

# WELCOME!

Thank you for being here.

We kindly request for your cameras and mics to be turned off for the duration of the presentation.

Thank you.



Professional  
Support Services



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Wendat. We also acknowledge the land covered by Treaty 13 is held by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and Toronto is subject to The Dish with One Spoon covenant. We also recognize the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.*

# Supporting the Mental Health and Well-Being of our Teens During the Pandemic



Dayna Morris, M.A., C.Psych.Assoc. + Aimee Gomez, M.S.W., R.S.W.



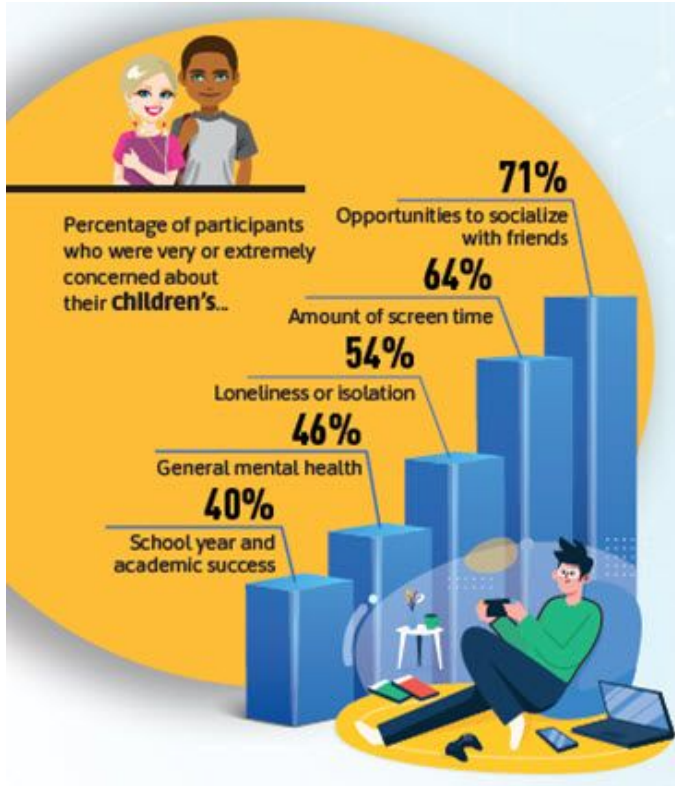
# COVID'S IMPACT ON FAMILIES

- Taking more precautions and having safety discussions
- Balancing work, virtual learning, and caregiving demands
- Employment + loss of income
- Routine and changing expectations
- Family conflict + family violence
- Isolation, loneliness, and disconnection
- Grief and loss of our “regular lives”
- Decline in mental health
- Social and economic inequities



Statistics Canada (2020). COVID-19 in Canada: A Six-month Update on Social and Economic Impacts. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2020003-eng.htm>

# COVID'S IMPACT ON YOUTH



- Decline in mental health and decreased access to supports
- Social Isolation
- Fear of contracting Coronavirus
- Managing their physical health
- Engagement in school
- Grief and loss of things they had connection to
- Access to employment
- Feelings of hopelessness and concerns about returning to “normal life”

# Child and Youth Voice Map



"Being at home makes it harder to take things seriously like at school. Also some subjects need face to face interaction with the teacher."

"I don't like crowds and people that aren't careful and I'm scared of catching the virus and getting sick."

"Open the parks for families to be able to go together and they can still social distance from others."

"I am spending more time with my family and extra time for my hobbies. My dad is working from home, so I sort of get to see what he does everyday and it has made me feel more respect and appreciative for what he does for our family."

"All of us are at home. My mom works from home and she is always on conference calls. My brother is also home and we fight quite a bit."

"Do something fun every day as a treat to yourself."

"I can help my friends by making them laugh."

"I can understand that my mom is trying her best and is also worried and anxious right now about money and losing her job."

"We live in a condo, and sometimes other family members need to use the computer room for work at the same time as me."

"I miss my friends and my teacher."

"Am I getting as much learning as I would need to pass next year?"

"I don't like that everyone seems afraid of everyone else, no one is friendly anymore."

Maximum City. (2020). "COVID-19 Child and Youth Well-Being Study: Toronto Phase One: Report". Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3bqiMhe>

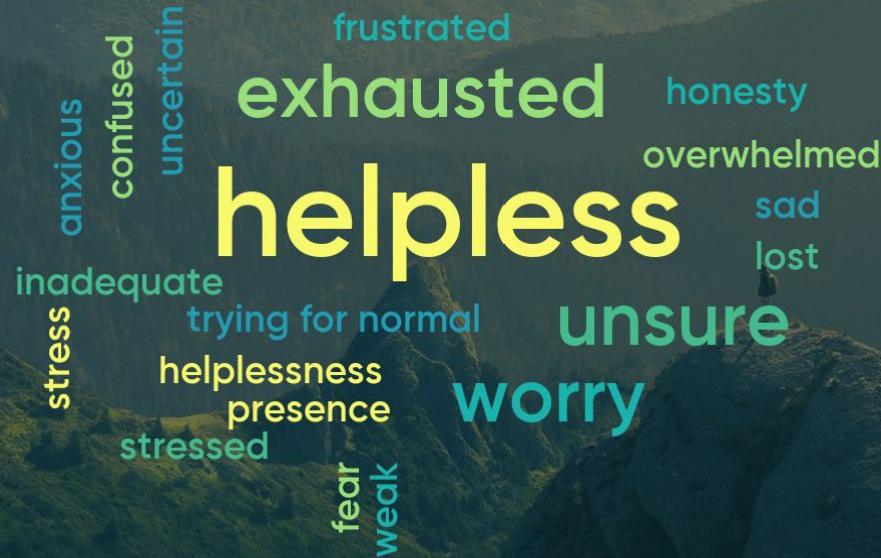
(Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and enter code)

**What are one or two feeling you have when you think about supporting your child's mental health and well-being during this time? (Results in next slide)**





What are one or two feelings you have when you think about supporting your child's mental health and well-being during this time?

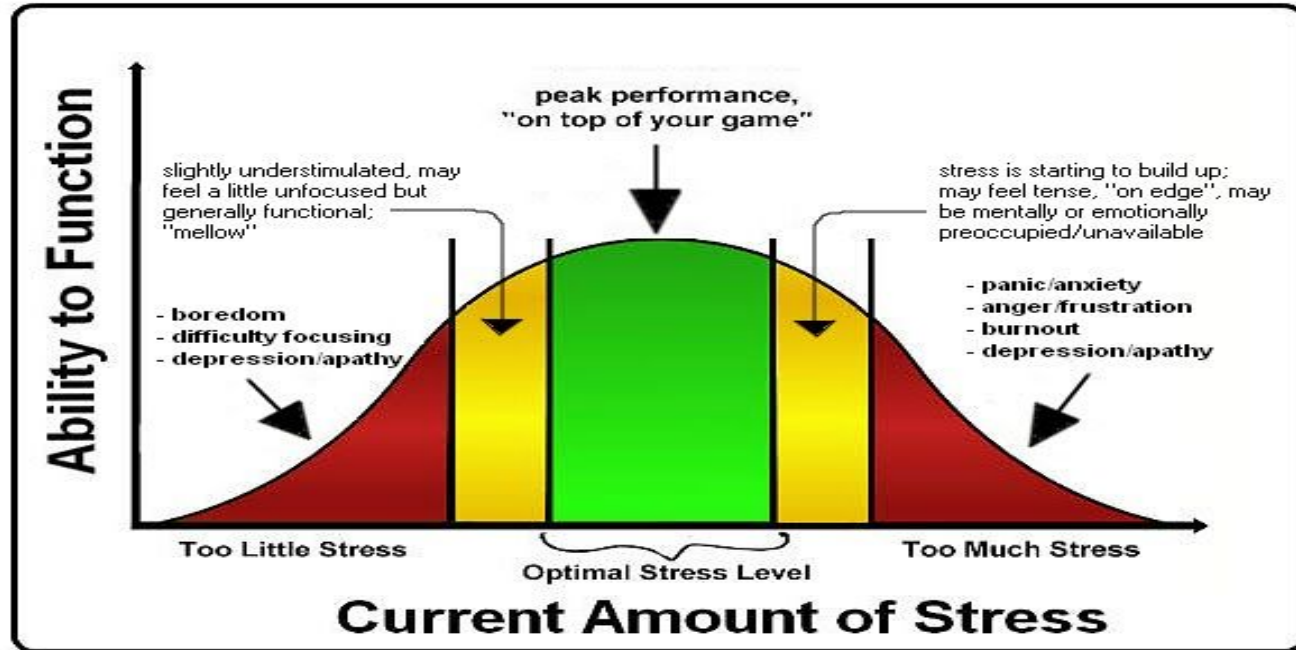




# YOUR WELL-BEING

Put your own  
oxygen mask on  
first, whether it's  
on the plane, at  
home or  
anywhere in life.  
~Ellen Delap

# IMPACT OF STRESS ON OUR ABILITY TO FUNCTION



Source: <https://www.sites.google.com/site/officeofstressmanagement/>

I CANNOT CONTROL:

HOW LONG THIS WILL  
LAST

REGULATIONS  
FINANCIAL  
INSECURITY

THE NEWS

GLITCHES WITH TECHNOLOGY

CHOOSING ENJOYABLE  
THINGS TO DO & STAYING  
ACTIVE

I CAN CONTROL  
(SO I FOCUS ON THESE THINGS)

LIMITING  
SOCIAL MEDIA

MY POSITIVE  
ATTITUDE

MAINTAINING  
SOCIAL  
CONNECTIONS

WASHING MY  
HANDS/WEARING A MASK

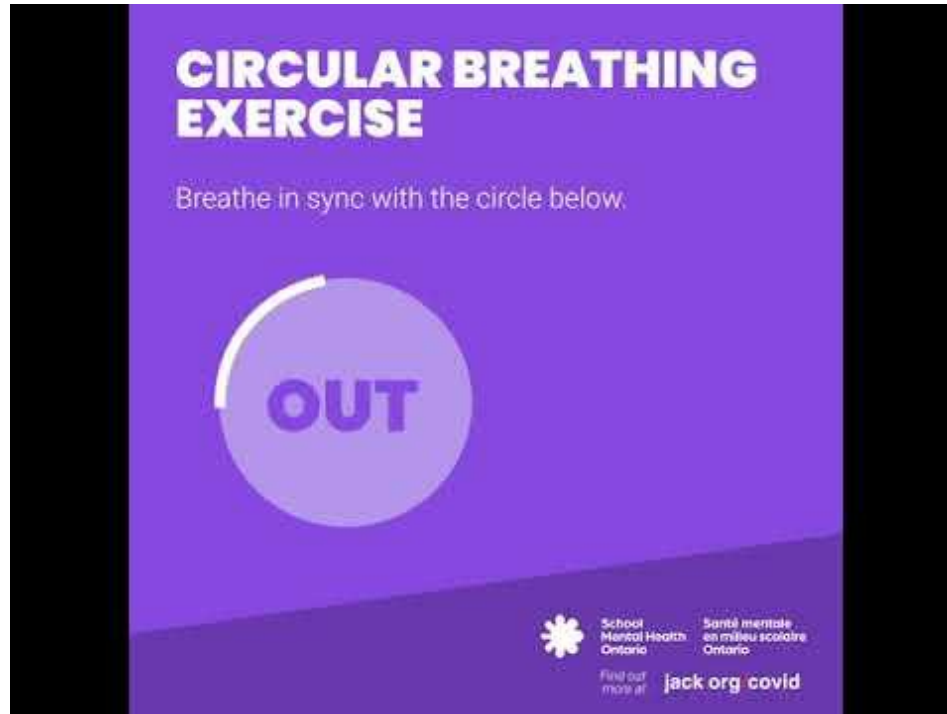
CHANGES TO JOB  
EXPECTATIONS

PREDICTING WHAT  
WILL HAPPEN

OTHER PEOPLE'S HEALTH

OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOURS

# TAKE A BREATH



School Mental Health Ontario. (2020). *Circular Breathing Exercise*. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boT7p5kw-MQ>

We are all facing the same storm, but the boats we are in are all different.

Everyone has their own story...





# THE TEENAGE BRAIN



- Teen brain  $\neq$  Adult brain
- During the teen years, the prefrontal cortex (i.e., the control centre of the brain) is undergoing a massive reorganization.
- Decision-making is more controlled by emotion centres of the brain (e.g., amygdala) - more reactive and impacted by reward
- This results in:
  - Act on impulse - Poor decision making
  - Feelings of invincibility
  - Difficulties with emotion regulation/behaviour regulation

# DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

## What Teens Want/Need

- Friends/social opportunities
- New experiences
- Developing new life skills/educational opportunities
- Freedom/independence
- Control
- Privacy
- Celebrating milestones
- Structure & Routine
- Healthy habits

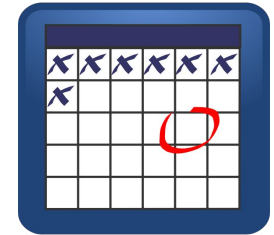
## What Teens Have During COVID

- Social isolation
- Boredom/“Groundhog day”
- Limited opportunities for real world learning/virtual learning
- Increased restrictions
- Minimal control
- LOTS of family time
- Missed opportunities/loss
- Structure and routine??
- Changes to diet and exercise

# GENERAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH + WELL-BEING



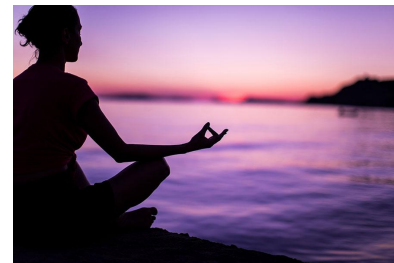
- Healthy eating/hydrating
- Routine - exercise, sleep, screen time, homework, hobbies, family time
- Connections - inside the home and with family and friends
- Limiting news/conversations about COVID



# GENERAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH + WELL-BEING

- Privacy
- Sense of control
- Mindfulness/Gratitude
- Tempering expectations -

IT'S A PANDEMIC! YOU ARE DOING THE BEST YOU CAN!!



# Cultivating Calm: Self-Care Ideas For Educators

*EVERYONE*

1 min	5 min	10 min	30+ min
<b>Get Grounded</b> Pause. Feel your feet in your shoes. If seated, lightly push your feet against the floor.	<b>Say Thank You</b> Text a friend, thank them for something they did for you	<b>Journal</b> Write down 10 things you are grateful for.	<b>Phone a Friend</b> Ask them how they are feeling. Share your thoughts and experiences too.
<b>Recall</b> Who is someone that makes you smile? Bring them to mind for a moment or two.	<b>Listen</b> Have a favourite song that you listen to when relaxing? Press play!	<b>Sip, Savour.</b> Prepare and enjoy a cup of your favourite tea or other beverage.	<b>Sweat!</b> HIIT - Run - Weights You Choose.
<b>Do Not Disturb</b> Set your phone to DND when you can. Or just leave it in another room for a while.	<b>Meditate</b> Find a free guided meditation online. Find a style that works for you.	<b>Walk it Out</b> Take a stroll around the block.	<b>Stretch it Out</b> Find a free yoga class online.
<b>Breathe</b> Inhale (5 sec.), Exhale (7 sec). Repeat 3x	<b>Tidy Up</b> Set your timer and take a 5 min break to tidy up your home office or desk.	<b>Dance</b> Have a favourite jam that makes you want to move? Press play. Repeat.	<b>Laugh!</b> Watch a funny movie, show or YouTube video.





# SIGNS MY CHILD OR TEEN MIGHT BE STRUGGLING WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH?



# HOW DO I SUPPORT MY CHILD OR TEEN WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH?

If you're concerned about your child's mental health, the first step is to talk with your child or teen.

Here are some tips:

- Find the right time
- Reassure them that they can tell you anything and you will not get angry
- Tell them what you have noticed
- Express curiosity about what they might be feeling
- Give them time to reflect
- Stay calm and stick with it
- Be supportive and help access support if necessary



# WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS REALLY STRUGGLING

In **non-urgent situations**, there are many ways that parents can provide support. Here are a few ideas:

- Stay calm
- Reduce pressure where possible
- Just listen
- Inspire hope
- Look for positives
- Deep breathing
- Get active
- Get outside
- Try to have 1:1 time
- Do something for others
- Check out the COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub





# HOW CAN I ACCESS HELP FOR MY CHILD OR TEEN'S MENTAL HEALTH?

## Accessing TDSB Supports:

1. If you have concerns about your child or teen, start by connecting with their teacher or school administrator (e.g., principal/vice-principal)
2. Referrals for additional supports can be made through your local School Support Team (i.e., teacher, vice-principal, principal, special education, guidance, Professional Support Services (PSS) staff)  
PSS staff include: Social Work, Psychology, Speech-Language Pathology, Child and Youth Services & Occupational/Physiotherapy



### 3. **Caregiver + Parent Virtual Office Hours**

Connect directly with staff from TDSB Professional Support Services. Ask questions and get answers for how to support your child or teen's mental health and well being.

Drop in Tuesdays from 10:00am to 11:00am & Thursdays from 7:00pm to 8:00pm starting this week

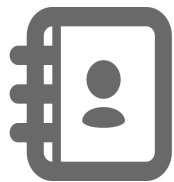


# IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health or substance use emergency, **call 9-1-1** or **go to the emergency room of your local hospital**. Even in these unusual times, it is important to get the immediate help that you need. There are people ready and available to help.

If you are not sure if it is an emergency, or just need to talk through the situation, consider reaching out to **Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000**, or the distress line or mobile crisis team in your area.





# Important Contacts



Ontario

Kids Help Phone



what's up  
walk in

 **Black Youth Helpline**  
BRIDGING CULTURES | REACHING YOUTH | IMPACTING CHANGE



Children's Mental Health Ontario  
Santé mentale pour enfants Ontario

**FEELING SAD OR DISTRESSED?**

Support is available for all Indigenous People in Canada



Talk to a qualified counsellor by  
phone at the First Nations and Inuit  
Hope for Wellness Help Line at  
**1-855-242-3310**

or through online chat at  
**hopeforwellness.ca**



Canada

jack.org





# Helpful Resources

NOW OPEN

[Supporting Mental Health and Wellness During the Return to School: Tips for Parents and Families](#)

[Suicide Prevention Guide for Parents and Families During COVID-19 and Return to School](#)

[Noticing Mental Health Concerns for Your Child](#)

[12 Easy and Fun Mental Health Activities to Try at Home](#)

[Reaching Out: A Resource to Support Student Help-Seeking](#)

[Self-Care 101 for Students](#)



# Helpful Resources Continued...

NOW OPEN

[National Association of School Psychologists](#): Parent tips, resources for schools and school mental health professionals

[The Hope for Wellness Help Line](#): Mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada

[Ministry of Education – Learn at home](#): Find supplementary resources for elementary and secondary students to practice math and literacy skills and learn at home

[Youth-focused mental health resources hub](#): An online hub of COVID-19 youth-focused mental health resources from Jack.org, Kids Help Phone and School Mental Health Ontario

[Public Health Agency of Canada](#): Risk level for Canadians, current situation, travel advisories

[TDSB Mental Health and Well-Being Resources During Covid-19](#)

[Indigenous Services Canada](#): Information for Indigenous communities related to COVID-19 and available supports

[Métis Nation of Ontario](#): COVID-19 updates, information about culturally relevant [mental health and addictions support](#)

The [First Peoples Wellness Circle](#) has put together [a resource with tips for First Nations parents and families on supporting mental wellness of children and young people](#) in their communities.

[Government of Ontario](#): Ontario news, status of cases in Ontario – updated at 10:30 a.m. daily

[World Health Organization](#): Technical documents, questions and answers



**THIS IS NOT EASY.  
WE HAVE NOT DONE THIS BEFORE.  
YOU ARE DOING THE BEST YOU CAN.  
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**



# QUESTIONS

# THANK YOU

