

Teen Mental Health Matters

September marks the end of summer and the beginning of a new school year; an exciting and often anxious time for children and teens. A certain amount of stress is normal but be on the lookout for more serious signs that could indicate a mental health issue including:



- Behavioural changes and outbursts
- Withdrawal from the family
- Drop in grades and truancy
- Suspected substance abuse
- Absent or unknown peer group
- Sleep disturbances
- Physical symptoms (persistent headache/stomach ache) – more likely to appear in boys
- Low self-esteem
- Self-harm

Boys, in particular, are under pressure to be strong and successful and are less likely to disclose or discuss problems for fear of appearing weak. But the good news is early intervention can help all children and teens. The following are tips to create a supportive home environment, shown to help mitigate mental health issues:

- Set aside daily tech-free family time
- Join children in a volunteer opportunity
- Encourage them to get involved in school clubs
- Involve them in caring for pets
- Urge them to “journal” and write down their thoughts
- Involve them in exercise and meditation sessions
- Talk and listen, rather than lecture
- Keep your cool and avoid judgment
- Highlight their good qualities
- Keep conversations safe and positive

The need for better mental health services for our children is strong but awareness campaigns such as www.rightbyyou.ca and <http://wptheme.cameronhelps.ca/> are working hard to raise funds for additional programming. Help be a force for change.

Download the Youth Mental Health guide for additional information:
http://www.rightbyyou.ca/uploads/docs/Right_By_You_Guide.pdf

Mental Health Resources

Family Mental Health

With up to a one year waiting list for all children’s mental health services, early intervention is best. But in the event your child is suffering, parents need to know where to turn for help as mental health issues affect the entire family.

- Contact your school Guidance or Community Outreach Counselor for program information
- Talk to your family doctor
- Research your Employee Family Assistance/Benefits options
- Find a Kids Mental Health center in your area - http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/about_us/memberslist.php
- Seek out walk-in support clinics - <http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/documents/walkinclinics-18sept2014.pdf>
- Reach out to parent/family support groups – <http://www.pcmh.ca/>
http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information_for_parents/Pages/default.aspx
- Keep children’s help line numbers handy: <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/teens/home.aspx>
- Call 911 if you have immediate safety concerns

Share your mental health strategies on social media #TriFitMentalHealth

Relax and Revive with Meditation!

If you're looking for a new way to build energy throughout the day, look no further! Sit back, relax, and meditate. Not only does meditation help clear the mind, relieve stress, and support good immune function, it can also improve productivity. Taking the time to reflect and decompress through guided meditation can help build energy. Here's how Tri Fit clients bring mindfulness to the workplace.

Sanofi Pasteur

Sanofi Pasteur's meditation program began in 2007 to help employees navigate everyday stress at home and at work. In addition to weekly drop in sessions, Sanofi offers annual focused sessions that touch on stress management, resiliency, joyful living, and skills for well-being. In addition to meditation classes, Sanofi also has a quiet room onsite where employees can go to reflect, clear their minds or pray.

"I have been participating in Sanofi Pasteur's Meditation program for a few years. Different techniques have been shared regarding meditation, breathing and increasing awareness. I have improved concentration, cultivated more acceptance, and improved my well-being." - Eli Agassi

Manulife

Manulife employees can set a positive intention to their week by participating in meditation sessions every Monday. Participants can dial in to a conference line or make their way to a meeting room where sessions have become so popular they are almost always full. Weekly meditations are facilitated by Toronto's Sahaja Yoga group who offer free meditation classes in the community (www.freemeditation.com). Handouts are made available online for those who wish to continue their practice at home or in Manulife's reflection room.

"I feel it makes me feel emotionally lighter, less stressed out and I sweat the small stuff less than I used to." - Manulife Employee

Enbridge Gas Distribution

Enbridge employees are invited to take part in mindful meditation sessions to reflect and recharge. The sessions are guided to encourage participants to stay focused on the present moment through sensations of sound, touch, breath and thoughts. Poems, relating to mindfulness, are shared with the group.

"Meditation sessions help me tackle my daily tasks in a calm and collected manner and I feel energized even at the end of a busy day." - Renuka Tennakoon



<http://bigthink.com/amped/meditation-is-the-new-yoga-bringing-mindfulness-into-the-workplace> <https://hbr.org/2012/10/if-youre-too-busy-to-meditate.html>

September News

Terry Fox Run – Sunday, September 20th

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run. Since Terry Fox started his cross-country journey in St. John's, Newfoundland, over \$700 million has been raised in Terry's name for cancer research. Find a run in your area. Visit http://www.terryfox.org/Run/Find_A_Runsite.html

Fall into Fitness

Summer vacation is over and it's time to kick-start your exercise plan! Fall is a great time to start a running program, walking program or to sign up for a new group exercise class. Start slow and find a workout buddy for motivation and to help you stick to the plan.

Need help getting started? Contact your Tri Fit Consultant for exercise guidance and for information on programs offered at your location.

Recipe for Personal Reflection

How can you take baby steps into the world of meditation and integrate it into the hectic environment of the modern workplace? Here are two ideas:

- **Walking Meditation:** One of the simplest ways to relax your mind and become more mindful is to take a break and go for a short walk. Whether around the office or around the block, simply walking, breathing and staying mindful and focused on the present moment can have a lasting effect.
- **Breathing:** Taking five minutes out of your day to quietly focus on your breath while letting go of mental and physical stress can help to improve focus, aid in relaxation and clear your mind of clutter.