

Starting the Conversation



Things to Remember

Challenges related to **mental health are the #1 health issue for young people**. School life can bring many amazing opportunities and experiences. However, it is very common, at times, to feel overwhelmed, lonely, or hopeless. Although some may not be directly impacted, they will very likely have someone in their immediate peer group who will struggle with a mental health challenge.

Your child's mental health is vitally important to be aware of and to talk about openly.

Parents need to start discussions around the subject of mental health with the **objective of making it as easy to talk about as physical health**. The same basic things apply. Encourage your child to strive for balance and to get an appropriate amount of rest, nutrition and exercise. Make it clear that it's okay to seek help for themselves or a friend if it's ever necessary.

Example Conversations

Temperature Check - What are they feeling?

“Excited for university?”

“How are you feeling about the change?”

Awareness - Knowing Where to Go

“Do you know when it's time to get help?”

“Do you know where to get help?”

“Do you know the signs that you or someone you know might be struggling?”

Reassurance - Love, Care & Respect

“Please know that I am here for you and you can reach out to me any time.”

“I'll be checking in every so often.”

Planning - Who can they turn to?

“Are there other people you can go to as well if you're struggling?”