



Family Newsletter: Mental Health and Well-being for Learning



September 2024

Mental health is important to well-being, growth, and development. It involves how we think, act, and connect with the world around us.

The Saskatchewan Prevention Institute identifies the following skills needed to foster early childhood mental health:

- Forming secure attachments
- Developing a sense of curiosity
- Exploring their environment
- Making sense of and being able to control their emotions
- Controlling their impulses
- Understanding other people's emotions, facial expression, and body language
- Developing social skills
- Learning to communicate with others
- Feeling safe in their homes
- Coping with changes and new environments
- Understanding and accepting differences among people
- Developing resilience (skills to cope with change and stress)



The Institute explains the complexities of brain development during youth and early adulthood. This development directly impacts mental health:

- A critical period of brain development occurs in adolescence and early adulthood as the brain works to become more integrated. The brain development continues until age 25.
- During this time, neural connections in the cortex are being further specialized and shaped. What adolescents focus on and what they spend time doing will directly stimulate brain growth and development.
- Adolescence can be referred to as a “use it or lose it” time of brain development.
- During this time of life, learning to navigate more complex relationships, solve problems, safely experiment, and safely take risks are important for healthy brain development.



More info: [Parents - Mental Health Literacy](#)

The Essential 8

Mental Health and Well-being for Learning: The Essential 8 (left) highlights the eight areas identified by Prairie Spirit as being foundational for mental health and well-being for learning.

These eight priority areas are the focus for Prairie Spirit staff in supporting students in safe, caring and healthy schools.

We're sharing this information with families so we can work together to support the mental health and well-being of all students.

Please see the following page for highlights of two of the Essential 8 areas for families to consider this fall:

- **Food Literacy**
- **Student, Parent and Community Engagement**





Food Literacy

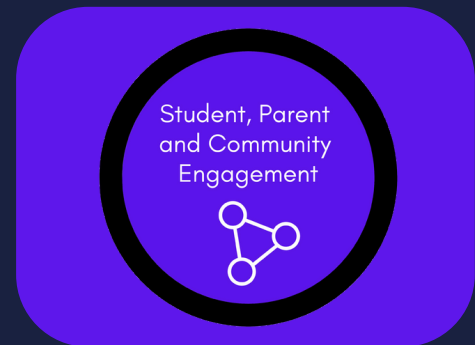
Back to school brings the opportunity to reflect on the impact nutrition has on mental health and well-being for learning. The Saskatchewan Health Authority provides ideas and resources on their [Nutrition Bites](#) website.

[The Caring for Kids website](#) explains that when children and youth have healthy eating habits, it can boost their mood, concentration and maintain energy levels. Additionally, children and youth can better manage emotions, stress, and improve sleep habits.

Student, Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and community engagement is an essential component to student well-being and achievement. When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.

[Prairie Spirit School Community Councils](#) are an excellent example of family and school community engagement.



PRAIRIE SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION

OUR VISION

Learners for Life

OUR MISSION

Inspiring a lifelong love of learning