



CANADA



**HEALTHY
LIVING
INITIATIVE**

Mental Health

**Resources for 4-H leaders
to support the mental health
and well-being of members**

Introduction to the Healthy Living Initiative



What is the Healthy Living Initiative?

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative has been developed to support the health and well-being of rural youth across Canada. Resources are designed to equip volunteers and families with the knowledge to help recognize youth in distress and provide the access to support they need.

This initiative includes:

- Resources and activities for 4-H youth members, 4-H volunteer leaders, and families and youth new to 4-H.
- Webinars and workshops for volunteer leaders, who are critical mentors and role models in adult-youth partnerships.



What is healthy living?

Healthy living at its core focuses on taking care of the 'whole you'. It means making positive choices in your mental health, physical health, nutritional health, and overall well-being.

Why is healthy living important?

Healthy living awareness is important for everyone because it is a holistic approach to taking care of yourself. All aspects of yourself are interconnected and making a change in one area of your health will affect other areas of your health. For example, changes in our mental health can lead to changes in our body reactions.

Why is 4-H Canada developing this initiative?

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative is in response to the critical needs of youth in communities across Canada. Young people living in rural and remote communities are at a greater risk of experiencing issues related to their mental and physical well-being. They also lack the resources and services that might be available to those in more urban areas.

What will I find in this initiative?

The Healthy Living Initiative is presented in three programs, called focus areas, each centered on a different aspect of healthy living. These areas are:



What's included in the focus areas?

Mental health and physical health focus areas

- Tip sheets with important and useable information.
- Activity guides to assist leaders in using the resources.
- Webinars and workshops to assist leaders.

My Plate and the Planet

- Activity book with background information about the food we eat, with instructions for exciting hands-on activities that build upon learning.

How are these resources developed?

4-H Canada has teamed up with knowledgeable and youth-focused organizations to develop the resources and materials for each focus area of this initiative. All organizations have expertise in their area of focus to ensure the accuracy, relevancy and rigour of the information provided through this initiative.

Thank you to the strategic partners who have assisted in developing these resources.

How is this initiative made possible?

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative is made possible thanks to the generous support of these partners:



Each of these partners believes in the importance of healthy living in Canadian youth and adults, and has partnered with 4-H Canada to ensure they are receiving the support they need through the development of this initiative.

For more information on the Healthy Living Initiative, visit 4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Introduction to Mental Health



What is mental health?

Kids Help Phone defines mental health as a state of well-being when someone reaches their own potential, can cope with the everyday stresses of life, can focus on their own work and get it done, and is able to make a contribution to their community.

Mental health can be visualized as a continuum where some days are better than others. When someone experiences a challenge to their mental health, we use the term mental ill-health. Mental ill-health might include sadness, worry, and stress. Symptoms of mental ill-health may or may not be diagnosed by a professional as a mental disorder.

Mental disorders are diagnosed by a psychologist or doctor and typically mean someone has been experiencing symptoms of a certain severity over a period of time. For example, depression and anxiety are considered mental disorders.

There are many different treatment options for all mental disorders. It is important that you discuss them with your doctor or other health care professional, and encourage your 4-H members to seek help when needed.

Everyone will experience mental health and mental ill-health at some point in their life, although not everyone will have a mental disorder. Mental health and mental ill-health can range from positive to challenging.



Feelings of Mental Health

Focused	Motivated
Resilient	Excited

Feelings of Mental Ill-health

Sadness	Stressed
Loneliness	Overwhelmed

Why is it important?

We all experience ups and downs to our mental health. Just like with physical health, it is important to check in with yourself or with a professional from time to time, the same way you would see a doctor for a cough or a backache.

While mental health may not be an easy topic to talk about and can be a sensitive issue for some people, the stigma is decreasing as awareness of the importance of mental health to our overall well-being increases. The more you talk and learn about it, the easier the conversations around mental health will become.

4-H Canada's mental health resource

In this resource, you will find tip sheets for both yourself as a 4-H leader, and for your 4-H members. You will find that these tip sheets complement each other and share important information that connect to all aspects of healthy living!

Tip sheets for youth:

- Taking Care of Yourself
- Building your Support System
- Accessing Resources
- Supporting a Friend in Distress
- Understanding Bullying

Tip sheets for leaders:

- Demonstrating Self-Care
- Building a Support System
- Accessing Resources
- Supporting a 4-H Member in Distress
- Understanding Bullying

As a companion to the tip sheets for 4-H leaders you will also find an Activity Guide with tips on how you can incorporate mental health into your 4-H meetings and some activities to help start the conversation on mental health with your 4-H members.

To further assist you in using these resources, 4-H Canada's accompanying webinar presentation will introduce you to the Healthy Living Initiative, and provide you with ideas on how to use these tips sheets with your members.

This webinar and all the above resources are available at **4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving**.

Top three discussion topics at Kids Help Phone in 2017:

1. Mental/Emotional Health - Depression
2. Peer Relationships - Conflict
3. Suicide/Suicide-Related - Self Ideation/Attempt

4-H Canada's Healthy Living Initiative is made possible thanks to the generous support of these partners:



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Updated June 2021

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop these resources
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Demonstrating Self-Care

FOR LEADERS



One way you can support your 4-H members is by teaching them ways to care for themselves and role modelling self-care yourself. Members learn a lot by watching and doing, so if they see you practicing good self-care, there is a good chance they will do the same.

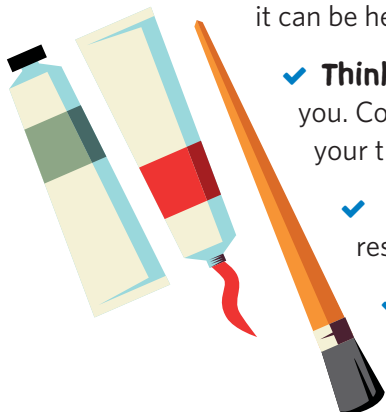
What is self-care?

Self-care is about taking care of your mental, emotional and physical health. Self-care looks different to everyone but by taking care of yourself, you are helping to boost your confidence, your sense of self and your overall well-being.

Tips for self-care

These tips for self care can be easily adapted into your life and into the lives of your members:

- ✓ **Be kind to yourself!** Show yourself some love and kindness by doing activities you enjoy and that make you feel good.
- ✓ **Challenge self-critical thoughts!** It's difficult to avoid self-critical thoughts completely but it can be helpful to add in a positive whenever you think of a negative.
- ✓ **Think ahead!** When you feel stressed or sad, have a list of coping strategies that work for you. Coping strategies such as journaling are things you can do to help lower stress, vent your thoughts, explore your feelings and increase the feeling of well-being.
- ✓ **Let it out!** Express yourself in a way that feels right to you! Make sure you are respectful and safe in what you say or do.
- ✓ **Get artistic!** Whether you draw, paint, or write, just get creative and allow your feelings to flow!
- ✓ **Exercise!** Go for a jog, walk, lift weights or do yoga. Get that blood pumping! Exercise is good for the body and mind.



- ✓ **Stay connected!** Surround yourself with people you trust and who love you for you. Reach out to them.
- ✓ **Do a digital detox!** Spend time away from screens. Use this time to read, get outside and enjoy nature.
- ✓ **Get support!** If you are struggling, talk to someone you trust, whether it is a friend, a family member or mental health professional. Don't hesitate to ask for help!

Self-esteem

Your self-esteem moves with you from youth to adulthood and is an important element of what makes you, you! It is how you value yourself and appreciate your self-worth. Healthy self-esteem allows you to be proud of what you do, your skills, accomplishments and who you are.

When you feel good about yourself, you're more likely to:

- ✓ Set goals and achieve them, in any area of your life – personal, academic and 4-H included
- ✓ Believe that you are capable of learning something new
- ✓ Try new things

As a 4-H leader, you have 4-H members looking up to you as a role model. Seeing healthy self-esteem in adults helps young people to model their own behaviour and create goals for their future. You can work together on building healthy self-esteem by being honest about your journey and offering tips on what has worked for you. Being open about your struggles and challenges can build trust if they want to open up to you.

Even as adults, you can continuously work on your self-esteem and watch it grow and develop. Your self-esteem can be shaped by many things such as your environment, how you feel about yourself, your expectations of yourself and your experiences.

Here are some tips to improve self-esteem or to share with your 4-H members:

- ✓ **Remind yourself** and others that they are more than their appearance
- ✓ **Identify your strengths and abilities** and work on a plan to build them. Once you have done this, you can help your members to do the same.
- ✓ **Take care of yourself.** That could mean eating healthy and being active. By practicing self-care yourself, your members may be inspired to do the same.
- ✓ **Think of a positive thought** for every self-critical thought. Practice with your members to do the same.
- ✓ **Set goals** and plan an approach to achieve them for yourself and for your members.
- ✓ **Build a support system** of trusted people with your members. Building their own support system might even start with you!

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Building your Support System

FOR LEADERS



It is important for everyone, including yourself as a 4-H leader, to have a support system in place, as we all experience challenges at some point in our life. It is important for you to be able to help your 4-H members build their support system, and it can start with you!

What is a support system?

A support system is a group of people you can turn to at any time and can:

- ✓ **Be there for you** when you need someone to talk or vent to
- ✓ **Help you deal with things** such as:
 - feelings or emotions – especially those you don't understand
 - difficult events in your life
 - strategies for coping with stress
- ✓ **Support you** and root for you in things that you do
- ✓ Can help you to **determine next steps**
- ✓ **Help you find professional help**, if you need more support



Who do teens talk to when they have an issue?

Kids Help Phone's *Teens Talk 2016* report identified the number one person teens talk to when they need support is a friend.

A support system can be one person or a group of people. It's a good idea for yourself and your 4-H members to identify a few people to turn to, whenever they're needed.

It's important that your support system is made up of people with whom you have a healthy relationship with, which means that you trust them, feel safe with them and they accept you for who you are.³

Building your support system

Your support system can be made up of:

- ✓ family
- ✓ friends
- ✓ community members
- ✓ spiritual leaders
- ✓ coworkers
- ✓ mental health professionals

Your 4-H members' support system can be made up of:

- ✓ Safe and trusted adults
 - immediate family (parents, siblings, etc.)
 - 4-H leaders
 - teachers or other school staff
 - spiritual leaders
 - other community members
- ✓ Friends
- ✓ 4-H members

Safe and trusted adult

When helping your members to build their support system, it is important to explain to them who a **safe and trusted adult** is. They are someone who is accountable, respects your boundaries and doesn't ask you to keep secrets from others.

A safe and trusted adult is someone who is:

- ✓ thoughtful
- ✓ trustworthy
- ✓ respectful
- ✓ helpful
- ✓ caring

For more information on support systems, visit KidsHelpPhone.ca.

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Accessing Resources

FOR LEADERS



Asking for help can be difficult for anyone at any age. As a trusted adult, you may have 4-H members reach out to you for support. Here is how you can help them get the proper support they need.

Kids Help Phone is available across Canada!

Living in a rural area can limit the amount of resources available. Kids Help Phone is available across Canada and is easily accessible to all youth in all communities.

The counsellors at Kids Help Phone are there for your 4-H members, whether they just need someone to listen or if they are in crisis. They are trained to respect youth's privacy, listen without judgment and work with them to come up with a plan, from preparing for a big test to questions on anxiety. Counsellors at Kids Help Phone can also help members find resources in their area.

4-H members can connect with Kids Help Phone counsellors or volunteer crisis responders in three different ways:



CALL

1-800-668-6868

24 hours a day, 7 days a week,
365 days a year



TEXT

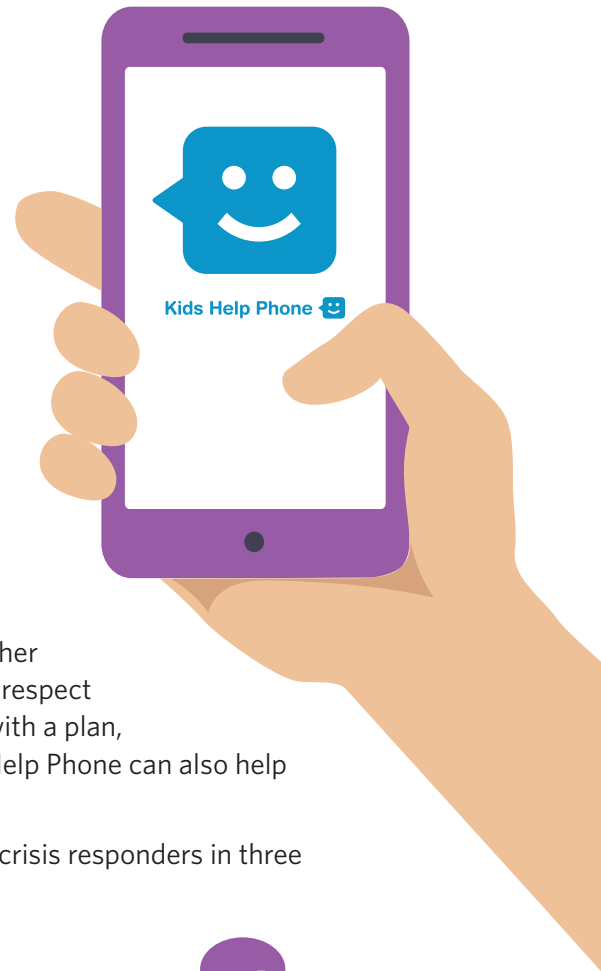
Text CONNECT
to **686868**



LIVE CHAT

KidsHelpPhone.ca

Download the free mobile app:
Always There



4-H members can also check out Resources Around Me

Kids Help Phone has a comprehensive list of resources by community and category, such as counselling services, housing support, and legal support.

apps.kidshelpphone.ca/resourcesaroundme/welcome.html



Resources in your province

Here is a list of some provincial resources available to support your 4-H members and their mental health. **This list is not exhaustive and you can find more resources through Resources Around Me at KidsHelpPhone.ca.**

British Columbia

Youth In BC

youthinbc.com
604-872-1811

Alberta

CASA - Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health

casaservices.org/resources-specific-
mental-health
780-400-2271

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan HealthLine 811

saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/
accessing-health-care-services/healthline
1-877-800-0002

Manitoba

Klinic Community Health: Manitoba Farm Rural & Northern Support Services

supportline.ca
1-866-367-3276

Ontario

Wellness and Emotional Support for Youth

wesforyouthonline.ca
519-507-3737

Quebec

Interligne

interligne.co
1-888-505-1010

New Brunswick

Chimo Helpline

chimohelpline.ca
1-800-667-5005

Nova Scotia

IWK Health Centre

iwk.nshealth.ca/mental-health/youth/
mental-health-and-addictions-emergency-or-crisis
1-888-429-8167

Prince Edward Island

Island Help Line

pei.cmha.ca
1-800-218-2885

Newfoundland and Labrador

Canadian Mental Health Association: Newfoundland and Labrador

cmhanl.ca
1-888-737-4668

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Supporting a 4-H Member in Distress

FOR LEADERS



As a 4-H leader, you are a role model and ally that 4-H members can trust and go to for support.

Young people face many challenges today. With social media and the access to technology 24 hours a day, bullying and peer pressure can be hard to avoid. Social media can also influence self-esteem and confidence as young people see image standards that are not always healthy.

This is a time where youth are faced with a lot of changes and unknowns while at the same time discovering themselves and finding their sense of identity.

One of the best things you can do with your members is to have honest and open conversations. By using this approach, you are showing your members compassion and understanding, especially when they come to you in distress.



Here is a list of ways you can help a 4-H member if they come to you in distress:

- ✓ **Listen!** Make an effort to really listen to your members without judging. Show that you understand and if you don't, ask for clarification.
- ✓ **Communicate!** Encourage your members to be open about the good and bad issues in their lives, and be open to different forms of communication.
- ✓ **Provide hope!** Offer words of positivity and encouragement that things will get better. It can be difficult to open up, so thank them for sharing with you.

- ✓ **Expand your mental health knowledge!** If you don't know a lot about mental health, emotional health and mental disorders, take some time to learn about it. Check out reliable online resources like KidsHelpPhone.ca or talk to a doctor or mental health professional, and share what you learn with your members.
- ✓ **Encourage your members to reach out to Kids Help Phone or another mental health professional!** Places like Kids Help Phone offer support from trained mental health counsellors anonymously, which may encourage some of your members to feel like they can reach out safely.
- ✓ **Contact emergency services!** If you feel like a member is in immediate danger, call 911! Stay with them until emergency services have arrived, if it is safe to do so.
- ✓ **Reflect on your own personal views of mental health!** In order to positively support your members, check your views and biases on mental health. You can do this by paying attention to how you react when you see or hear stories of mental health or how you talk about mental health.

When supporting a member in distress, remember to take care of yourself. Your mental health is important too and you may be going through an array of emotions and feelings. Seek support by reaching out to a friend or family member or seek professional support, but always keep in mind the confidentiality of your member.

Remember:

- ✓ **You are not responsible** for your 4-H member's wellness and you are not a mental health professional.
- ✓ **There is a limit** to what you can do even as an adult.
- ✓ **You shouldn't blame yourself** for your member's struggle. The best you can do is be there for them and support them as much as you can.

For more information on having open conversations with your 4-H members

Read Kids Help Phone's article

How to have an open conversation with a young person at

kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/programs-resources/open-conversation-young-person

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Understanding Bullying

FOR LEADERS



What is bullying?

Kids Help Phone defines bullying as a person or a group of people who repeatedly do something on purpose to make someone else feel hurt, sad or embarrassed.

Bullying can affect many aspects of someone's life, including:

- their feelings
- their relationships with people
- their self-esteem
- their sense of safety

Knowing the type of bullying you are witnessing can assist you in supporting a 4-H member.

Types of bullying:

Physical bullying is when someone uses physical force to harass someone.

Emotional bullying is when someone uses verbal attacks, hurtful comments, teasing, etc. to harass someone.

Cyberbullying is the use of digital channels to harass someone.

Social bullying is when someone or a group of people purposely exclude others, spread rumors or give others the "silent treatment" as a form of harassment.

Discriminatory bullying is when someone or a group of people harass someone else based on the perception that there is something different about them.



Helping someone who is being bullied

To help someone who is experiencing bullying, **focus on their safety first**. This includes physical and emotional safety, as the impacts of bullying can cause both physical injury and psychological distress.

In supporting those who are being bullied, keep in mind the three types of people involved:

1. **The person being bullied**
2. **The person who is bullying**
3. **The bystander** (the person who sees the bullying)

As a 4-H leader, you play an important role with each of these people in supporting them and teaching them about the impact of their behaviour.

If you have a 4-H member who is experiencing bullying, it is important for you to remind them that it is not their fault and that they are not alone! Here are some tips to share with members:

- ✓ **Report it!** Encourage them to speak up if they are being bullied. Help them talk about it and remind them there is strength in numbers.
- ✓ **Get support!** As a trusted adult, you can point them to resources they can access to get more support. Being bullied can take a toll on them and they should not feel alone.
- ✓ **Stay safe!** Young people can take steps to protect themselves, physically and emotionally. They can spend time with others, create a safety plan or turn off social media

Addressing bullies

If you have a 4-H member engaging in bullying behaviour, have them ask themselves what drives that behaviour. Using the 4-H in Canada Code of Conduct, you can set boundaries for 4-H meetings that enforce rules and define appropriate behaviour. If the member has shared that they want to change their behaviour, you can support them to do so:

- ✓ **Help them** set goals.
- ✓ **Encourage them** to find a different outlet for their energy and feelings such as 4-H, sports or art.
- ✓ **Encourage them** to say sorry to those they have hurt, or offer to go with them to say sorry. They can do this in person or write them a note.

Addressing bystanders

If you know a 4-H member is being bullied, you most likely know 4-H members who are bystanders. As a 4-H leader you can teach your members that bystanders play an important role in stopping bullying behaviour.

If it is safe for them to do so, encourage them to step in and tell the person who is bullying to stop. There is a good chance others will step in too.

Preventing bullying

Here are some tips you can share with your 4-H members to help them prevent bullying:

- ✓ **Speak up** about the bullying to friends, classmates or fellow 4-H members.
- ✓ **Speak to the person being bullied.** Let them know that it is not okay and there are things you can do together to make it stop.
- ✓ **Provide an escape.** Ask the person being bullied if they would like to leave with you.
- ✓ **Report it.** Tell a safe and trusted adult, such as a teacher, parent or 4-H Leader. If someone is in immediate danger, call 911.
- ✓ **Provide support.** Ask them if they are okay and if they would like to talk. Also remind them it is not their fault.

For more information on bullying, visit [KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca).

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
[KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca)



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Taking Care of Yourself

FOR MEMBERS



While it is great to help your friends or 4-H members, remember to take care of yourself too. Self-care is about taking care of your mental, emotional and physical health. By being kind to yourself, you are helping to boost your confidence, improve your sense of self and ensure your overall well-being.

Self-care looks different to everyone. Here are some tips for self-care:

- ✓ **Be kind to yourself!** Show yourself some love and kindness by doing activities you enjoy that make you feel good.
- ✓ **Challenge self-critical thoughts!** Try to see challenges as learning opportunities and send encouraging thoughts to yourself to keep going.
- ✓ **Think ahead!** When you feel stressed or sad, have a list of coping strategies that work for you. Coping strategies like journaling are things you can do to help lower stress, vent your thoughts, explore your feelings and increase the sense of well-being.
- ✓ **Focus on the positive!** Try to look at the bigger picture instead of the small parts of a problem, to remind yourself of what's important. Focus on the parts you do well and try not to worry about the things you can't change.
- ✓ **Let it out!** Express yourself in a way that feels right to you!
- ✓ **Get artistic!** Whether you draw, paint, or write, just get creative and allow your feelings to flow!
- ✓ **Exercise!** Go for a jog, walk, lift weights or do some yoga. Get that blood pumping! Exercise is good for the body and mind.



- ✓ **Stay connected!** Surround yourself with people you trust and who love you for you.
- ✓ **Do a digital detox!** Spend time away from screens. Use this time to read, or get outside and enjoy nature.
- ✓ **Get support!** If you are struggling, talk to someone you trust. That could be a friend, a parent, your 4-H leader or Kids Help Phone. Don't hesitate to ask for help!

Self-esteem

Your self-esteem is how you value yourself and appreciate your self-worth. It is an important element of what makes you, you! Healthy self-esteem allows you to be proud of what you do, your skills, accomplishments and who you are.

When you feel good about yourself, you're more likely to:

- ✓ Set goals and achieve them, in any area of your life – personal, academic and 4-H included
- ✓ Believe that you are capable of learning something new
- ✓ Try new things

Many factors can influence your self-esteem, like your environment, your expectations of yourself and your experiences. Just like everyone, you will have good and bad days but you can work to build your self-esteem over time.

To build your self-esteem, you can:

- ✓ Identify your strengths and abilities and build on them
- ✓ Remember that you are more than your appearance
- ✓ Take care of yourself
- ✓ Think of a positive thought for every self-critical thought
- ✓ Set goals and make a plan to achieve them
- ✓ Build a support system of people you trust

For more information on self-care, self-esteem and self-acceptance, visit [KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca).



Kids Help Phone 

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[KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca)



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Building your Support System

FOR MEMBERS



It is important for everyone to have a support system in place whether or not they are dealing with mental health, mental ill-health or a mental disorder.

What is a support system?

Your support system is a group of people you can turn to at any time to:

- ✓ **Be there for you** when you need someone to talk or vent to
- ✓ **Help you deal with things** such as:
 - feelings or emotions – especially those you don't understand
 - difficult events in your life
 - strategies for coping with stress
- ✓ **Support you** and root for you in things that you do
- ✓ **Help you figure out a plan** and next steps
- ✓ **Help you find professional help** and access support in your community



Who do you talk to when you have an issue?

It was reported in 2016, that the number one person teens talk to is a friend.

Building your support system

Your support system can be one person or a group of people. It's a good idea to **identify a few people you can turn to**, such as:

- ✓ Safe and trusted adults
 - family
 - 4-H leaders
 - teachers or other school staff
 - spiritual leaders
 - other community members
- ✓ Friends or siblings
- ✓ 4-H members

When building your support system keep in mind it should be made up of people who you have a **healthy relationship** with. To have a healthy relationship with someone means that you trust them, feel safe with them and they accept you for who you are.

Safe and trusted adult

A **safe and trusted adult** is someone who is accountable, respects your boundaries and doesn't ask you to keep secrets from others. They are someone who is:

- ✓ thoughtful
- ✓ trustworthy
- ✓ respectful
- ✓ helpful
- ✓ caring

For more information on support systems, visit [KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca).

Accessing Resources

FOR MEMBERS



Whether you are growing up in a rural or an urban community, asking for help can be difficult and you may not know where to go. Here are some ways to access support and learn more about resources in your community.

Kids Help Phone is available across Canada!

One of the most trusted resources you can access is Kids Help Phone. Their counsellors are there for you, whether you just need someone to listen or to ask specific questions. There is never any judgement from the counsellors and everything you discuss is completely confidential.

Three ways you can connect with Kids Help Phone:



CALL

1-800-668-6868

24 hours a day, 7 days a week,
365 days a year



TEXT

Text CONNECT
to **686868**



LIVE CHAT

KidsHelpPhone.ca

Download the free mobile app:
Always There



Resources Around Me provides a list of resources right in your community

apps.kidshelpphone.ca/resourcesaroundme/welcome.html



Resources in your province

British Columbia

Youth In BC

youthinbc.com
604-872-1811

Alberta

CASA - Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health

casaservices.org/resources-specific-
mental-health
780-400-2271

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan HealthLine 811

saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/
accessing-health-care-services/healthline
1-877-800-0002

Manitoba

Klinic Community Health: Manitoba Farm Rural & Northern Support Services

supportline.ca
1-866-367-3276

Ontario

Wellness and Emotional Support for Youth

wesforyouthonline.ca
519-507-3737

Quebec

Interligne

interligne.co
1-888-505-1010

New Brunswick

Chimo Helpline

chimohelpline.ca
1-800-667-5005

Nova Scotia

IWK Health Centre

iwk.nshealth.ca/mental-health/youth/
mental-health-and-addictions-emergency-or-crisis
1-888-429-8167

Prince Edward Island

Island Help Line

pei.cmha.ca
1-800-218-2885

Newfoundland and Labrador

Canadian Mental Health Association: Newfoundland and Labrador

cmhanl.ca
1-888-737-4668

**Please note this is not a comprehensive list of
services available. For more resources check
out Kids Help Phone's Resources Around Me
at KidsHelpPhone.ca.**

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Supporting a Friend in Distress

FOR MEMBERS



A friend or fellow 4-H member may open up to you about what is going on in their life and you may not know how to help them. This tip sheet will help you, as well as help them.

First, ask yourself two questions:

1. Is it safe to help?
2. Do you feel comfortable and able to help?

If you answered **NO** to either of these questions, **seek the help of a trusted adult right away or if the person is in immediate danger, call 911.**

It is an emergency if your friend has said they are planning to hurt themselves or someone else and will not seek help on their own. If it is safe to do so, you can wait with them until help arrives.

If you answered **YES** to both questions, here are some ways you can offer support:

- ✓ **Listen!** This is one of the most important things you can do to show your friend that you care. The key to listening is allowing them to talk without being interrupted or judged.
- ✓ **Be there!** Spend time together and do things you both enjoy.
- ✓ **Provide hope!** Offer words of positivity and encouragement that things will get better. It can be difficult to open up, so thank them for sharing what they are going through.
- ✓ **Make a list of activities they can turn to when going through a struggle!** Activities could include journaling, music, running, reading or volunteering to name a few.



- ✓ **Check out KidsHelpPhone.ca together!** By visiting the website together, your friend may feel encouraged to check it out later on their own.
- ✓ **Involve a trusted adult!** Identify a parent, teacher or leader that your friend can reach out to, and who could help them find resources or get professional help.
- ✓ **Follow-up!** Reach out to your friend. If someone doesn't seem like themselves, ask them how they are doing and remind them they are not alone.

After you have helped a friend in distress, remember to take care of yourself. It can be difficult helping a friend and it is normal to feel worried, scared, or sad. Seek support such as Kids Help Phone or talk to a trusted adult.

Remember:

- ✓ You are not responsible for your friend's wellness. They may need more support than you can give.
- ✓ It's okay to set boundaries for yourself. If you find you aren't able to have a difficult conversation, suggest your friend seek out another member of their support circle.
- ✓ Don't blame yourself for your friend's struggle. All you can do is be there for them.

Confidentiality... to tell or not to tell

If a friend has asked you not to tell anyone about what they are going through, remember some secrets are just too big to keep. If you feel like their safety or well-being may be compromised, talk to a trusted adult who can help you and them find the resources or help they need.

It can be a tough decision to make, but your friend's life and safety are most important.



Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
KidsHelpPhone.ca



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Understanding Bullying

FOR MEMBERS



What is bullying?

Kids Help Phone defines bullying as when someone uses their power to hurt, frighten, exclude or insult someone else.

Bullying can affect many aspects of your life, including:

- your feelings
- your relationships
- your self-esteem
- your sense of safety

Bullying can come in many different forms:

Physical bullying is the use of physical force.

Example: pushing a fellow 4-H member into a manure pile at a 4-H show

Emotional bullying is the use of words in a hurtful manner.

Example: teasing a fellow member for placing last at a judging competition

Cyberbullying is the use of digital channels to harass someone.

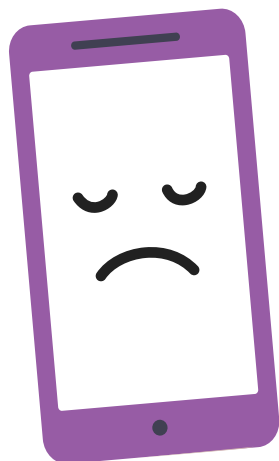
Example: using Instagram to post an embarrassing photo that is meant to be hurtful to a fellow member

Social bullying is when someone or a group of people purposely exclude others, spread rumors or give others the "silent treatment" as a form of harassment.

Example: not talking to a fellow member because they won overall grand champion at the local fair and you believed someone else should have won.

Discriminatory bullying is harassing someone because they are different from you.

Example: making fun of someone because they are from an urban area and do not necessarily understand how people live in a rural area.



How to handle bullying

There are three types of people involved in a bullying incident:

1. **The person being bullied**
2. **The person who is bullying**
3. **The bystander** (the person who sees the bullying)

If you are experiencing bullying, remember that it is not your fault and you are not alone! There are ways that you can address bullying:

- ✓ **Stay safe!** This is the most important thing you can do. Let people know that you feel unsafe and surround yourself with friends or trusted 4-H members.
- ✓ **Report it!** If you are being bullied, speak up about it. Tell your parents or 4-H leaders about any incidents that have occurred.
- ✓ **Get support!** Being bullied can take a toll on you and who you are. Talk to a friend, fellow member, leader or parent.
- ✓ **Take care of yourself!** Bullying can wear on your self-esteem. Practicing good self-care, such as spending time with animals or with family and friends, or any activity you enjoy doing can help combat the effects of bullying.

If you are bullying, ask yourself why you are doing it. Here are some things you can do:

- ✓ **Talk** to a trusted leader or other adult about your feelings.
- ✓ **Find a different outlet** for your energy by putting it into your 4-H project.
- ✓ **Say sorry** to those you have bullied. You can do this in person or write them a note.

A **bystander** is someone who has witnessed bullying. As a bystander, you can play an important role to stop bullying:

- ✓ **Speak up about the bullying** to friends, fellow members or your 4-H leader.
- ✓ **Talk to the person being bullied.** Let them know that they are not alone.
- ✓ **Report it.** Tell a trusted adult, parent or 4-H leader. If someone is in immediate danger, call 911.
- ✓ **Provide support.** Reach out to them and see if they are okay.

For more information, visit [KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca).

Kids Help Phone 

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop this resource
[KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca)



4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving

Activity Guide for Leaders



As a 4-H leader, it is important that you expand your knowledge of mental health and available services to support any 4-H member who may turn to you for help. We encourage you to review the 4-H Canada Mental Health Resources and to do your own research so that you can feel more comfortable talking about it with your members.

Try using the following tips and activities with your club to open up the dialogue around mental health and to have ongoing check-ins.



This Activity Guide is divided into three sections:

1. Mental Health and 4-H Meetings

- Why incorporate mental health into your meetings
- How to incorporate mental health into your meetings
- Tips for talking about mental health

2. Activities for Breaking the Ice on Mental Health

- Creating an open space to talk about mental health
- Lift Me Up – Hot Air Balloon
- Destigmatizing mental health
- Walk through Kids Help Phone's website

3. Check-in Activities - Ongoing

- Bud, Rose, Thorn
- Feelings Thermometer
- Build Your Own Check-in

1. Mental Health and 4-H Meetings

Why incorporate mental health into your meetings

It is important to hold regular discussions around mental health at your 4-H meetings in order to:

- de-stigmatize the topic of mental health;
- create a comfortable and safe space where talking about mental health is okay;
- encourage 4-H members to open up about their struggles.

How to incorporate mental health into your meetings

- Work through activities outlined in this guide to introduce the subject of mental health.
- Have regular check-ins with your 4-H members. Once it becomes part of the regular schedule, members may become more comfortable opening up. Check-out the check-in activities in section three.
- Invite mental health experts to speak at your 4-H meetings.

Tips for talking about mental health

- When you are talking about mental health as a club, build in enough time to have an open and honest discussion with 4-H members.
- Read the room and be prepared for members to come to you after the discussion.
- Try not to leave the discussion until the end of the meeting; build it in as part of your meeting agenda so that if any emotions about the subject come up, there is time for them to be addressed before everyone rushes home.
- Check your perceptions, judgements and biases towards mental health before you start talking about it with your members. Reading the tips sheets in 4-H Canada's Mental Health Resources is a great place to start.

2. Activities for Breaking the Ice on Mental Health

ACTIVITY

Creating a safe and open space to talk

Purpose: To create an open and safe space that allows for sharing about mental health when the time is right, by establishing an agreed-upon code of behaviour. This is an important first step in making members feel that their 4-H club is a safe space for sharing about their emotions and mental health, and eventually a part of their support system.

Age: 9 and up

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Paper and writing materials, box for suggestions and comments

Instructions:

- Explain to your 4-H members that it is important to set an agreed-upon code of behaviour for safe and open communications so that everyone feels comfortable sharing. After an initial discussion, have the members complete the Group Guidelines on the next page.

Discussion points:

- Ask your members what an open or safe space means to them. Does it look different if you are brainstorming ideas for a club event, or having a more sensitive discussion on something like mental health? Have someone make note of the guideline ideas.
- Talk about the purpose of group guidelines and explain that they are in place so that the people in the room can hold each other accountable for the openness and safety of the space. What happens if someone isn't following the guidelines?
- *Reminder: Group guidelines apply regardless of age or role – adults are expected to adhere to them just the same as young people.*
- What if someone doesn't feel comfortable sharing in front of others? Discuss other options to allow all members to be included in discussions. Perhaps you can add a suggestion box for anonymous ideas?



- Your ground rules might include:
 - > **Respect:** It is important that everyone respects each other's feelings.
 - > **Confidentiality:** When it comes to personal stories or feelings, it cannot leave the room afterward. Discussions of a personal nature must be protected by those who have had the privilege to hear it.
 - > **No judgment:** No one can make comments about a person's story or feelings.
 - > **Anonymity:** Any questions or comments put in the box are to remain anonymous even if you recognize who wrote it (make sure only leaders read the questions or comments).
- Use this discussion as an opportunity to link back to the **Building your Support System** tip sheet. By working with your club to create a safe and open space for sharing, members may begin to recognize that 4-H club members and leaders can be part of their support system when they are facing challenges.
- You can also use this discussion to link back to the **Understanding Bullying** tip sheet. It is important to address that bullying does not have a place in your 4-H club and what you can do if you witness it.



Template: Group Guidelines

Our group guidelines:

Why these group guidelines are important:

What happens when we do not follow these group guidelines:

By signing this document, we collectively agree with these guidelines and pledge to follow them.

Our signatures:

Our signatures:

ACTIVITY

Lift Me Up - Hot Air Balloon

It is important for everyone to be able to identify what makes them feel unhappy, overwhelmed, or stressed, but also what lifts them up and makes them feel positive, confident and happy.

Purpose: To encourage 4-H'ers to identify what brings them up (what makes them happy or stress-free) and what brings them down (issues they may be having or unhappy emotions they may be feeling).

Age: 6 and up

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Hot air balloon print-out provided, pencil crayons (or other colour materials), sharpener, other crafting supplies (optional)

Instructions:

- To start, have a conversation with your 4-H'ers on general issues or emotions that can make them feel down, and why. For example:
 - > stress from school
 - > anxiety
 - > sadness
- As a club, brainstorm ideas 4-H'ers could use to combat those feelings/issues. For example:
 - > exercising
 - > reading
 - > spending time with animals
- You will find a printable hot air balloon at the end of this activity. Print it out and hand it out to your 4-H'ers.
- Have your 4-H'ers write on the sandbags of the balloon any emotions or issues that weigh you down. On the inside of the balloon, have your 4-H'ers write things that lift them up and make them feel good. Encourage your members to decorate their balloon.
- If your 4-H'ers feel comfortable doing so, allow time at the end of the activity for them to share their balloons.

Discussion Points:

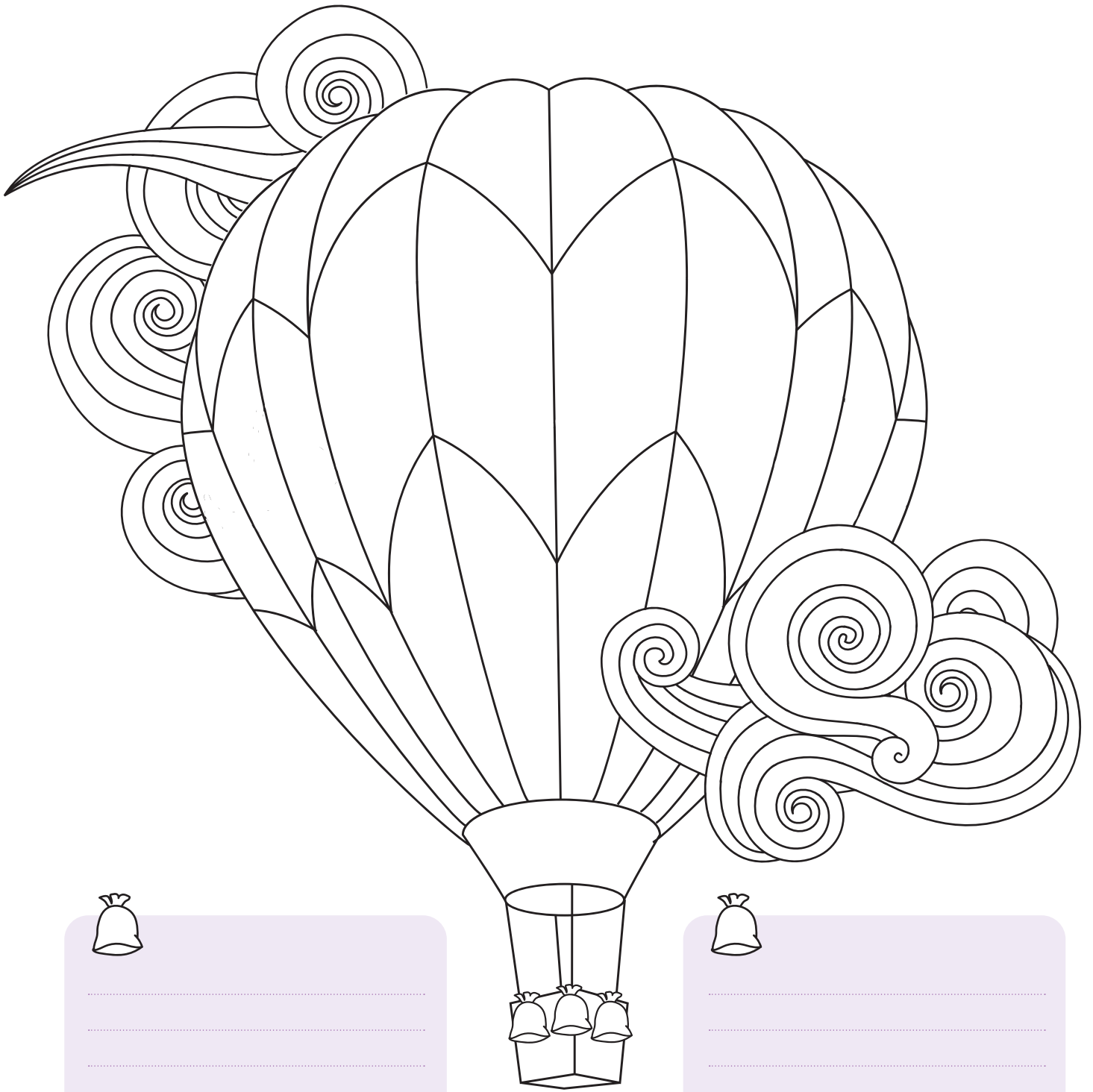
With youth members 10 years old and up, you may want to begin introducing them to more in-depth concepts around mental health. Refer back to the **Introduction to Mental Health** and the tip sheets for members and leaders.

Mental health can be visualized as a continuum where some days are better than others. This balloon activity shows what might make you feel down, but also what you can do to lift yourself up.

When someone experiences a challenge to their mental health, we use the term mental ill-health. Mental ill-health might include sadness, worry, and stress over a few days, but when it lasts for an extended period of time it is important to seek help. A professional can help to determine if the symptoms of mental ill-health are part of a mental disorder, and can make a diagnosis.

Remember: Everyone will experience mental health and mental ill-health at some point in their life, although not everyone will have a mental disorder.

This is also a great time to introduce the **Taking Care of Yourself** tip sheet. Many of the ideas your members list on their balloons would be examples of self-care and how they can boost their self-esteem.



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ACTIVITIES

De-stigmatizing mental health

Mental health is a topic that is still widely stigmatized today. The only way to de-stigmatize it is to normalize it through everyday conversations.

Purpose: To start the conversation around stigma and ways to reduce it.

Age: 13 and up

Time: 30-35 minutes

Materials: Writing utensils and paper

Instructions: The following activities are meant for you and your members to start the conversation on stigma and mental health.

ACTIVITY 1 What is stigma?

Have a conversation with your members to define what stigma means and the effect it can have on people.

Discussion points:

- Stigma refers to “a cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate the general public to fear, reject, avoid and discriminate against people with mental illness. Stigma is not just a matter of using the wrong word or action. Stigma is about disrespect. It is the use of negative labels to identify a person living with mental illness.” (as quoted in Kutcher, Wei, & IWK Health Center)
- Major concepts on stigma
 - > Stigma is the result of discriminatory behaviour and treatment towards people with mental illness.
 - > The fear of stigma often prevents people from seeking help and treatment for mental illness.
 - > Stigma is continued through mistaken beliefs about mental illness and can be seen in the media, public policy and people’s attitudes.
 - > Stigma can be reduced by ensuring accurate information about mental health and its treatment is provided.

If you are looking for more information, check out these resources:

- The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
 - > Addressing Stigma: camh.ca/en/driving-change/addressing-stigma
 - > Mental Health and Addiction 101 Series: Stigma: camhx.ca/education/online_courses_webinars/mha101/stigma/Stigma_.htm
- Canadian Mental Health Association – Stigma and Discrimination: ontario.cmha.ca/documents/stigma-and-discrimination

This section on De-stigmatizing Mental Health has been extracted from Kutcher, Stan, Dr., Yifeng Wei, Dr., and IWK Health Center. “Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide: Understanding Mental Health and Mental Illness Version 3.” December 2017.

teenmentalhealth.org/curriculum/

ACTIVITY 2 What do you know about mental health – Survey

Instructions:

- This survey is to find out how much you and your 4-H members know about mental health. It is okay if you or your members do not know a lot, as this activity is meant to start expanding your knowledge.
- Print or photocopy this page and distribute the survey to your members.
- Give your members approximately 5 minutes to complete.
- Discuss the survey with the answers provided.

What do you know about mental health?

Check the most appropriate answer:	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
1. People should work out their own mental health problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Once you have a mental illness, you will have it for life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Females are more likely to have a mental illness than males	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Medication is the best treatment for mental illness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. People with a mental illness are generally violent and dangerous.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Adults are more likely than teenagers to have a mental illness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. You can tell by looking at someone whether they have a mental illness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. People with mental illness are generally shy and quiet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Mental illness can happen to anybody.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. You would be willing to have a person with mental illness at your club.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. You would be happy to have a person with mental illness become a close friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Answers to the survey

1. People should work out their own mental health problems

Not true. When people have a physical health concern, they generally take some action and often go to the doctor. Mental illness is associated with disturbances with brain functioning and usually requires professional assistance. Because of the stigma surrounding mental illness, many people have been reluctant to seek help.

2. Once you have a mental illness, you will have it for life

While it's true that most mental illnesses are lifelong, they are often episodic. This means that the symptoms are not always present. Just like people who live with chronic physical illnesses like arthritis and asthma, people with mental illnesses can, when their illness is managed, live positive and productive lives.

3. Females are more likely to have a mental illness than males

Men and women are both equally affected by mental illnesses in general, but there may be higher rates among women of specific illnesses such as eating disorders. Men have higher rates for some disorders such as alcoholism and ADHD. Some illnesses are relatively equally shared by both men and women (e.g. Bipolar Disorder). Women are more likely to seek help for mental and emotional difficulties and to share their concerns with friends compared to men. Females are more willing to let friends know if they are receiving counselling.

4. Medication is the best treatment for mental illness

Medication can be a very effective part of treating a mental illness, but it is not always the best nor only type of treatment. For many people with a mental illness it is a necessary part of their care. A wide range of appropriate interventions, including medication, counselling, social, vocational and housing-related supports, as well as self-help and generic resources for all community members (such as: groups, clubs, and religious institutions) may also be important in helping people recover and stay well. It is helpful to think of medications as often necessary but not sufficient treatments for many mental disorders. The best approach is to have a combination of strategies that have been scientifically proven effective.

5. People with a mental illness are generally violent and dangerous.

People with mental illness are generally not more violent than the rest of the population. Mental illness plays no part in the majority of violent crimes committed in our society. The assumption that any and every mental illness carries with it an almost certain potential for violence is not correct. However, a small number of people who have a mental illness where they may have lost their ability to distinguish what is real and what is not real may commit an unusual, violent act. This can be unusual and is therefore sensationalized in the media, leading to the mistaken belief that all people who have a mental illness are violent.

6. You would be willing to have person with a mental illness at your club.

See answer to question 11 below.

7. You would be happy to have a person with mental illness become a close friend.

Questions 10 and 11 both address the issue of "social distance" - that is, the willingness to engage in relationships of varying intimacy with a person. Social distance is an indicator of public attitudes toward people with mental illness. Social distance is a complex concept influenced by a number of factors, including age, gender, socioeconomic and cultural factors, but also by the respondent's general attitude toward mental illness. Contact, or social inclusion of people with mental illness with the rest of the population, is one factor that may lead to a decrease in stigma. This can happen when people find out that a co-worker, neighbour or friend is struggling with mental illness, and despite it, is living on their own, working and being a part of the community.

Discussion points:

After completing the mental health survey and reviewing the answers, use the following questions to continue the discussion:

1. What are some of the negative things you have heard about people with mental illness? (Possible answers may include: violence, bizarre behaviour)
2. What are some of the positive things you have heard about mental illness? (Possible responses may include: link to creativity). While this may be seen as positive, remind students that generalizing can also be a form of stereotyping.
3. Why do you think people with mental illness are stigmatized? (possible answers include: they are seen as being different, people don't really know the facts about mental illness, etc.)
4. What kinds of factors have contributed to changing public attitudes around some of these conditions or issues? (Possible answers include: education, public policy, open dialogue, scientific research, legislation changing social norms, better knowledge, etc.)
5. How do you think stigma affects the lives of people with mental illness? (Possible answers include: people decide not to get help and treatment even though they would benefit from it, it makes them unhappy, they may not be able to get a job or find housing, it may cause them to lose their friends, it puts stress on the whole family, etc.)



ACTIVITY 3 Reducing stigma

Brainstorm with your 4-H'ers ways to reduce mental health stigma and activities they can do to implement those ways.

Discussion points:

Here are some ways to reduce stigma:

- Watch your language
 - > Most of us including mental health professionals and people living with a mental illness, use terms and expressions related to mental illness that may perpetuate stigma.
- Ask questions
 - > If you don't know something, instead assuming or perpetuating stereotypes, the best thing you can do is ask questions. If you are willing to learn, people will teach you.
- Learn more about mental illnesses
 - > If you are well-informed about mental illness, you will be better able to evaluate and resist the inaccurate negative stereotypes that you come across.
- Listen to experiences
 - > These individuals can describe what they find stigmatizing, how stigma affects their lives and how they would like to be viewed and treated.
- Speak up about stigma
 - > When someone you know misuses a psychiatric term (such as Schizophrenia), let them know and educate them about the correct meaning. When someone says something negative about a person with mental illness, tells a joke that ridicules mental illness, or makes disrespectful comments about mental illness, let them know that it is hurtful and that you find such comments offensive and unacceptable.

ACTIVITY

Walk through Kid's Help Phone Website

You may have a 4-H'er silently struggling without you knowing. One way that you can help them is to show them the Kids Help Phone website and resources that are available.

Purpose: To take out the unknown factors of accessing the Kids Help Phone website and Resources Around Me.

Time: 20-60 minutes

Materials: Computer(s), Internet, projector (optional)

Instructions:

- Show your 4-H'ers how to access the Kids Help Phone website and Resources Around Me on a computer. If you only have one computer, you can project it onto the wall with a projector or have everyone gather around the computer.
- Navigation of the Kids Help Phone website
 - > Go to kidshelpphone.ca.
 - > On the main page, you will see a search bar, the various ways to contact Kids Help Phone, and what is trending.
 - > While you have the main page on the screen, have a discussion with your members on the ways they could contact Kids Help Phone.
 - > Next, have someone suggest a topic and write it into the search bar.
 - > You can then go through the suggested articles and games on that topic.
- Exploration of Resources Around Me
 - > Go to: apps.kidshelpphone.ca/resourcesaroundme or go to kidshelpphone.ca and scroll down to the ways to contact Kids Help Phone and click on Resources Around Me.
 - > A box will pop up: "Would you like to search for resources based on your current location?" You can select either yes or no.
 - > Enter a location. It could be your hometown or a nearby town or city.
 - > Depending on what you are searching for, you can choose a topic to narrow down the search or you can search all.
 - > On the left, you have all the services that are in that area and they will be organized by topic. If you scroll in or out on the map, it will either refine your search or expand it.
 - > When you click on a resource from the side bar it will show all the information related to that service and its location.
- If you have multiple computers:
 - > Have your 4-H'ers break into groups and let them explore the Kids Help Phone website and Resources Around Me.
 - > Give the groups a minimum of 20 minutes to explore the two websites together.
 - > Have each group fill out the Kids Help Phone website Scavenger Hunt.
 - > If they feel comfortable to do so, have each group present what they found and why it is interesting to them.

Tip to Leaders: Listen for issues that are worrying your 4-H members and look up on the Kids Help Phone website for resources that you could highlight to the group or share individually.



Discussion points

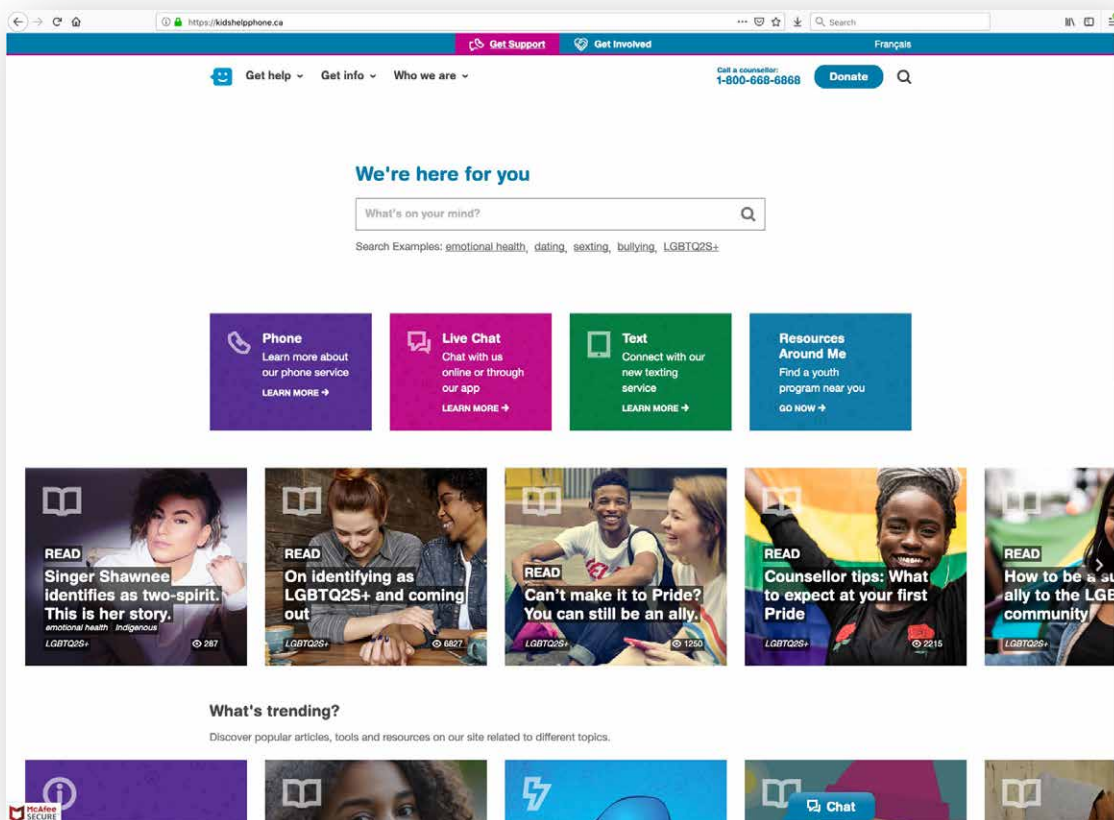
You can introduce any of the tip sheets during this activity. If you are unsure what tip sheet to introduce with this activity, **Supporting a Friend in Distress** would be a good one, if you have not already addressed it.

Supporting a friend in distress can take a toll on your own emotions. It is important to make sure you think of yourself during this time as well. Reach out to a trusted ally if you or your friend needs help.

If you want to know about the topics we have discussed, check out the Kids Help Phone website to explore further.

Kids Help Phone is a great place to learn more information on other mental health topics such as suicide, eating disorders, anxiety and depression.

This is also a great time to introduce the **Accessing Resources** tip sheet. All the information to contact Kids Help Phone is on this tip sheet and the provincial resources on the back can also be found at Resources Around Me.



Kids Help Phone

Template: Kids Help Phone website Scavenger Hunt

1. List the top three interesting things you found:

1.

2.

3.

2. Check out the Tools and Games section. Pick two games that you found helpful or would share with a friend.

1.

2.

3. What is Kids Help Phone?

4. Go to Resources Around Me and describe one resource available in your area:

5. What is trending on KidsHelpPhone.ca?

6. Where would you go if you wanted to talk to a counsellor?

6. Is there more than one way to connect with a counsellor (Circle yes or no)?

Yes

No

3. Check-in Activities - Ongoing

Check-ins are a great way to see how your members are doing both mentally and emotionally, and can be done in small or large groups. The more often you do check-ins, the more routine it will become, and the more your members may feel comfortable in opening up.

As a 4-H leader, check-ins are a great way for you to:

- gauge the feelings and emotions of the club members after a meeting, discussion or event;
- get insight into what the club may need going forward;
- learn more about your members and what they do outside of 4-H;
- encourage personal and group reflection.

Check-ins can also be extremely beneficial to your members by:

- allowing time for personal reflection;
- helping them to get to know one another (especially those who are new to the club);
- allowing time for everyone to share their feelings.

ACTIVITY 1 Bud, Rose, Thorn

Instructions:

Ask your 4-H members what their bud, rose and thorn are from the week, the month or from the 4-H meeting. This check-in activity can be done in small or large groups.

Tip: Challenge your 4-H members to have different answers from each other.

Legend:



Bud:

Something you are looking forward to



Rose:

Something you liked or enjoyed



Thorn:

Something that you disliked or bothered you

Discussion points

Mental health is on a continuum and you will have good and bad days. If you can only identify thorns for weeks, then it is time to reach out to a trusted ally for support.

ACTIVITY 2

Feelings Thermometer

Instructions:

1. Print the thermometer activity and distribute it to your members.
2. Have your members indicate the emotion they are feeling and colour the thermometer for a visual representation.
3. Have your members fill out the three corresponding questions.
4. If your members chose it, have them share what they are feeling and why.

Discussion Points

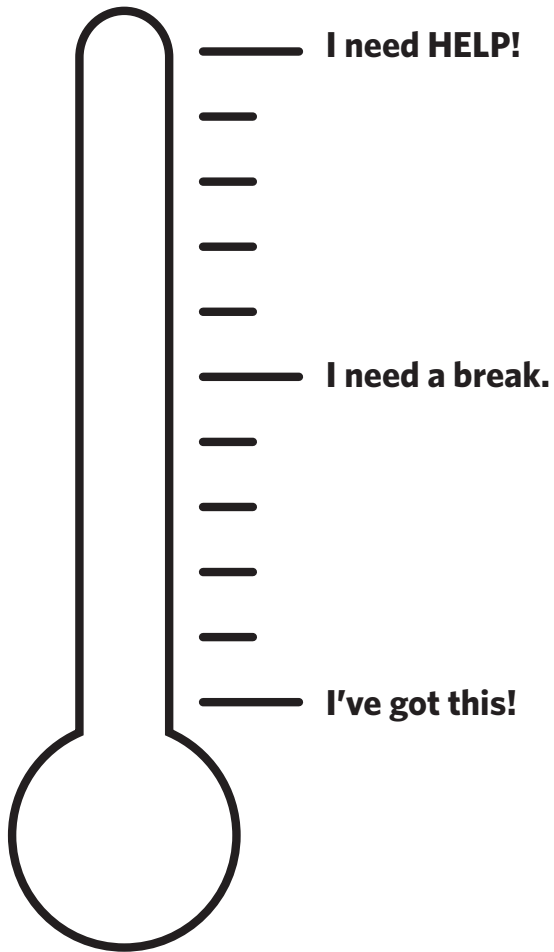
If you haven't yet introduced the **Building your Support System** or **Taking Care of Yourself** tip sheets, now would be a great time, so you can get your members to start thinking. If you already have introduced them, refer back to them when doing this check-in. Ask your members:

If you do not know what or who might help you get through this feeling, refer to your Building your Support System and Taking Care of Yourself tip sheets.

Think back to a time where you might have felt this feeling before. What did you do to get you through it?

Feelings Thermometer

How I am feeling: _____



1. Why do I feel this way:

2. What can I do to change this feeling:

3. What or who might help:

Examples of Feelings

HAPPY
FRUSTRATED
STRESSED
RELAXED
SHY
SAD

PROUD
CONFUSED
ANNOYED
PEACEFUL
WORRIED

ACTIVITY 3

Build Your Own Check-in

There are lots of resources online to help you build a check-in question to best suit your club.

Keep in mind:

- **Size of your club:** Does your club have six or 30 members?
- **Time:** How much time can you dedicate to the check-in activity?
- **Type of question(s):** Are you looking for short, one-sentence answers or detailed, compelling stories from your 4-H members?
- **Tone:** What are you checking in about? Are you looking to hear how your members are doing emotionally or simply how their week went?

Here are some examples:

- Tell the club about a time when...
- How do you feel about...
- What do you think of...
- What do you need...

How would you...

Notes

References



Building Your Support System

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Notes

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 24 horizontal dotted lines.



**Learn
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