



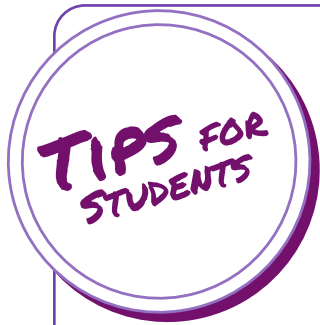
## Well-Being and Mental Health Tips and Resources for Students, Families, Educators, and Others

### Overall Priorities

Supporting the positive well-being and mental health of students, staff, and families is a key priority for Manitoba Education and for its many educational partners throughout the province. This support has been needed this year more than ever, as we all deal with the many stresses and uncertainties that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

This document provides three useful well-being and mental health tip sheets—one for students, one for parents/guardians, and one for teachers—to help Manitobans as they navigate this difficult time.

Another key priority is to provide enhanced consistency in resources shared between schools and families. This document, therefore, also includes a list of mental health resources for both students and adults that may be used, along with the divisional guidance counselling and/or clinical services that are available.



"You are braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."  
— Christopher Robin

As you navigate through all the messages about new COVID-19 restrictions and deal with all the changes to your learning in this new reality, you may be concerned about how these events will affect you and your education. This tip sheet was developed to help you in this time of change, uncertainty, and information overload, and to assure you that you will be supported and cared for throughout.

## Safety is Your Key Priority

It is very important that you establish and maintain a sense of safety and connectedness with the school community and with all the people in your life, including your family, teachers, and peers. The following are some tips on how to do this:

1. **Look at your school and school division website** for information about specific topics, issues, and updated news and events.
2. **Build a positive relationship with your teachers and school team.**
  - Connect with your teachers by following updates on your class online platform and/or through the communication strategy you establish with your teachers. This may be by text, email, notes, agenda books, or phone calls.
  - Advocate for a communication system that works for you. Much of the information will be available online. If you do not have access to the Internet, please state the communication tool that will work best for you.
3. **Ask for help.**
  - Ask for help with your academics.
  - Ask for help with your worries, anxieties, and/or social/peer concerns.
  - Ask for help as soon as you realize you need it. This is key.

### **Your teachers, school team, and parents can help.**

If you have any questions or concerns, you need to state them clearly to your teachers as soon as they arise so they can help you. Your school team has expertise and resources to support you and your learning.

Together with your parents/guardians and the teaching team, try creating a plan to limit anxieties, reduce stress, and meet your needs.

### **Your family doctor can help.**

If you have questions or concerns, or if you require information about potential mental health and stress-related responses or worries that seem bigger than you can manage, please contact your doctor. Your healthcare provider is the person in the best position to assist you in finding the right resources to meet your needs.

If you don't have a family doctor, there is a Family Doctor Finder program to help you find one: [www.gov.mb.ca/health/familydoctorfinder/](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/familydoctorfinder/). Students aged 15 and younger need their parents/guardians to use it, but if you are 16 or older you can access this on your own.

## **Resources You May Find Helpful**

Your school may have resources, supports, and programs to support your well-being and mental health. If you are looking for more information, try using the resources from your school as a first step.

Below is a list of useful resources. Even if your school is not currently using one of these programs, the online resources may be helpful to you.

### **Kids Help Phone (KHP) 24/7 support**

Call a counsellor: 1-800-668-6868

Text CONNECT to 686868

Live chat [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

### **Sources of Strength**

This site is a mental health promotion and suicide prevention resource.

[www.sourcesofstrength.org](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org)

### **Stress Hacks**

This website has Manitoba resources for youth, families, and educators, and it provides information on what stress is and how to manage it.

[www.stresshacks.ca](http://www.stresshacks.ca)

### **Jack.org**

This Canadian-based, youth-driven site connected to [www.teenmentalhealth.org](http://www.teenmentalhealth.org) provides resources that have been specifically designed for youth.

<https://jack.org/>

### **Project 11**

This is a classroom program that teaches skills like focusing the mind, increasing self-awareness of feelings and strengths, and building positive relationships. The Project 11 website has resources to support your well-being and mental health.

[www.projecteleven.ca/](http://www.projecteleven.ca/)

### **Thrival Kits**

This Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) website has videos to further support skills for well-being and mental health.

<https://mbwpg.cmha.ca/>

**Remember to ASK FOR HELP when you need it. Reaching out is a sign of courage and strength. Your parents, teachers, peers, and community have the resources to help you achieve your goals.**



“When little people are overwhelmed by big emotion, it’s our job to share our calm, not join their chaos. — L.R. Knost

## Key Priorities for Parents and Caregivers

- Maintain the positive quality of your relationship with your child.
  - A key to this is in your own ability to stay calm and regulated and to utilize coping strategies when needed.
- Focus on a relationship and environment that nurtures security, safety, and trust.

## Key Outcome

*The effective long-term contribution to your child’s development of well-being, mental health, and resiliency—that is, the ability to cope through challenging times*

As you navigate through all the messages about new COVID-19 restrictions and try to support your child’s learning in this new reality, you may be concerned about how these events will affect your family. The following tip sheet was developed to help you through this time of change, uncertainty, and information overload, and to assure you that your child will be supported and cared for throughout.

1. **Refer to your child’s school website** for specific information related to their needs within the context of current and updated planning, practices, and procedures that will be changing as the school year unfolds.

Connect with your child’s teachers by following updates on their online platforms and/or with whatever communication strategy that has been established.

2. **Create a positive relationship with your child’s teachers/school team.**

- Advocate for a system of communication that works for you—much of the information will be available online. If you do not have Internet access, please state the communication tool that will work best.
- If you have any questions or concerns, or require information related to you or your child at school, your school connection is key. It is important to utilize the expertise and resources within your own school to help limit anxiety related to the information overload you may be receiving during this time.

- If you have additional concerns about your child, you may be able to access the support of a school counsellor in some schools. Your child's teacher would be able to provide you with information about how to access that support.
- Most school divisions in Manitoba offer access to clinical psychologists and social workers who may offer support services for your child or family. Ask your child's teacher, school counsellor, resource teacher, or principal how you can gain access to these supports.
- If you continue to have questions or concerns or if you are seeking information about potential mental health and stress-related responses or worries, please contact your or your child's primary healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider is the person who is in the best position to assist you in finding the right resources to meet your child's needs.

### 3. Search out information and resources in response to your questions.

## Resources and Supports You May Find Helpful

### ***Welcoming Our Students Back: What Parents Need to Know***

This site provides updated information about plans for education during the pandemic, resources for parents/guardians, and frequently asked questions.

[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html)

### ***What to Expect When Welcomed Back to School***

This site provides an overview of the specific safety procedures and mitigation measures being implemented in Manitoba schools.

[https://manitoba.ca/asset\\_library/en/covid/k12-parent-fact-sheet.pdf](https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/k12-parent-fact-sheet.pdf)

### ***Manitoba Parent Zone***

This is a guide developed by Healthy Child Manitoba for parents of pre-schoolers and Kindergarteners who are starting school.

[www.manitobaparentzone.ca/tips-news/pdf/getting-ready-school.pdf](http://www.manitobaparentzone.ca/tips-news/pdf/getting-ready-school.pdf)

### **UNICEF**

This resource is a guide for supporting your child's mental health as they return to school during COVID-19.

[www.unicef.org/coronavirus/supporting-your-childs-mental-health-during-covid-19-school-return](http://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/supporting-your-childs-mental-health-during-covid-19-school-return)

### **World Health Organization (WHO)**

*COVID-19 Parenting: Talking about COVID-19*

This WHO resource offers tips to parents about how to talk with children about COVID-19.

[www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-6-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=232558c1\\_8](http://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/healthy-parenting/english-tip-6-covid-19-parenting.pdf?sfvrsn=232558c1_8)

### ***Healthy at Home***

This WHO resource provides mental health tips for those working from home.

[www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/healthyathome/healthyathome---mental-health](http://www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/healthyathome/healthyathome---mental-health)

### **Kids Help Phone (KHP)**

This resource offers tips to support youth as they go back to school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/programs-resources/resources-caring-adults/3-tips-to-support-youth-with-back-to-school-during-covid-19/>

### **Healthychildren.org**

This American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) website offers a number of resources related to parenting during the pandemic.

[www.healthychildren.org/](http://www.healthychildren.org/)

### **The Strongest Families program**

The Strongest Families program provides evidence-based services to children and families seeking help for mental health and other issues affecting health and well-being.

It provides timely care to families by teaching skills through our unique distance coaching approach—supporting families over the phone and Internet in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. Programs are designed to support children and youth from 3 to 17 years of age. Referrals are made through the student services administrator in your school division or your regional health authority.

For more information about the program, go to <https://strongestfamilies.com/> or talk with your child's school team or your family physician.

### **Your Regional Health Authority**

Each of Manitoba's regional health authorities offers child and adolescent mental health supports.

- Northern Health Region  
<https://northernhealthregion.com/programs-and-services/mental-health/>
- Prairie Mountain Health  
[www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/mental-health](http://www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/mental-health)
- Southern Health  
[www.southernhealth.ca/en/finding-care/find-a-service/mental-health/](http://www.southernhealth.ca/en/finding-care/find-a-service/mental-health/)
- Southern Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Referral Form  
[www.southernhealth.ca/assets/Finding-Care/e40085c484/Referral-Form-Child-and-Adolescent.pdf](http://www.southernhealth.ca/assets/Finding-Care/e40085c484/Referral-Form-Child-and-Adolescent.pdf)
- Interlake-Eastern RHA  
[www.ierha.ca/default.aspx?cid=13362&lang=1](http://www.ierha.ca/default.aspx?cid=13362&lang=1)
- Winnipeg RHA – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centralized Intake  
204-958-9660 or <https://matc.ca/services/centralized-intake/>

## Balancing Remote Learning and Self-Isolation Within Your Family/Household

You may find your family required to go into remote learning/self-isolation at any time and with very little notice. You may be thinking about negotiating this balancing act and wondering about how to prioritize your and your children's needs while meeting the expectations of both remote learning and self-isolation.

### TIP

- Some people find it helpful to imagine what this scenario would look like in the context of their family and household. This helps to reduce feeling overwhelmed should you receive notice that your child and household will need to implement remote learning and self-isolate.
  - If you are working outside of the home, it might be helpful to remind your immediate supervisor that you are a parent/caregiver of school-aged children so you can have a plan in place should the scenario arise.
- It is very important to know that your school and school division are working together with Public Health to support this situation.
- Should the scenario arise, you will receive the following:
  - **School Support**  
Your school will notify you, keep you up to date, and provide support for remote learning needs.
  - **Public Health Support**  
Manitoba Public Health will be available to support self-isolation needs in the context of your family and household.
- You will receive timely information from both your school and Public Health to support and guide you through this.
- Utilize these services to ask questions and seek guidance and support to meet your needs.
- Remember, through a time of self-isolation and/or remote learning, any decision you make to help maintain your well-being and keep your children feeling safe and secure will be the right one for your household. Know that your child's teacher and school team will understand that this scenario will be different for every household. They are there to support learning within your family's context and needs.



"An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly."  
— unknown

## Key Priorities for Teachers

Establish a sense of safety, connectedness, empowerment, choice, and trust.

### Suggestions for educators to support **your own** mental health and well-being

- Create a routine that includes taking care of your physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health.
  - Physical: Eat well; get fresh air, movement, and exercise; practise good sleep habits.
  - Mental/emotional: Practise self-kindness and remember that it is best to take care of yourself before you try to take care of anyone else.
  - Social: Stay connected with friends, family, and colleagues.
  - Spiritual: Maintain or create a connection to mindfulness, meditation, nature, or organized religious practices.
- Take time to check in with yourself to gain insight into where you may be struggling. Once you identify the issues, create a plan to address the issues you can control and to work on letting go of the ones you cannot.
- Remember that, as adults, our behaviour is the best predictor of how our students and children will manage; they are watching and listening to us. When we take care of ourselves, we're showing them how they can take care of themselves too.
- Practise self-compassion. Remember to be patient and forgiving with yourself. Teachers are human too, and it is natural to struggle at times.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society offers support to all members:

- The Lifespeak Wellness Platform offers supportive and preventative ideas.  
[www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2019/01/07/lifespeak-wellness-platform/](http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2019/01/07/lifespeak-wellness-platform/)
- The Educator Assistance Program offers counselling sessions with professional counsellors.  
[www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2016/05/24/educator-assistance-program/](http://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2016/05/24/educator-assistance-program/)



## Suggestions for educators to support **students'** mental health and well-being

### **Establishing a routine and maintaining clear communication are crucial.**

Maintaining and communicating predictable routines is very important. Doing so helps students to maintain a sense of psychological safety—a sense that they can manage stress or connect with someone who can help them manage stress.

When there are changes in routine, take time to explain the changes. It reduces student stress and increases confidence that the adults can take care of them.

Encourage students to lead the way in sharing what they understand and do not understand about the current situation. Approach their experiences with curiosity. Aim to clarify misinformation and connect students with other important adults as necessary.

### **Relationships and well-being can take priority over assignments and behavioral compliance.**

Alternative: Spend time intentionally focused on establishing a sense of security and belonging between yourself and your students and among students. Remember, you must make sure students' needs are met (as under Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs) before they can achieve their learning potential.

Students will fare best if they know their teachers care about their well-being just as much as their academics and behaviour. Providing structure and expectations will help contribute to that sense of security and to student success.

### **Students who may be at additional risk**

While not all families have a history of exposure to trauma, children with identified histories of trauma may be especially vulnerable to the impact of significant changes in schedule, routine, and expectations that come with social distancing, cancelled courses, remote learning, and reliance on caregivers for academics. Students who may be at additional risk include those

- who live with anxiety
- who live with depression or suicidal ideation
- who live with learning and attention disorders
- whose families may have lost jobs or income
- who have loved ones particularly vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus
- who have a caregiver who is a healthcare worker or in another occupation where they are exposed to the virus or are being asked to respond in an intense way
- who may be less supervised because of their caregivers' work

## Helpful Resources

In addition to your school division's guidance counselling and/or clinical services (i.e., social work, psychology, etc.), some other helpful online resources include the following:

### **Manitoba Professional Learning Environment**

Join any of these groups that offer ideas, resources, and supports:

- Supporting Student Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Mental Health and Well-Being
- Guidance and Counselling

[www.mapleforem.ca](http://www.mapleforem.ca)

### **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)**

*Trauma-Informed School Strategies during COVID-19*

This document discusses how, in the time of COVID-19, schools can adapt or transform their practices by using a trauma-informed approach to help children feel safe, supported, and ready to learn. In this move to virtual learning, "schools can build resilience and coping skills, provide a much needed sense of safety and routine, and connect with families who might otherwise be isolated and overwhelmed."

[www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/resource-guide/trauma\\_informed\\_school\\_strategies\\_during\\_covid-19.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/resource-guide/trauma_informed_school_strategies_during_covid-19.pdf)

*Trauma Facts for Educators*

This NCTSN resource offers facts such as "one in four children has experienced some form of trauma," and provides tips to educators to help students who have been traumatized.

[www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//trauma\\_facts\\_for\\_educators.pdf](http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//trauma_facts_for_educators.pdf)

*The Resilience of Youth: The Impact of Developmental Trauma, Covid-19, and Beyond*

This resource examines four young adults who discuss their experiences and thoughts on resilience, and reflect on their goals, challenges, and coping styles. The participants' reflections give us insight into resilience and how it can affect developmental trauma.

[www.nctsn.org/resources/the-resilience-of-youth-the-impact-of-developmental-trauma-COVID-19-and-beyond](http://www.nctsn.org/resources/the-resilience-of-youth-the-impact-of-developmental-trauma-COVID-19-and-beyond)

### **Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**

"Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies" by Jessica Minahan

*Educational Leadership*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (October 2019)

"When it comes to student trauma, there is much that is beyond educators' power, but there is also a great deal they can do to build a supportive and sensitive classroom environment. Here, author Jessica Minahan shares eight practical strategies teachers can use to help these students feel safe and ready to learn."

[https://ascd.org/publications/educational\\_leadership//oct19/vol77/num02/Trauma-Informed\\_Teaching\\_Strategies.aspx](https://ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership//oct19/vol77/num02/Trauma-Informed_Teaching_Strategies.aspx)

*"We are all in this together."*

## Resources for Students and Adults

### **AbilitiCBT**

This site provides information on mental health resources, including *AbilitiCBT*, an online cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) program available to Manitobans aged 16 and over who are struggling with anxiety related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/bewell/>

### **Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)**

The MHCC offers a variety of resources, tools, and training programs aimed at increasing mental health literacy and improving the mental health and well-being of all people living in Canada, including *Resource Hub: Mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

### **Resiliency Building**

This Canadian resource for parents and educators promotes positivity and resiliency skills to "bounce back" and cope with adversity. It also includes a childhood book list that younger students may find interesting.

[www.reachinginreachingout.com](http://www.reachinginreachingout.com)

### **Canadian Mental Health Association Service Navigation Hub**

Specialists are available to help Manitobans find the best type of care or service to match their needs.

<https://mbwpg.cmha.ca/cmha-service-navigation-hub/>

Contact: 204-775-6442

### **Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba**

The Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba is a self-help organization that provides education, advocacy, and support to those living with a mood disorder or other mental health illness. It provides a peer support line, a variety of free resources on its website, and several online support groups that can be accessed by filling out the online registration form at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WPQLZSZ](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WPQLZSZ).

[www.mooddordersmanitoba.ca](http://www.mooddordersmanitoba.ca)

Peer Support Line: 204-786-0987

### **Anxiety Canada**

Anxiety Canada offers free online, evidence-based self-help resources to help Canadians manage anxiety using scientifically proven strategies.

[www.anxietycanada.com/](http://www.anxietycanada.com/)

### **Rainbow Resource Centre**

The Rainbow Resource Centre offers counselling, education, and programming support to the 2SLGBTQ+ community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is continuing to offer all support services by phone and through platforms such as *Instagram*, *Facebook*, and *Zoom*.

<https://rainbowresourcecentre.org>

### **Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba (ADAM) Support Line**

ADAM has established an anxiety support line at 204-925-0040 for anyone seeking support during this challenging time. The line is checked regularly between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. from Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends. People are asked to leave their name, phone number, or email address and an ADAM representative will get in touch with them soon.

[www.adam.mb.ca/programs/peer-support](http://www.adam.mb.ca/programs/peer-support)

### **CRISIS Resources**

#### **Klinic Crisis Line**

Klinic operates a variety of crisis phone lines and online support services, providing free and confidential counselling, support, and referrals for people who are suicidal, in crisis, or struggling to cope.

<http://klinik.mb.ca/crisis-support/>

24/7 Crisis Line: 204-786-8686

Toll-free: 1-888-322-3019

#### **Youth Mobile Crisis**

Contact: 204-949-4777

Toll-free: 1-888-383-2776

#### **Manitoba's suicide prevention and support line**

is open and available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Contact: 1-877-435-7170

#### **Shared Health Manitoba Mental Health and Addictions**

"The service is committed to providing a responsive and inclusive system aimed to restore, promote and maintain mental health and well-being as well as provide addiction services and support healthy behaviours."

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/services/mental-health/>

### **For additional information**

#### *Welcoming Our Students Back: Restoring Safe Schools*

This document from August 2020 provides provincial guidance on the plan for reopening schools during the pandemic.

[https://manitoba.ca/asset\\_library/en/covid/k-12-reopeningplan-guidance.pdf](https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/covid/k-12-reopeningplan-guidance.pdf)

#### *Guidance for Mask Use in Schools*

This resource provides guidance on the requirements for mask use in schools and on buses, including information on who should and should not wear a mask.

[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/mask_guidance.pdf)

#### *COVID-19 Education Plan*

This site provides updated information about plans for education during the pandemic, resources for parents/guardians, and frequently asked questions.

[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/index.html)



### *School Division Re-opening Plans*

This site provides links to each school division's re-opening plan during the pandemic.

<https://manitoba.ca/covid19/restoring/school-divisions.html>

### *RESTARTMB Pandemic Response System*

This document provides "a clear and responsive overview of public health guidance on the current risk of COVID-19 and the specific measures being taken to reduce its spread. This system helps people understand the current level of risk and the public health guidance that must be followed."

[www.gov.mb.ca/asset\\_library/en/restartmb/pandemic\\_response\\_system.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/asset_library/en/restartmb/pandemic_response_system.pdf)

### *Resources Supporting Students with Special Needs*

This document provides tips, resources, suggestions, and important information for school teams who are supporting remote learning for students with special needs and students at risk.

[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/rsssn.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/rsssn.html)

### *Welcoming Our Students Back: Supporting Students with Special Needs and Students at Risk as They Return to School*

This document includes some of the key elements that need to be considered as student support teams facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs and students at risk during the pandemic.

[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/support\\_students\\_w\\_special\\_needs.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/docs/support_students_w_special_needs.pdf)