

Mental Wellbeing in Youth

Adolescence is an important time in the development of lifelong mental wellbeing. Mental wellbeing is more than just being happy. It is having self-esteem and confidence, being connected to others and enjoying the good feelings that come from participating in and giving back to your community. When youth develop the best possible mental wellbeing, it lessens the likelihood of future substance abuse or mental problems.

Mental illness and mental wellbeing are not opposites. Youth with mental illness can enjoy good mental wellbeing, while youth with no symptoms of mental illness can struggle with poor mental wellbeing. All young people benefit when they connect with others, feel valued and learn important skills.

Here are some ways to help youth build mental wellbeing:

Connecting with others - increases self-worth and provides a source of support during hard times. Help your youth to form relationships with people close to them and with the wider world. Connections can be made by joining teams, clubs and groups, volunteering, getting a part-time job and spending time together with family and friends.

Being active - causes chemical changes in the brain that makes us feel good. Physical activity can also help youth form relationships and learn new skills which builds self-esteem.

Encourage trying new things - and be willing to do the same. Learning new things challenges us and setting/reaching goals makes us feel proud and capable.

Acts of kindness - can give us a sense of purpose and improve self-worth. Youth can be encouraged to give to others by saying thank you to someone who has helped them, phoning a relative or friend who needs support, becoming active in peer support or mentoring or lending a helping hand to others. Check for youth volunteer opportunities in your community.



Health advice as easy as 8-1-1

Did you know you can get trusted health advice around the clock from a registered nurse by dialing Health Link at 8-1-1? Health Link is Alberta's free, 24/7 health information and advice line. They can help assess symptoms and help you decide if you need to seek medical attention.

Will Putting Toothpaste on a Pimple Make It Go Away?

There are 101 stories about uses for toothpaste but it does nothing for pimples. So what does it do? Well we know that it makes a mess, hardens like a rock, and causes arguments about who forgot to put the cap on. So why use it? Fluoride. Turns out toothpaste is a great way to get fluoride on your teeth and prevent tooth decay.

Choose a toothpaste with fluoride and brush two times a day. You only need a pea-sized amount. Spit it out – but don't rinse it out for best results.

It is hard to imagine that the outer surface of your teeth can absorb fluoride, but that is what happens when you brush. Fluoride adds to all the minerals in teeth to harden and protect them from decay. But watch out, those minerals, including fluoride, can be removed from your teeth when you eat anything sweet or acidic. Too much mineral loss is called tooth decay.

Cut down on sweet and sticky snacks, drink tap water for thirst (particularly in locations where fluoride is added), and remember to use fluoride toothpaste.