

Looking after our Mental Health

It seems fitting, particularly during this time of uncertainty and continuous change, to remind ourselves of the importance of caring for our psychological well-being. Taking care of our minds is just as important as taking care of our physical well-being; what can we do to look after our mental health?



- Talk about your feelings; it's not a sign of weakness to express yourself when you are feeling troubled
- Stay in touch with others through phone calls, notes, emails, or online chats
- Ask for help when you feel overwhelmed
- Take a break, either an active one or a nonactive one; "me time" is important for our mental health

UBC Okanagan is partnering with the B.C. Psychological Association to offer free psychological first-aid to all BC residents:

“Residents seeking assistance can access the service by filling out a short online form on the [BCPA website](#) or by calling 604-827-0847. Once submitted, they will receive a call from one of 200 volunteer registered psychologists within 24 to 48 hours. Considered best practice in times of crisis, psychological first-aid is a brief, up to 30-minute, telephone consultation designed to provide information and strategies to help people cope with mental health struggles related to traumatic events.” (UBC Okanagan News, April 15, 2020)

Whether you choose this kind of support or not, remember to guard your own emotional health during this time by:

- Being aware of your own symptoms of stress
- Acknowledging that it is okay to be struggling
- Understanding it is okay to reach out for help; find your inner courage and talk to a partner, friend, neighbor, or counsellor/therapist
- Being kind and gentle to yourself

Resources for Children and Youth to access online counselling/mental health support:

- Children and teens can speak with a counsellor 24/7 by calling Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868. Kids Help Phone 24/7 support (call, text, chat):
- Crisis Centre of B.C. is offering free online resources such as "Tools for Managing Uncertainty and Change: <https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/special-programming-during-the-current-health-situation/>
- Online chat service for youth who need someone to talk to about the stress of COVID-19 or any other issue: www.YouthInBC.com (noon to 1am). Online chat service for adults: www.CrisisCentreChat.ca (noon to 1am).
- Anxiety Canada –<https://www.anxietycanada.com/> – Interactive resource for youth to get information and strategies to manage anxiety. Also have free MindShift App
- Kelty Mental Health – <http://keltymentalhealth.ca> - Youth in Residence – Support for youth, by youth who live with mental illness.
- www.dwdonline.ca -Dealing with Depression Workbook for Teens – free online resources
- <https://bouncebackbc.ca/> – is a free skill-building program designed to help adults and youth 15+ manage low mood, mild to moderate depression, anxiety, stress or worry. Delivered online or over the phone with a coach. *School counsellors and family doctors can refer.*
- <https://mindcheck.me/> - check how your mental health is going and keep track of your improvement, FREE and PRIVATE. (Foundrybc.ca)
- <https://www.secondstep.org/covid19support> - Access to MindYeti mindfulness program sessions/videos as well as other Second Step resources for ages 5 to 18

Resources for Parents for support:

- Information Children – <http://www.informationchildren.com> – offers a Parent Helpline, Parent Coaching and Parenting Pamphlets to families free of charge
- Kelty Mental Health – <http://keltymentalhealth.ca> - Parent in Residence – Our PIR, Graeme, is still offering support by phone and email. Graeme.partridge-david@familysmart.ca
- Help for parents in supporting their anxious kids: <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/talking-to-kids-about-covid-19/>
- <https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/special-programming-during-the-current-health-situation/> - Offering free online course beginning April 1st by Webinar *Tools for Managing Stress and Burnout*

If there are any questions, please connect with anyone of the school counsellors.

***Thank you,
Angela Basran.***