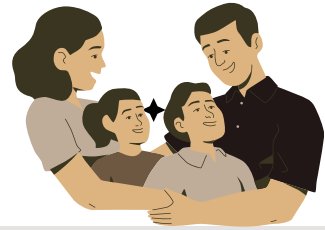


# FAMILY CONNECTIONS

## WELLBEING NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS

MAY 2024



### *A Note from us,*

*We hope you are having a great start to the week! In this edition of our newsletter, we are excited to share tips to promote the wellbeing of your family.*

*In the tapestry of parenting, nurturing positive mental health in children is a masterpiece waiting to be crafted. As parents, you hold the brush, and your actions are the strokes that shape your child's emotional landscape. In understanding the fundamentals of mental health in childhood, recognising the challenges they face and embracing your crucial role, you pave the way for resilient, emotionally healthy children.*

## CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH : WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Mental health is the way children think and feel about themselves and the world around them. It affects how children cope with life's challenges and stresses. Children with good mental health feel loved, safe, and secure in their environments. They also feel happy and positive about themselves. They are kind to themselves during tough times or when things do not go the way they expect. This means they feel OK about trying new or challenging things. They enjoy life, learn well, and get along well with family and friends and they can manage sad, worrying, or angry feelings and bounce back from tough times.

Good mental health is an important part of healthy child development. It helps children build positive social, emotional, behaviour, thinking and communication skills. It also lays the foundation for better mental health and wellbeing later in life.

### **Here are ideas to promote your child's mental health and wellbeing through a loving and supportive relationship:**

- Tell your child that you love them, no matter what. You can also show love through your body language and nonverbal communication – for example, making eye contact, giving a hug, or smiling at your child
- Use a positive, constructive, and consistent approach to guide your child's behaviour. This means giving your child praise and attention when they behave well, rather than negative consequences when they behave in challenging ways.
- Enjoy time with your child doing activities they like. This could be reading together, kicking a ball, drawing, playing board games etc.
- Have regular family meals. Eating together can strengthen your relationship with your child, give your child a sense of stability and connectedness, and have a positive effect on their development. It might also encourage your child to eat well too.
- Work on positive ways to solve problems and manage conflict between you and your partner, with your child and among other family members.

In this newsletter you can expect:

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH : WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS.

EMOTIONS AND GOOD MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN.

BEHAVIOUR, GOALS, SKILLS & GOOD MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN.

GOOD PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN.

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH.





## EMOTIONS AND GOOD MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

Children experience different emotions as part of growing up. They are likely to experience different emotions like fear, disappointment, sadness, anxiety, anger, joy, and hope. When children cope with big emotions or calm themselves down in demanding situations, they are more likely to feel good about themselves.

### Here are ways you can help your child learn to manage emotions:

- Talk about emotions with your child and encourage them to recognise and label their emotions. You can also let your child know that it is natural to have all sorts of feelings. For example, 'It looks like you are really frustrated that your toy will not work. I can understand that.'
- Role-model a positive outlook for your child – for example, I am disappointed that my cake did not cook properly, but that is OK – I will try it again another time.'
- Support your child when something is bothering them. For example, if your child is having trouble with friends at school, you could give your child hugs and reassure them that you are there for them. And you could collaborate with the teacher on a plan to manage the situation.
- Help your child learn to manage small worries so they do not become big problems. You can do this by gently encouraging your child to do things they are anxious about instead of avoiding scary situations. For example, 'Have you thought about trying out for the school choir this year? You really enjoy singing.'

### BEHAVIOUR, GOALS, SKILLS & GOOD MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

#### Here are ways to promote your child's mental health and wellbeing through a focus on behaviour:

- Have family rules about behaviour and involve your child in developing rules and consequences. Adjust the rules and consequences as your child grows. For example, you and your child might make and adjust rules about digital technology use or online behaviour. Rules and boundaries help children of all ages feel safe and secure.
- Help your child to set realistic goals for their age and abilities and work towards achieving them – for example, riding a bike without training wheels or trying to solve a difficult maths problem for school. And praise your child's efforts to achieve the goal, rather than the goal itself.
- Help your child learn how to solve problems so that they develop the skills to do this for themselves when they are older. For example, you can help your child work out what the problem is, brainstorm viable solutions, and choose a solution to put into action.
- Encourage your child to try new things, take age-appropriate risks, and learn from their mistakes. This could be things like entering a competition, speaking in front of the class, climbing new equipment at the playground etc.



## GOOD PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

Good physical health is important for mental health. That is because being fit and well helps your child have more energy, feel confident, manage stress and sleep well.

### **Here are ways to help your child stay physically fit and well:**

- Offer healthy food and encourage healthy eating habits in your family.
- Encourage your child to try different physical activities and sports. Trying different activities is good for fitness and energy levels. It can also help children feel good about themselves as they develop new skills.
- Make sure your child gets the sleep they need. Quality sleep will help your child to manage stress and a busy life.



## LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH.

Looking after yourself helps you stay physically, mentally, and emotionally well. This is good for you, and it is also important for your child. When you are well, you are better able to give your child the warmth, care, and attention they need to grow and thrive. You also set a good example of self-care for your child.

### Looking after yourself includes:

- Eating well and doing some exercise.
- Trying to get enough rest.
- Making time for things you enjoy.
- Keeping up with old friends or making new ones.
- Watching out for and managing stress, anxiety and anger.
- Getting support from family, friends, your community.

*In a world that often feels complex and uncertain, your unwavering support, open communication and commitment to your child's well-being can be the bedrock upon which they build a brighter, more resilient future.*