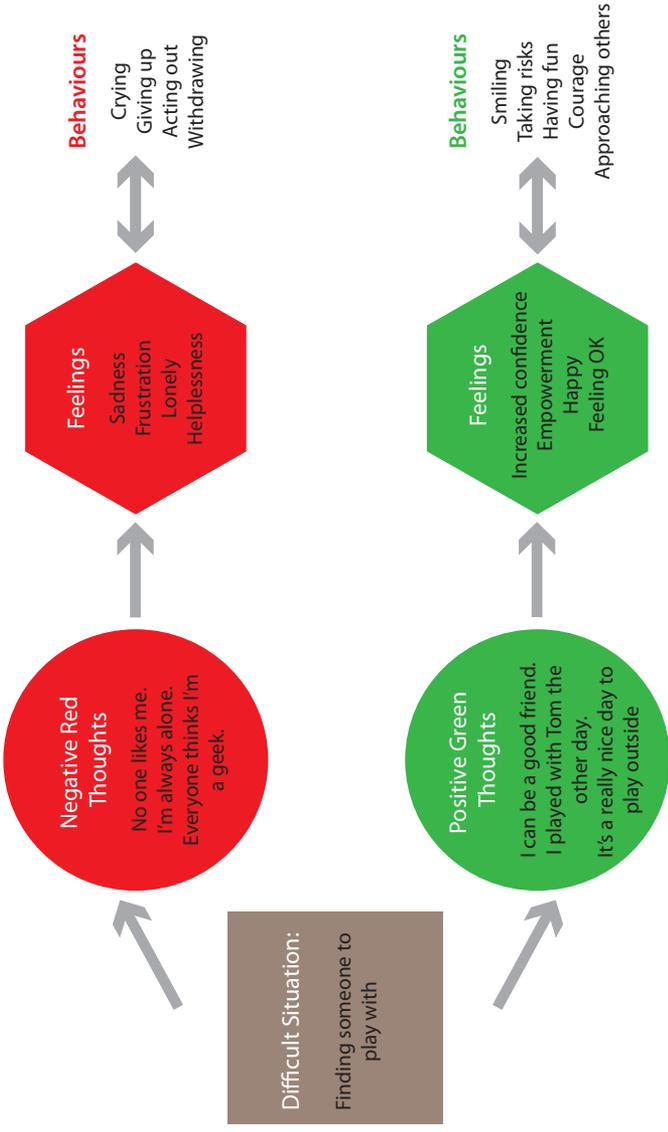
Learning to Think Green Thoughts

Have your child explain what red and green thoughts are to all family members.

Sharing out loud some of your own thoughts helps your child or youth to recognize whether thoughts are helpful or unhelpful.

Encourage your child to focus on the positives of any situation and realistic green thoughts.

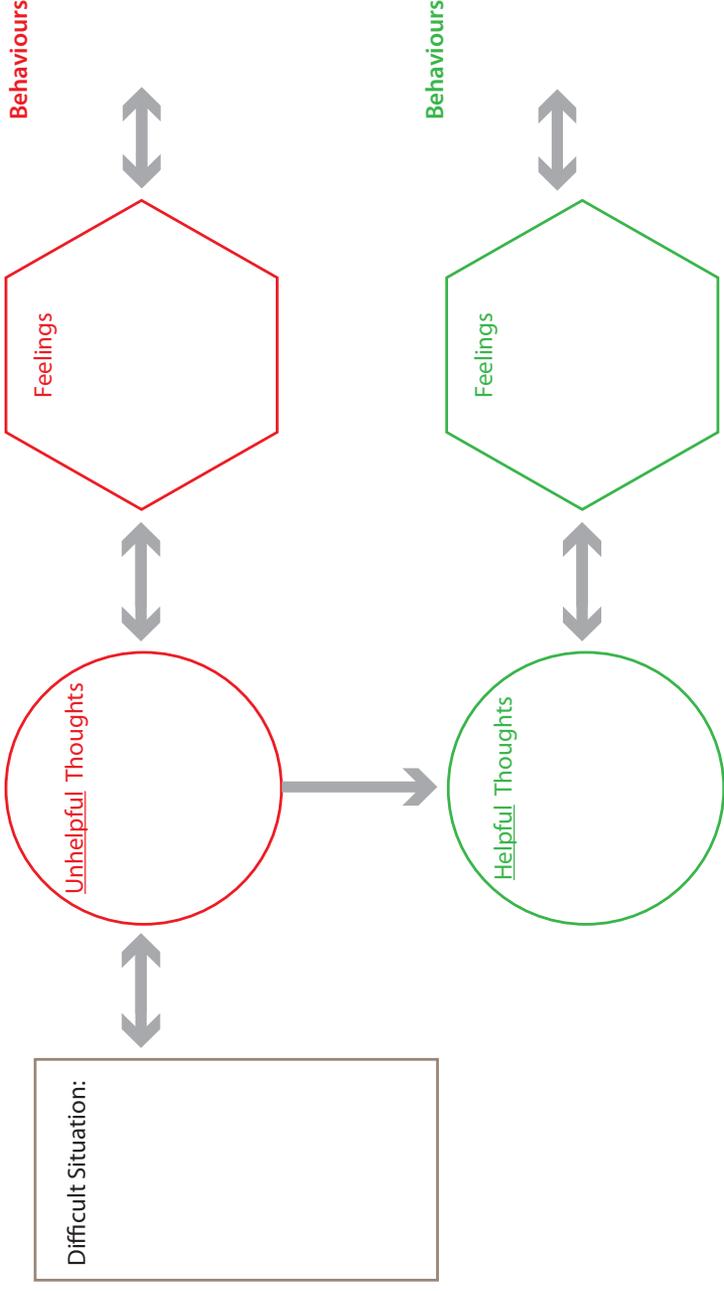
Changing Unhelpful Red Thoughts, Increasing Green Thoughts



Changing Unhealthy Thoughts

Fill in the diagram and learn how to change your thoughts from **Unhelpful** Red thoughts to **Helpful** Green thoughts:

Changing Unhelpful Red Thoughts



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Pathways Health and Research Centre and Ministry of
Children and Family Development FRIENDS for Life Program

Quick Ways To Relax

Breathe Deeply

Breathing Exercise

1. Slowly blow up the balloon
1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ...
2. Now, slowly blow out the balloon
1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ...

You can help slow down your body and quiet your mind by breathing deeply. Here is one way to try deep breathing:

- › Imagine you have a balloon in your tummy. Place one hand below your belly button
- › Breathe in slowly through the nose for four seconds
- › Feel the balloon fill up with air – your belly should expand
- › When the balloon is full, slowly breathe out through your mouth for about four seconds
- › Your hand will rise and fall as the balloon fills and empties
- › Wait 2 seconds, and then repeat a few times
- › When belly breathing, make sure the upper body (shoulders and chest area) is fairly relaxed and still



Adapted from AnxietyBC

Visualize A Calm Place



- › Find a quiet place and close your eyes
- › Think of the most calm, peaceful place you have ever been. Picture yourself in that place
- › Describe what it: **Looks** like, **Sounds** like, **Smells** like, **Feels** like
- › Return here when you are feeling stressed or worried

Relax Your Muscles



- › Make a fist with each hand, squeeze each hand tight. Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax
- › Now, while you squeeze your fists again, tighten your arms to squeeze your body, Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax
- › Now, this time also squeeze your legs together while making a fist and squeezing your arms together, Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax
- › Repeat if you would like
- › Shake out your hands, arms and legs. Hopefully now you feel more relaxed

Adapted from the Psychology Foundation of Canada

How to Problem Solve

1.

Figure out what is the problem (name it).



2.

Decide how you feel about the problem.



Sad



Angry



Scared



Confused



Frustrated

3.

Decide what you want to do about the problem (for example, you could ask for help, tell the person how you feel, or walk away to think about it). Think of three things you can do to solve the problem.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



4.



Try out the plan you decided on.

Make sure that you explain how the problem affected you, how you are feeling about it and what you want to happen to help you feel better.

5.

6. If the plan you chose does not work, DO NOT give up, ASK FOR HELP!



Sleep Tips for Kids

Here are some things you can do to help get a good night's sleep:

Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day

Your body will get used to a schedule



Try to avoid caffeine - especially in the afternoon and at night

Caffeine can be found in many foods and drinks, like chocolate and sodas

Make sure your bedroom is dark, quiet and comfortable

You can ask your parents for help



Try to avoid bright lights after dinner

This includes the TV, computer, and other screen activities

Exercise during the day

Running and playing during the day can help your body get ready for sleep (try not to exercise within 3-4 hours of your bedtime)



Have a bedtime routine

Do the same relaxing things before bed each night, like taking a warm bath, reading, or listening to quiet music. Your body will know it is time to get ready to sleep

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The Healthy Living...It's in Everyone Toolkit (the “Toolkit”) is intended as an aid to families of children with mental health challenges in B.C., to support such families to develop and maintain healthy living habits. The Toolkit is not intended as a substitute for the advice of an appropriate health care professional. If professional advice is required, the services of a competent and qualified professional should be sought. Nothing contained in the Toolkit should in any way be construed as being either official or unofficial policy of British Columbia Mental Health Society Branch, Children’s & Women’s Health Centre of British Columbia Branch or Provincial Health Services Authority (together the “Societies”), or the F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids’ Mental Health.

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