

Student Mental Health and Well-Being



TCDSB Mental Health Services provided by **Psychology, Social Work, and Guidance** personnel

Boys Mental Health



Many children experience challenges from time to time and reach out to a trusted adult for support and guidance. A recent study indicated that, “five thousand times a week young Canadians across the country reach out for help from the Kids Help Phone”. When children reach out and receive support it is highly effective. However, it was also discovered that seventy-three percent of children who call for help are girls. It begs the question, “what about the boys?”

Boys are less likely to express their feelings due to societal norms. Boys are taught that “real men” don’t show their emotions and should be “strong”. However, this “bottling up” of emotions can negatively impact on a boy’s mental health and behavior.

We’re pleased to send you the March edition of the Student Mental Health and Well-Being Newsletter. Please feel free to share and pass it along.

The Canadian Mental Health Association explains that “symptoms of mental illness in boys may look like “typical” teenager behavior, leaving mental illness unnoticed for many years.” Some symptoms may include, substance abuse, risky behavior, conflict with others, and inability to focus.

There are several things we can do to support boys to speak out and stop the stigma:

Create a positive message: Show boys that it’s okay to express their emotions. Encourage them to express how they feel without judgement.

Discuss healthy coping skills and self-care practices: By doing this, boys will be more aware of unhealthy thoughts and behaviors and better equipped to recognize them should they occur. This will also help them to receive the message that it’s okay to take care of themselves.

*Information obtained and adapted from the Canadian Mental Health Association;
www.globalnews.ca/545193/young-minds-boys-arent-reaching-out-for-mental-health-help-in-great-numbers/*

Fostering The Family:

The TCDSB Pastoral Plan 2015-18 “ Together With one Voice: Harmonizing Our Faith Through Family, Parish, and School” 2016 focuses on the PARISH

Friday May 5th is Parish Family Day. There will be a special celebration at the Catholic Education Centre to showcase student work focusing on the ways that our parishes and our parish priests contribute to our schools and communities.



A prayer for encouragement and strength

Lord,
You are the wind in my sails
You guide me as I steer and find direction.
You give me strength to keep on going.
You watch over me as I navigate stormy seas.
You are the harbor where I stop for rest.
You are my encourager when I lose hope.
You are the lighthouse that keeps my path safe.
You are always with me.
Amen

Mental Health Benefits of Physical Activity



Engaging in physical activity not only helps your child’s physical health but it has also been shown to improve mental health and well being. When children exercise, their brain releases endorphins which helps to improve sleep, energy levels and mood. It also can reduce anxiety, and improve relationships.

Exercise helps to reduce anxiety: When children are anxious they tend focus on negative thoughts, which in turn may make them feel more anxious, creating a negative cycle. Participating in physical exercise may help break this negative cycle because your child is focused on the demands of the activity rather than their negative thoughts. As well, when your child exercises their body releases hormones called endorphins, which make them feel good.

Improved Relationships: Engaging in shared physical activities may give a child or teen the opportunity to feel a sense of companionship or belonging. Participating in sports may alleviate some of the social pressure that anxious or shy children and teens may otherwise experience when interacting with peers.

Information obtained and adapted from www.aboutkidshealth.ca

Mental Health Initiatives 2016-2017

- Support for schools in developing a mentally healthy classroom. See Supporting Minds on the Ministry’s website and edugains.ca.
- Inclusion of mental health to school SLIPs
- safeTALK suicide awareness workshops for staff available via PAL
- Building partnerships with community agencies, families, and parishes.
- Psych. And SW supporting Newcomer Mental Health, as well as Mental Health in HPE

