

Mental Health and Well-being for Learning

Prairie Spirit's *Mental Health and Well-being for Learning* family newsletter offers practical tips and helpful resources to help families support student well-being at home and school.



Mental health matters at every age and stage. World Mental Health Day (October 10) is a reminder that every person's experience matters and that being heard, understood, and connected can support mental well-being.

This month, we are exploring how families can support mental well-being as children grow—from feeling safe and heard, to understanding emotions, building belonging and connection, and developing voice and independence. Small moments of listening, connection, and support can make a meaningful difference.

Pre-k to Grade 2:

Feeling safe, heard, and connected

For young children, mental health starts with feeling safe, secure, loved, and understood. This year's World Mental Health Day reminds us that people's experiences matter and that being heard can support mental well-being. For young children, being heard can start with a caring adult who notices, listens, and responds.

What can adults do?

- **Name feelings** - Help your child put words to emotions like sad, mad, worried, or excited.
- **Listen and respond** - Let your child know their feelings matter. You don't always need to fix the problem.
- **Co-regulate** - When emotions are big, offer your calm presence, a deep breath, movement, a quiet space, or a comforting hug.
- **Keep routines predictable** - Consistent routines around sleep, meals, and mornings can help children feel safe and secure.

A simple reminder: Listen. Notice. Connect. Help them feel safe.



Grades 3 - 5:

Understanding emotions and feeling heard

As children grow, their feelings and worries can become more complex. World Mental Health Day reminds us that every experience matters and that being heard supports mental well-being.

For children, this starts with trusted adults who listen, take their feelings seriously, and help them make sense of what they are experiencing.

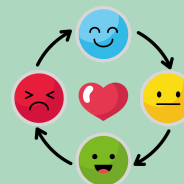
As children grow, they may worry about academic expectations, friendships, fitting in, or trying new experiences.

Learning to manage worries helps children develop resilience, confidence, and healthy coping skills that support both learning and well-being.

What can adults do?

- **Make time to listen** - Create regular moments to talk about what is happening in your child's world—without rushing to solve the problem.
- **Validate feelings** - Instead of "You'll be fine," try: "I can see this feels really hard. Tell me more."
- **Help name and understand emotions** - Give children words for what they are feeling and help them notice what their body may be telling them.
- **Build a coping toolkit** - Help your child discover what helps them feel better—drawing, music, movement, reading, being outside, or talking with someone they trust.
- **Protect their mental space** - Be mindful of distressing news and digital content. Help create time to disconnect, recharge, and simply be a kid.

A simple reminder: Listen. Validate. Understand. Help them cope.

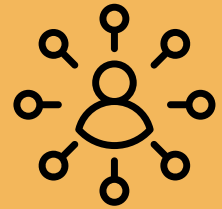


Grades 6 – 8:

Belonging, Emotional Well-Being, and Connection

The middle years bring many changes. Friendships shift, emotions can feel intense, and young people are exploring who they are and where they belong.

This year's World Mental Health Day theme, “Lived experiences heard: real voices, real change,” reminds us that young people's experiences matter. Feeling heard, understood, and connected can support mental well-being.



What can adults do?

- **Make space for big feelings** - Let your child know that strong emotions are a normal part of growing and that they don't have to hide difficult feelings.
- **Listen to their experience** - Try to understand things from their perspective. You don't have to agree to let them know their experience matters.
- **Strengthen belonging** - Look for opportunities to connect with family, friends, school, teams, activities, and community. Feeling known and accepted matters.
- **Help them make sense of things** - If your child is struggling, be curious rather than rushing to solve it. Try: “What do you think is making this feel hard?”
- **Be a steady presence** - As young people become more independent, they still need trusted adults. Let them know you're there—even when they aren't ready to talk.

A simple reminder: Listen. Connect. Make space for their experience.

Grades 9 – 12:

Listening, connection, and support

As young people navigate school, relationships, work, identity, and decisions about the future, they may experience stress, uncertainty, and pressure.

This year's World Mental Health Day theme, “Lived experiences heard: real voices, real change,” reminds us that young people's experiences matter. Listening, respecting their perspective, and involving them in decisions about support can strengthen mental well-being.



What can adults do?

- **Listen before solving** - Give your teen space to share without immediately offering advice. Try: “What would be helpful right now?”
- **Make mental health conversations normal** - Talk about mental health as part of overall health. Let your teen know that reaching out for support is a healthy choice.
- **Stay curious** - Their experience may be different from what you expect. Ask questions and listen without assuming you already know what they need.
- **Support their voice and choices** - As teens become more independent, involve them in decisions about the people, strategies, and supports that may help.
- **Connect to support** - Encourage your teen to connect with a trusted adult, counsellor, doctor, mentor, or other support when they need it. They don't have to navigate difficult experiences alone.

A simple reminder: Listen. Respect their experience. Support their voice. Connect.

Mental Health Supports

Rapid Access Counselling (RAC)

Family Service Saskatchewan's [Rapid Access Counselling Program](#) is delivered through a partnership of member agencies in communities across Saskatchewan. Counselling sessions are available to children, youth, adults, and families in Saskatchewan. Virtual counselling is available to support families. For more information and to book an appointment: www.counsellingconnectsk.ca

Kids Help Phone (KHP)

[Kids Help Phone](#) (KHP) is always here for young people in Saskatchewan and across Canada – any day, any time, day or night. KHP's e-mental health services are free, multilingual and confidential. KHP offers support without obstacles, help with any hardship and support in any moment of need.

If you know a young person who is struggling with a problem, big or small, you can encourage them to contact KHP for support - by calling 1-800-668-6868, texting 686868 or going to: kidshelpphone.ca

Sask Ag Matters

[Sask Ag Matters](#) offers free mental health support services for Saskatchewan agriculture producers. This program offers free mental health support services for Saskatchewan agriculture producers, their family members and agricultural workers.

Each individual is financially covered for six hours of therapy per year with trained and registered mental health professionals who have a background in farm culture.