

Help your child get the benefits of sleep

A well-rested child is better able to solve problems, learn new information, and enjoy the day. Children aged 5-13 years need 9-11 hours of quality sleep each night. Teenagers aged 14-17 need 8-10 hours. Help them get the sleep they need with these tips:

- Set a consistent wake up time and bedtime (even on weekends).
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine that includes reading, taking a bath or listening to music.
- Set up a sleeping space that is cool, dark and quiet.
- Keep TVs, electronics, and cell phones out of your child's bedroom – they interfere with natural sleep cycles.

If your child has difficulties staying asleep, talk to your healthcare provider.

To learn more visit: [Are Canadian Children Getting Enough Sleep? Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



Self-regulation

School can be stressful for kids. Self-regulation is the ability to understand and manage your behaviour and your reactions to feelings and things happening around you. Self-regulation is important for long term well-being and school success. Kids who self-regulate can manage their emotions and behaviours in positive ways. As you are helping your child learn how to regulate their emotions, keep these tips in mind:

- Everyone has a range of emotions and none are good or bad. They are just normal.
- Naming emotions helps children connect the word with a feeling. Try out one of these activities for recognizing emotions from School Mental Health Ontario: <https://smho-smso.ca/emhc/identification-and-management-of-emotions/recognizing/>
- When upset, show your child that you understand how they are feeling by naming their emotion. Naming the emotion makes it real, and may help to calm them down.
- When your children are young, they will learn how to deal with difficult feelings by watching how you deal with your feelings.



Supporting Your Child's Mental Health

Children find it easier to enjoy learning, stay motivated, and deal with challenges when they have your support. Here's some tips to help your child during times of change and uncertainty:

- Listen and communicate - Mealtimes are often a good time for talking. Ask questions about your child's day and give them time to respond.
- Solve problems together- Work together with your child to identify a challenge and discuss what steps you can take to reduce stress. Consider trying a breathing exercise!
- Provide time and support your children to be active every day - This can be structured activities or can be time to play together and with others.
- Help your children get enough sleep – Follow a regular schedule, shut off screens well before bedtime and encourage calm activities right before bed.

For more information visit: [Tips and Strategies \(strongmindsstrongkids.org\)](https://strongmindsstrongkids.org) and [School Mental Health Ontario](#) for strategies and resources.

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



What can parents do to support their own mental wellness?

Raising children can be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable adventures in life. However, parenting can be stressful at times, such as trying to get everyone out of the house on time in the morning. Being able to cope with normal stresses of daily living is part of mental wellness.

Parents need to remember to take care of themselves so that they can take care of their children.

- Make time for yourself and things you enjoy
- Take care of your own health (get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise)
- Recognize your emotions and symptoms of stress
- Talk about your feelings
- Reach out for support
- Develop good relationships

For more information, visit [Mental Health for Life - CMHA National](#)

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



What can Parents Do to Support Their Child's Mental Wellness?

Connect and Talk – Communication is key to building supportive relationships.

Here are some communication tips for parents:

- Encourage your child to talk about what's happening in their life—both the good and the bad.
- Comment on their positive qualities too. Sometimes kids can feel they only hear the negative.
- Let your child know that you are someone they can talk to.
- Be ready to listen, without judgment, when they want to talk.
- Keep connecting—encourage your child to talk at meal times, during car rides, etc.

Visit [Kids Help Phone](#) for more information about Emotional Health and Well-Being

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



What can You Do to Support Your Child's Mental Wellness?

Tips to increase your child's mental health and well-being:

- Value and accept your child for who they are.
- Show your child that you like them and that you enjoy their company.
- Respect your child's emotions - allow them to express their feelings.
- Help your child to understand their own feelings and the feelings of others.

Children learn so much from what they see you do. Model the behaviour you wish to see in your child, for example, dealing with frustrations in a calm manner, greeting others with kindness and respect

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Positive Role Modeling

The eyes and ears of children and youth are constantly watching and listening to what parents do and say. Children and youth especially see how you as parents handle stress and life's challenges and are likely to copy your actions.

Practice being a positive role model by:

- Taking care of your own health (get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise)
- Show compassion, kindness and patience
- Talk about your feelings
- Apologize when you make mistakes
- Use humor and stay positive
- Reach out for support
- Make time for things you enjoy

For more information, see [Healthy relationship skills - Everyday Mental Health Classroom Resource - A Daily Mental Health Resource \(smho-smso.ca\)](#)

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



Sources of Stress

At any age, family, school, work, friends, jobs, or world events can cause people to feel stressed and anxious. Children and teens may feel stressed and anxious when something upsetting or unexpected happens.

Sometimes children can pick up on their parents' stress and anxiety, and start to worry themselves. Find your stress level by taking the Stress Index:

[Check in on your Mental Health - CMHA National](#)

For more tips on how to recognize and help children deal with stress and anxiety, visit www.KidsHelpPhone.ca

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



Stress and Anxiety

Children and teens, like adults, feel stress too! Stress is the way the body naturally responds any time we feel threatened. Stress and anxiety can be good when it gives children the energy to study for a test, play sports or get away from danger.

Stress can also make children worry, feel scared or nervous. Feeling stressed and anxious most of the time isn't healthy! Continued stress and anxiety can feel very scary and can stop children from being themselves and enjoying life.

For tips on how to recognize and help children deal with stress and anxiety, visit www.KidsHelpPhone.ca and/or contact your local health unit.

The same strategies we use in classrooms can be used at home to help learn about and manage stress. <https://smho-smso.ca/emhc/stress-management-and-coping/>

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



Stress – What’s the Harm?

We all need some stress in our lives to help us stay alert and energized. Feeling fear and anxiety in stressful situations is normal, but these feelings should go away after a day or two. If stress continues for long periods of time it can make us tired, which can make it hard to concentrate and makes day to day activities harder to handle.

Reflect and explore what causes you and your child to feel stress and anxiety, and how you respond in stressful situations. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about any concerns.

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)



Positive School Environment

In a positive school environment staff, students and parents:

- Feel safe to talk open and honestly
- demonstrate respect, fairness and kindness in their interactions, free from discrimination and harassment
- are positive leaders and role models for each other
- take actions to prevent and respond to bullying
- are inspired and supported to succeed

Parents play a vital role in their student’s school success.

Visit your school boards website for more information on how you can help build a positive school environment [Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland, Clarington Catholic District School Board](#) or [Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board](#).

Find out more at [Durham Region Health Department](#) or [Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit](#) or [Peterborough Public Health](#)

