

## **Talking about Mental Health - May 6-10 is Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being Week!**

Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being Week is about promoting mental wellness, increasing awareness of child and youth mental health, decreasing stigma and understanding that support is available. Let's improve everyone's mental health and well-being!

The theme for Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being at UGDSB is: Have a **SUPER** Week!

**S**ocial Connections

**U**nderstanding Emotions

**P**ersonal Health

**E**mpathy

**R**esilience

Each day of the week will focus on a different aspect of Mental Health and Well Being. The schools will be provided with resources and activities related to each day's theme.

As a parent, you can increase the Mental Health and Well-being of your children, youth and family too! Here are some suggestions:

Monday May 6-Social Connection - ``Don't be shy. Just say hi!``

Say Hi to 3 people that you do not know. Perform a random act of kindness.

Tuesday May 7- Understanding Emotions – “Sad, glad, happy, mad – just be you”

Right now, stop and reflect on how you are feeling. Take a couple of moments as a family to do some deep breathing. <http://youth.anxietybc.com/how-do-it> Now, how are you feeling?

On Wednesday, wear GREEN to support Mental Health Awareness.

Wednesday May 8 – Personal Health - “Healthy Self. Heal-thy self”. Wear green today to support Mental Health Awareness.

Did you know that how our bodies feel affects how good we are feeling? Three of the best things you can do to improve your mood is to exercise, sleep well and eat well. Go for a walk or play a game, get outside, turn off the devices an hour before bed and eat fresh food! The more you do to help your body feel good, the better you will feel!

Thursday May 9 – Empathy - “Be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody”.

When in doubt – be kind. Try seeing something from another person's perspective today.

Friday May 10 – Resilience - “If Plan A doesn’t work, the alphabet has 25 more letters!”.

Mental Health and Well-being means coping with the ups and downs of day to day life. Building more resilient thoughts and skills can really help. Children and youth can also find support by seeking help from caring adults. Take time now to talk with child or youth about who those caring adults are in their lives.

For more information about Mental Health and Well-being and interactive activities with your children and youth:

**CMHA Get Loud!** A comprehensive resource and tool kits. <https://mentalhealthweek.ca/>

**Mind your Mind** (online) [www.mindyourmind.ca/Interactives](http://www.mindyourmind.ca/Interactives)

Fun, interactive options for de-stressing for youth.

**Smiling Mind** (Free App) [smilingmind.com.au/](http://smilingmind.com.au/)

An app that guides you through simple, calming meditations.

**GoNoodle** (Free App) <https://www.gonoodle.com/>

Fun interactive body and mind breaks for kids.

At the end of the week, talk with your child/youth about the things that made them feel more connected, emotionally aware, healthy, empowered and resilient and continue to do those things every day!

Most of all... have a SUPER week!

*Jenny Marino is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board*