



CANADA



**HEALTHY  
LIVING  
INITIATIVE**

# **Mental Health**

**Resources for 4-H 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](https://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](http://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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## Kids Help Phone

4-H Canada has partnered with Kids Help Phone to develop these resources  
[KidsHelpPhone.ca](http://KidsHelpPhone.ca)



[4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving](http://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).**



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[4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving](https://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](https://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.**



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[4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving](https://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.

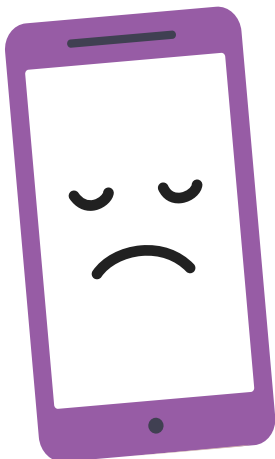
*Example: using Instagram to post an embarrassing photo that is meant to be hurtful to a fellow member*

**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://KidsHelpPhone.ca).

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[4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving](https://4-h-canada.ca/healthyliving)

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## Notes

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**Learn  
To Do  
By Doing**

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