

GET LOUD
to maintain positive mental health.
GET LOUD
to get it back.

What does it mean to GET LOUD for Mental Health? Think of “getting loud” as one big public address system—a giant loud speaker—calling out to end discrimination and stigma and shame.

#GETLOUD

CMHA'S 65TH ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH WEEK MAY 2-8, 2016

So why is your mental health so important?

Mental health is an essential part of your overall health. Just as physical fitness helps your body to stay strong, mental fitness helps you maintain a state of good mental health. Mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness. It's a state of well-being.

When you are mentally healthy, you enjoy your life and environment, and the people in it. You can be creative, learn, try new things, and take risks. You are able to cope with difficult times.

It's important to be aware of your mental health. Without awareness, it's difficult to pinpoint why you are so stressed or having problems coping.

Tips for positive mental health²:

- Have positive, respectful relationships with family and friends.
- Practice positive self-talk. Don't be so hard on yourself. We all make mistakes.
- Talk to people you trust when you're feeling down or stressed.
- Do things you enjoy.
- Learn some ways to relax and cope. Choose safe and healthy ways to deal with negative feelings—like going for a walk or listening to music.
- Eat healthy foods, be active and get enough sleep.
- Help others—it will make you feel good too.

Having positive mental health means you are able to:

Enjoy life.

You live in the moment, learn from the past and plan for the future. You focus on what you can influence or control, rather than things you cannot predict or change.

Be resilient.

You are optimistic and bounce back from challenges. You keep your perspective when dealing with serious events in your life.

Strive for balance in your life.

You juggle competing demands and aspects of your life. You know when your balance is off and make changes to restore it.

Work to achieve your full potential.

You recognize and develop your strengths and interests.

Be Flexible.

You're able to feel and express a range of emotions, and to change your expectations and approaches to solve problems.¹

Did you know that up to
70%
of young adults
living with mental health
problems report that
the symptoms started in
childhood?

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Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

For parents and other adults: How they can support youth mental health

The journey from child to adult can be complex and challenging. Young people often feel tremendous pressure to succeed at school, at home and in social groups. At the same time, they may lack the life experience to know that difficult situations will not last forever. Parents/caregivers and other adult role models can help young people manage their mental health and navigate this time of dramatic change by:

Developing positive relationships: Taking the time to learn about a young person's individual interests and sharing in activities can help build bonds that open communication. As a young person develops their identity, non-judgmental and supportive relationships are critical, particularly in difficult times.

Engaging youth in developing leadership: Young people have strengths that can be encouraged through opportunities to problem-solve, make decisions and organize activities and events. Providing youth a directing role can help them gain new skills and celebrate successes.

Giving emotional support: Listening to a young person should be active, not reactive. Ask questions to help them sort through their feelings, rather than reacting immediately with your own thoughts. This can create a safe space for a young person to explore their emotions and thoughts. Watch for difficulties in coping and signs that additional support may be needed.

Modeling self-care and help-seeking when a personal problem arises: Parents and other trusted adults can reflect on ways in which they can reduce their own stress and find support for their own mental health. These may include participating in recreation activities, learning a new skill or sharing household tasks. Developing supportive relationships and seeking help from other adults can set a good example for young people. Watch for difficulties in coping and signs that additional support may be needed.

Getting help

Have you ever felt:

- so angry or so sad that you can't cope with day-to-day life?
- like your body is unattractive and letting you down?
- unsure which way to turn, and like a deer caught in the headlights?
- that you need alcohol or drugs to feel better and get through the day?
- like you are constantly fighting with people or have pulled back from those you care about?
- overwhelmed by a sense of hopelessness and helplessness?

A lot of young people experience these feelings and they can be overpowering at times. But once you acknowledge that you might have a mental health issue, you can get the help and support you need, and feel like yourself again.

Signs and symptoms of possible youth mental health problems

- Abuse of drugs and/or alcohol
- Changes in school performance, falling grades
- Inability to cope with daily problems and activities
- Changes in sleeping and/or eating habits
- Excessive complaints of physical problems
- Missing a lot of school, stealing, damaging property or problems with the law
- Low self-esteem and negative body image
- Prolonged feelings of unhappiness and thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- Uncontrollable outbursts of anger

Finding your support system

The first steps are always the toughest, but knowing where to look for help is a good start. Here are some places where you can begin:

Internet

Go online and find out about reputable, confidential mental health resources. Many provincial governments or community agencies across Canada offer anonymous telephone or web chat services.

Library

Borrow books, videos and audio books on mental well-being and mental illness.

Family and friends

Share your feelings with family and friends, and let them be part of your team. Talk with someone you can confide in.

Educational events

Attend workshops and education sessions hosted in community centres, agencies, schools, colleges and universities.

School supports

Talk to a school counselor, teacher or the principal of your school.

Community resources

Check out community mental health clinics or contact mental health organizations.

Family doctor

Talk to your family doctor. He/she is a great resource and can link you to other professionals, if needed.

How CMHA can help.

Every year, CMHA's remarkable cross-Canada team of more than 10,000 staff and volunteers provides more than half a million Canadians with vital services and support.

Contact your local CMHA, or other community mental health organization, to learn more about support and resources in your area.

For more information on mental health programs and services in your community or to donate to CMHA, visit our websites: cmha.ca and mentalhealthweek.ca.

Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is a national charity that helps maintain and improve mental health for all Canadians. As the nation-wide leader and champion for mental health, CMHA helps people access the community resources they need to build resilience and support their recovery from mental illness.

