

Things you can do for yourself

We all need to take care of our own mental wellness just like we take care of our physical wellness. Sometimes we need self-help tools, friendly supports or professional guidance.

Mental health includes emotional, psychological and social well-being and can influence:

- How you feel about yourself, the people around you and your outlook on the community and the world.
- Your ability to be physically active, to solve problems and to cope with big and small changes and challenges.
- Your ability to have healthy relationships with others and most importantly with yourself.
- Your ability to feel motivated, to be resilient, to complete tasks and reach your goals.

Learning to take care of yourself takes time, courage and a sense of self-worth. There are a variety of resources available online to get you started. Here are just a few suggestions.

Information and resources for youth aged 12 to 25

www.teenmentalhealth.org www.mindyourmind.ca
www.iwk.nshealth.ca/mental-health/
<https://strongestfamilies.com/our-programs/>

Information and resources for adults

www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-modules
www.cmha.ca www.ccsa.ca www.camh.ca
<https://www.mentalhealthns.ca/find-support>

Learn more about the Mental Health Continuum and where you are: <http://www.bcehs.ca/health-info/support-for-bcehs-family-members/critical-incident-stress/assessments>

Try some of these tips to improve your overall wellness;

- Take 10 minutes each day to pause and reflect
- Find a buddy who also wants to improve their wellness
- Find ways to relax (take a bath, go for a walk, read)
- Eat healthy food and practice good sleep habits
- Keep active (join online groups, exercise, get outdoors)
- Keep a journal about your emotions/interactions
- Set boundaries with others
- Make time to play, walk, be connected & listen to music

Things you can do in your community

Connected people are happier, enjoy better health, use fewer health services, are more resilient and live longer.²

Even in these changing times we are fortunate to live in communities that create opportunities to connect. Consider some of these options to connect in your community.

Be active & get outside

- Go for a walk alone or with a friend or pet on a trail, through the woods, on a secondary road or on the beach.
- Consider starting or joining a walking group.
- Attend a local fitness or yoga class or participate from home by watching a video or online class.
- Join a sports league (bowling, darts, baseball, soccer).
- Get outdoors, do yard work, plant a garden or play with your kids and/or pets.

Connect

- Reach out and connect with others, make a phone call, send an email, or write a letter to someone.
- Use your cell phone or device with a video camera to connect with others visually and verbally.
- Attend a local event by yourself or invite friends along.
- Hang out where other people are such as the local coffee shop, library, church, park or farmer's market.
- Sign up to learn a new skill in your community. Learn to cook, read, garden, make crafts, create art and more.
- Invite someone to have a virtual dinner or lunch with you and decide on a healthy menu together.
- Start or join a book club online to connect with others.
- Organize a group of friends to get together. Host a BBQ, potluck, games night, neighbourhood walk.

Lend your time and/or skills

- Talk to your local school, hospital, library, nursing home, church, lions club, business group and others to find out about volunteer opportunities and how you can support their work in the community.

² (MOH-LTC, 2017)

Community resources that can help

Finding Community & Social Services - Dial 211

Free information and referral service to more than 3,000 community and social services across NS. www.ns.211.ca

Kids Help Phone - Provides free 24 hour, 7 days a week phone counseling and information for youth under 20. www.kidshelpphone.ca **1-800-668-6868**

Good2Talk - support services for post-secondary students. Call **1-833-292-3698** or Text **GOOD2TALKNS** to **686868**

IWK Mental Health & Addictions - Provides navigation to mental health and addictions services for youth up to age 19. Call the central intake line at **1-855-955-1122**

Nova Scotia Health Authority - Find out what mental health services are available in NS. www.nshealth.ca/services

Health Information & Advice - Dial 811

Talk to a registered nurse (24/7) for health advice and general information. <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Doctors/Nurse Practitioners – Discuss your mental health with your primary care provider for advice and referral.

Community Mental Health and Addictions Clinic- Serves those (19 yrs & up) diagnosed with, or suspected to have, a moderate to severe mental disorder and/or substance use disorder. Call the Central Intake line at **1-855-922-1122**

Health Care Social Worker - Assists individuals coping with life changes and stress from trauma, illness, or disability. **1-902-885-3627, 1-902-384-4107 or 1-902-889-4103.**

Healthy Minds Cooperative - Peer-based services to those living with mental illness. www.healthyminds.ca/services
Call **1-902-404-3504 ext 201**

Eastern Shore Mental Health – Local peer support group offering online support and resources. Message via Facebook **@Eastern Shore Mental Health**

Private Services - If you have insurance or the ability to pay you can get access to private services. For a list go to <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/therapists/nova-scotia>

Things you can do to help others

You may or may not know when someone needs help. You may not feel prepared to support someone else's mental wellness. Most times a person is just looking for someone to listen. They don't need you to provide advice or solutions they just need to talk and to have someone really listen.

You can help others by:

- Asking people how they are feeling
- Be prepared to listen without judgement
- Be an active listener (no distractions, no time restrictions, no interrupting)
- Acknowledge how the person is feeling
- Empathize with the person
- Not comparing their feelings or situation to others
- You don't need to solve or even fully understand what they are experiencing, just listen.

"I can see how upset you're feeling right now. I can only imagine how you must feel."

- Offer to help seek supports & services in the community
- Offer to be available if they need to talk more
- Offer to check in with them to see how they are doing
- Reach out to the Mental Health Crisis line if you need assistance when helping others
- If immediate help is required call 9-1-1

It is important to know your limits, to seek help from others when needed and to take care of your own mental wellness.

Ways to support your friends and family members:

- Encourage healthy eating, getting enough sleep, being physically active, being social and connected.
- Support them when needed and find ways together to manage stress and situations.
- Be encouraging, respectful and accepting.
- Have fun together and remember to laugh.

The act of asking and listening can be the difference in someone's day.

When you need emergency help

911 Emergency

Call **911** if you feel you may be of harm to yourself or others and you need help right away.

Mobile Mental Health Crisis Team

Call **1-888-429-8167** (24 hrs/7 days week) for phone intervention and short term crisis management for children, youth and adults experiencing a mental health crisis.

IWK Emergency

5850/5980 University Avenue, Halifax

Proceed to IWK Emergency when a youth is in immediate danger to him/herself due to compromised thinking and/or judgment. A Crisis Team will provide an assessment and determine their mental health care needs.

Local Emergency Departments

- Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital, 22637 Hwy #7, Sheet Harbour (Open 24/7)
- Twin Oaks Memorial Hospital, 7704 Hwy # 7, Musquodoboit Harbour (Open 24/7)
- Musquodoboit Valley Memorial Hospital, 492 Archibald Brook Rd, Middle Musquodoboit (Open 8 am to 8 pm)

Other Emergency Departments

- Dartmouth General, 325 Pleasant Street, Dartmouth (24/7)
- Halifax Infirmary, 1796 Summer Street, Halifax (24/7)

Adult Protection

Call **1-800-225-7225** if you have concerns about a person (over 16) whose safety is at risk (neglect, abuse, poor living conditions) and who lacks the capacity to make proper decisions for themselves.

Child Protection

If you are under 16 and facing physical, mental, or sexual abuse you can access protection by calling **1-902-424-5800**

NS Take Home Naloxone (THN) Program

Opioid overdose prevention, naloxone administration training and free take home naloxone kits are available at local pharmacies. www.nsnaloxone.com

MENTAL WELLNESS IS IMPORTANT FOR EVERYONE

As communities and as individuals we can take actions to improve everyone's mental wellness. Actions matter.

Taking care of
yourself

Connecting to
community

Accessing
community
resources

Supporting
others

Getting emergency help

Everyone can benefit from learning how to enhance and protect their own mental health.