

Talking About Mental Health December 2018 – GIVE THE GIFT OF RESILIENCY

As we head through December and towards the holidays, it is important to be aware that this can be a very exciting time of year, but for some it is also a difficult time of year.

REMEMBER:

- eat well
- get good sleep
- don't over schedule
- stay connected to family and friends
- keep daily routines going
- avoid over-use of technology
- get outside and enjoy the crisp, fresh air

HOLIDAY "CONNECTING & REFLECTING" IDEAS:

23 Days of Giving

Every day in December have everyone put something that they don't use or need into a basket. Later in the month you can go as a family and donate to a shelter or community center

Reflection Wall

Have a wall in the house where everyone can add sticky notes of what they are grateful about from the year. Focus on lessons learned, new skills and strategies used throughout the year

Rose, Bud, Thorn

Have everyone identify one or two things that they feel were successes from the year (rose), something that was a struggle (thorn) and what they did to overcome the struggle, and something they are looking forward to in the new year (bud).

Signs to look for that someone is struggling *Sometimes it's hard to tell that someone is suffering. Here are some signs that someone is struggling.*

- not coming to school or work
- not engaging with friends or family
- not participating in activities that they used to enjoy
- withdrawing
- feeling hopeless
- increase use of drugs or alcohol
- changes in behaviour
- anger/irritability

Getting help

If you, your child/youth or someone you know is struggling, it is important to know where to reach out for help.

Who would you talk to if you were distressed, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to make a list of at least 3 people or resources you would reach out to.

Who would your child/youth talk to if they were upset, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to sit down with your child/youth and ask them who they would talk to. Put the kidshelpphone and HERE 24/7 or DCAFS number in their phones (see below).

All children and youth need caring adults in their lives to talk to about their feelings. Parents/guardians can be some of those caring adults, but it is important for the children/youth to have other caring adults in their lives such as:

- Family members, friends of the family
- School staff (teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, child and youth counsellors, social workers, librarian, custodial staff)
- Coaches, instructors
- Spiritual or religious community
- Community members (police, family doctors, librarians, etc.)

Who you can call for mental health support:

- Here 24/7 (for crisis and support with mental health or addiction concerns in Guelph/Wellington) <http://here247.ca/> 1.844.437.3247
- Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) (for crisis and mental health supports for children/youth in Dufferin) <https://dcafs.on.ca/> 519 941 1530
- Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/> 1 800 668 6868
- Your family physician or family health team

Have a mentally healthy holiday season!

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