

YOUTH

&

SELF-SUPPORT



PEER SUPPORT



May is Mental Health Awareness Month



PRACTICAL WAYS STUDENTS CAN LOOK AFTER THEIR MENTAL HEALTH EACH DAY



Wake up and practise some deep breathing



Write down 3 things you are grateful for



Speak to someone about how you are feeling



Engage in a thought diary



Write down a list of your worries



Challenge unhelpful thoughts



Schedule in some fun activities in your week



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Let people know how you are feeling



Engage in something you are good at



Surround yourself with people who make you happy



Eat a well balanced diet



Do something that makes you feel proud



Keep yourself active throughout the day



Get a good nights sleep



Close your eyes and imagine being in a safe place



Disconnect from social media



Disconnect from technology



Catch up with a friend



Practise some meditation



Use all your senses to engage with an activity



Practise some progressive muscle relaxation



Listen to music that relaxes you



Practise postponing your worries



Problem solve to overcome a worry



Identify your thinking errors



Remind yourself of your achievements



Identify a list of all your strengths



Identify how you can use your strengths in your day



Go for a long relaxing walk



Volunteer at a local charity



Engage in some exercise

Join an exercise group



Take a break from what you are doing



Focus on the present. Stay in the here and now



Practise self care (E.g. have a bath)



Assess your feelings each morning when you wake up

WHY CHILDREN SHOULD TAKE A BREAK FROM SOCIAL MEDIA



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Switching off from social media could be good for your mental health. It could reduce feelings of anxiety, loneliness or jealousy



Switching off from social media could help you to get more things done



You will find yourself with more time to see friends, exercise or engage in hobbies

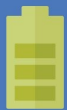
You will find yourself with more time to see friends, exercise or engage in hobbies



Because it can negatively impact your self esteem



So that they can have more time to rest and recharge



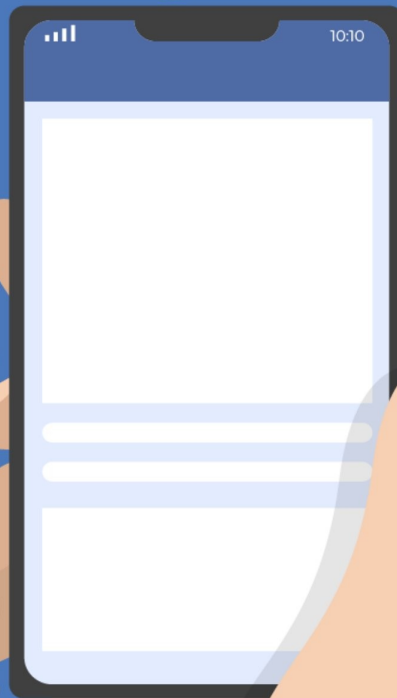
You will be more present with what you are doing



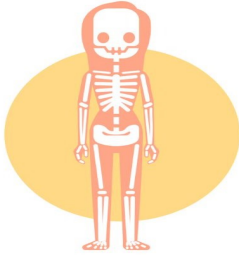
Switching off from social media could help to improve your sleep



Because by connecting with people in person is really important for our wellbeing



10 THINGS STUDENTS CAN DO TO BOOST THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



Mind and Body

Look after your body as well as your mind. Eat a well balanced diet, keep hydrated and get into a regular sleep pattern



Exercise

Engage in regular exercise. Find a sport or activity that you enjoy. Exercise is a great tool for improving mood and reducing stress and anxiety



Organisation

Manage your time effectively. Stay organised and on top of things. This will help to reduce pressure

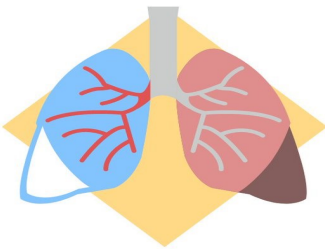


Self Care

Practice self care. Make sure to look after yourself. Relax, smile, have a bath, go for a walk and do something you enjoy

Talk to someone

Don't be afraid to talk to someone about how you are feeling. Talk to your friends, family or teachers.



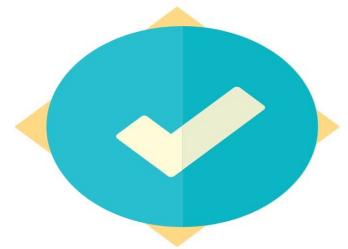
Breathing

Learn how to breathe effectively. Practice a number of techniques and find what works for you: ratio breathing, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation



Write down

Write down how you feeling or what you are thinking. This can be a really simple way to understand what is going on within your mind and body



Challenge

Try to challenge your thinking. If you experience an unhelpful thought try and turn it into a helpful thought



Check in

Regularly check in with yourself. Monitor your emotions and mood

Problem solve

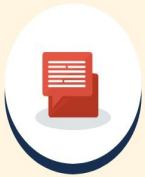
Learn how to problem solve effectively. When you experience a problem try and write down a number of solutions.





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9 WAYS CHILDREN CAN BE BRAVE AND LOOK AFTER THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



If you are struggling don't be afraid to talk to someone



Try not to keep things bottled up. Talk to someone about your feelings



Work each day on building your mental fitness (E.g breathing techniques)



Embrace challenges which you have coming up



Look after yourself and make sure to apply lots of self care (Mindfulness)



Express how you are feeling or thinking to a friend, family member or teacher



Know when to stop. If things become too much give yourself a break



Don't be afraid to ask for help



It's okay to not feel okay. Try not to fight the feelings and talk to someone



10 THINGS CHILDREN CAN DO AT HOME TO HELP THEM COPE WITH ANXIETY



Get a pen and paper and write down what you are thinking and feeling. This can be a useful technique to express yourself and get things off your mind



If you feel anxious breathe in for a count of three, then breathe out for a count of three. Get into a slow and steady rhythm



Talk to your family about how you are feeling. Don't be afraid to talk about negative thoughts or emotions



Focus your attention on something else. Try and fully concentrate on an activity that you are doing



If you are worried write down all the solutions to your problem. Come up with an action plan with your parents to overcome the problem



When you feel anxious close your eyes and imagine yourself in a calm and happy place



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Create a self soothe box. This is a box that contains activities linking to all your senses that help calm you down



Tear up a number of pieces of paper and write down activities you can do that will help you manage your anxiety. Put these activities into a jar and each time you feel anxious pull an activity out of the jar to start engaging with



IT'S **OK** TO FEEL:
.....



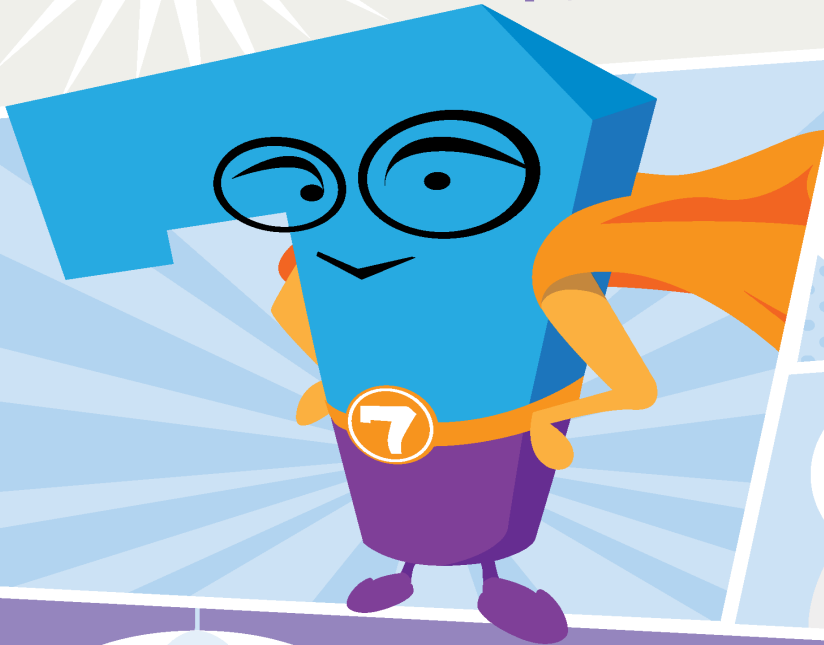
EVERYBODY FEELS THAT WAY SOMETIMES.
WE DON'T LIKE IT, BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE US WEAK. IT MAKES US

HUMAN.

AND IT HELPS TO TALK ABOUT IT.

SEVEN SUPER SKILLS

TO HELP A FRIEND IN NEED



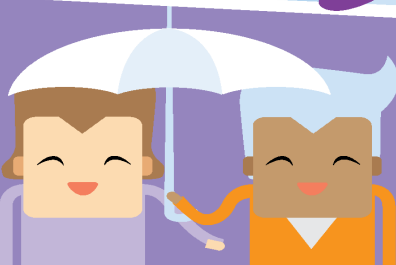
CALMNESS

COMFORTS YOUR
FRIEND IN A TIME
OF A NEED



HONESTY

ENCOURAGES
YOUR COMPADRE
TO TRUST YOU



NON-JUDGMENTAL ATTITUDE

CREATES A SAFE SPACE
FOR YOUR CHUM

EMPATHY

SHOWS THAT YOU
REALLY CARE



RESOURCEFULNESS

GIVES YOUR BUDDY
IDEAS ON WHERE
TO GET HELP



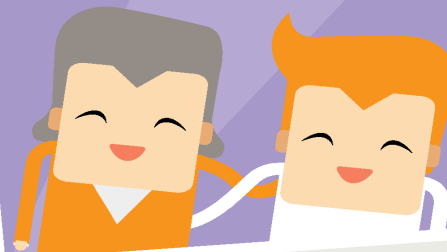
REASSURING

MAKES YOUR AMIGO FEEL LIKE
THINGS ARE GOING TO BE OK

OK

ENCOURAGING

HELPS YOUR
MATE GET
HELP AND
SUPPORT



www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org

HOW TO SUPPORT A STUDENT WHO IS FEELING LOW



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1



Take the time to listen to what they have to say. Be attentive, patient and understanding

2



Encourage them to seek support from their parents, a doctor or a school counsellor

3



Support them to set some simple short term goals which they can achieve. This will help to boost confidence

4



Encourage them to talk about how they are feeling and what they are thinking. Make sure they are doing this with the right people

5



Encourage them to engage in some activities that provide them with a sense of pleasure and achievement

6



Work with them to find opportunities where they can connect with friends and family. Connectedness boosts self esteem and reduces anxiety

7



Support them to challenge unhelpful thoughts by looking at the evidence for and against their unhelpful beliefs

8



Make sure they are looking after their physical health. Eating a well balanced diet and getting plenty of sleep

9



Encourage them to build a mental health support network of people they can talk to and go to for help

10



Identify some mood boosting activities they can slowly and gently start to take part in. Exercise is a great place to start



9 WAYS STUDENTS CAN GET READY AND FOCUSED FOR THEIR DAY

BREATHE



Start your morning by spending some time to slow down and breathe. This is great for reducing any stress or anxiety you may be experiencing

FUEL



Make sure you eat a nutritious breakfast to keep you fuelled for the morning

ORGANISE



Get organised. This can be done the night before. Pack your bag and make sure you have everything you need for your day

GOAL



Spend a few moments to identify some goals you want to achieve from the day

STRENGTHS



Remind yourself of all your strengths and how you will use them throughout the day

CONNECT



Think about people you need to connect with during the day (Friends, teachers)

STRESS



Write down any stress or worries and spend a moment to challenge unhelpful thinking patterns

REVIEW



Look over and review your timetable so you can be in the best possible shape to be ready for what you have coming up in the day

PRESENT



Stay focused on the present moment and what you need to achieve in the here and now

RITUAL



Find a morning routine that works for you that helps you to get ready for the day





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16 TIME



MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR STUDENTS



**Create a
schedule**



**Make time
for yourself**



**Get yourself
in a routine**



**Write down
goals**



**Have scheduled
breaks**



**Avoid
procrastination**



**Stick to your
plan**



**Allow time for
fun activities**



**Make a to
do list**



**Study in a
regular pattern**



**Work when
you are at
your best**



**Exercise to
relieve stress**



**Reward yourself
when you complete
something**



**Keep stress to
a minimum**

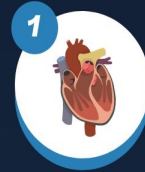


**Work a set
number of
hours a day**



**Don't panic
if you fall
behind**

10 WAYS STUDENTS CAN BOOST THEIR MENTAL FITNESS



Exercise, eat well,
stay hydrated.
Healthy body =
healthy mind



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Schedule time into
your week to practice
some relaxation



Identify your
strengths and think
about how you can
use them each day



Take a moment to
slow down what
you are doing and
breathe



Find opportunities
throughout your week
to connect with close
friends and family
members



When you
experience worry
engage in some
problem solving



Regularly monitor
and assess how you
are feeling



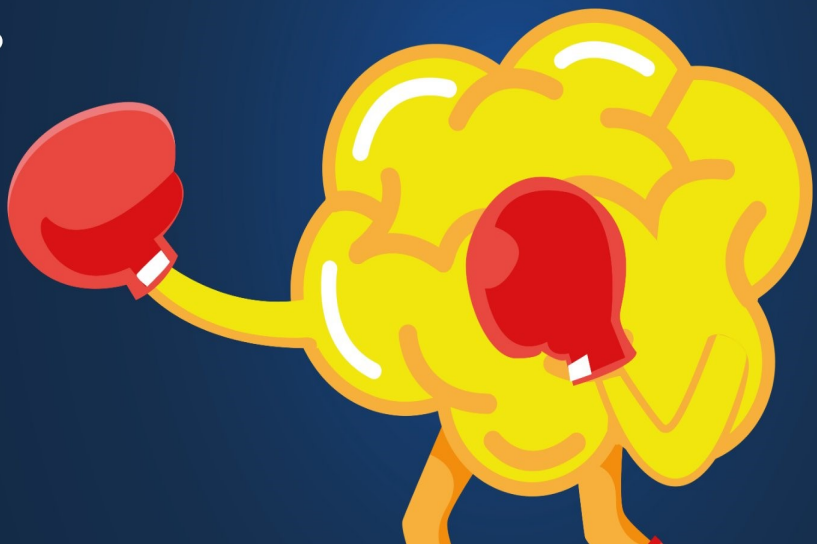
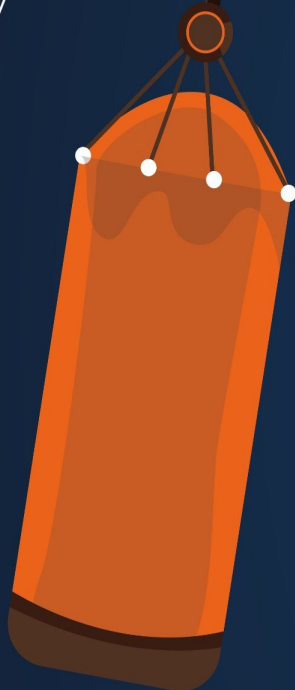
Find a coping skill
that you can exercise
daily



Invest time in
building your
confidence



Be ready for key
moments and events
that you have coming
up



HOW TO BUILD YOUR EXAM CONFIDENCE



Review recent successes and what you can learn from them



Visualise yourself performing well



Remind yourself of your achievements



Make sure you are physically well prepared



Invest time and energy into building your confidence



Develop a good support network who can help to build your confidence



Identify positive thoughts you want to be thinking



Focus on the things that you can control



Focus on identifying process goals you want to achieve



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Get regular feedback from teachers



Think about how you can use your strengths leading up to an exam



Identify a list of all of your strengths



Practise some mock exams under exam conditions



HOW TO BECOME A MORE RESILIENT STUDENT

MINDSET

See resilience as something you can work and build on. Adopt a proactive mindset



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PROBLEM SOLVE

Work on developing your problem solving skills so you can adapt and come up with solutions when faced with a problem

FAILURE

Don't be afraid to fail. See them as opportunities to grown and develop

COMFORT ZONE

Push yourself out your comfort zone. Adopt a challenge mindset and be explorative

RELATIONSHIPS

Build positive relationships with family, friends and teachers. Use their support.

THOUGHTS

Identify and challenge unhelpful thoughts

SETBACKS

Resilience can be developed from setbacks but only if you do the right things to use those experiences helpfully

REFLECT

Reflect on experiences and try to put things in perspective

COPING SKILLS

Develop your coping strategies to help you deal more effectively with stress, pressure and anxiety



HOW CAN EXERCISE IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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1 IMPROVED PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Improved concentration

Improved attention

Improved coping



2 INCREASED BLOOD FLOW TO THE BRAIN



Improved leadership skills



Increased brain tissue volume



Improved executive functioning



Increased memory



Improved executive functioning

3 REDUCED STRESS, DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

4 IMPROVED COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING



5 INCREASED RETENTION OF NEW INFORMATION



10 TECHNIQUES ATHLETES CAN USE AT HOME TO MANAGE STRESS



Find an activity which you can engage with and try being present with it by using all your senses



Progressive muscle relaxation can be used to relieve muscle tension which you might be experiencing



A thought diary can be a useful way to write down what you are thinking and how you are feeling



Identify times in the past where you have coped well with stress and use those as positive experiences to move you forward



Deep breathing is a useful technique to help reduce physiological and psychological arousal



Breathe slowly, close your eyes and imagine yourself in a relaxing and peaceful place



Identify self care activities which bring you a sense of calm and relaxation (reading a book, having a bath, talking to a friend)



Scheduling activities into a weekly planner can help bring back a sense of control and reduce stress



Problem solving is a great way to manage worries and find solutions to a problem



Identifying thinking errors can be used as a technique to identify negative thinking patterns



MENTAL HEALTH

Awareness



Writing Ideas for Kids

- Do you ever struggle with your own mental health? How does that make you feel?
- Do you know people who talk openly about their mental health? How does this impact you?
- Why is there such a stigma around mental health problems?
- People do lots of things to improve their physical health—but less to take care of their mental health. Why do you think this is?
- People see doctors for their bodies with no shame. Should they be embarrassed to see a doctor for their minds? Why or why not?
- What are some signs that someone may be struggling with their mental health?
- What would you do if you suspected a friend was depressed?
- What would you do if a friend told you they were going to hurt themselves?
- Why do people say that suicide is “a permanent solution to a temporary problem”? What does this mean?
- Are non-lethal forms of self-harm dangerous? Why?
- Why are some groups of people at a higher risk of mental health problems like depression?
- Why is it important for people to prioritize their mental health?
- What is one thing you could do on a regular basis that would be good for your mental health?
- Why is telling a depressed person to “just try to be happy” equivalent to telling someone with a broken leg to “just try to walk”?
- Why is it beneficial for people with mental health issues to hear from others who experience the same things?
- How can you best support someone who is struggling with his or her mental health?
- Who could you turn to if you were struggling with your own mental health?
- Would you ever consider seeing a therapist? Why or why not?
- Could therapy be beneficial for people who do not have issues with their mental health? Why or why not?
- How could our school better support students who struggle with their mental health?
- What does it mean for someone to have a “safe space”? How could this be beneficial to a person’s mental health?