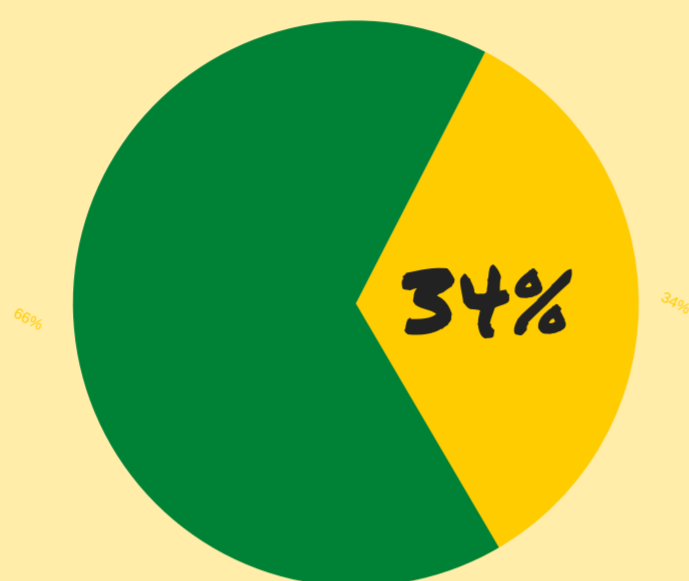


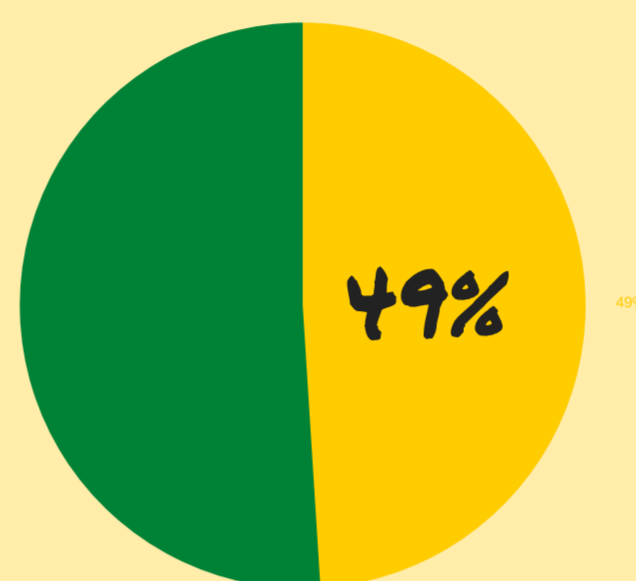
# YNRA WELLNESS PROMOTION GUIDE

Thank you so much for inviting YNRA into your classroom! We hope we have been able to start the dialogue on mental health and wellness. But we don't want the conversation to end here.

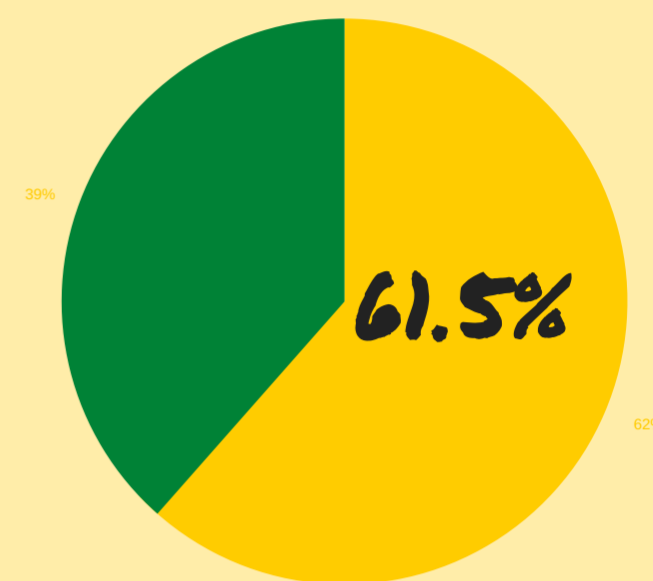
## Let's Talk



of teens show moderate-to-serious **symptoms of anxiety and depression**



of students are **concerned about mental health** issues for themselves or other students



said they **did not know where to go** for mental health support

## Let's Do

Luckily, we also know that “the school environment has a considerable influence on student mental health” and that **teachers can be the difference** in fostering a positive climate and directing students to community supports. This guide is filled with quick activities that combine a brief discussion, activity, and link to a resource **to continue the cultivation of positive mental health** in the classroom.

**GIVE IT A TRY AND LET US KNOW!**

youthnet@cheo.on.ca or 613-738-3915

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Instagram/twitter: @CHEOyouthnet

Facebook.com/ynraOttawa

## Let's Connect

**#TalkDoConnect**

If you are posting on social media, use our hashtag. We will not post photos of you without consent, for more info please contact us.

Healthy

Stressed

Struggling

Crisis

<p>A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.</p> <p><b>Balanced.</b></p> <p><b>Physical health and mental health:</b> you're experiencing your normal fluctuations in mood, social activity and sleep.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> keep doing what you're doing! Practice your mental and physical self-care as needed.</p>	<p>Practice your coping and self-care skills!</p> <p><b>Physical:</b> your nose is all stuffed up, you may be getting a cold.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> maybe head to bed early, eat some fruits and veggies, or lessen your work load.</p> <p><b>Mental:</b> you're feeling anxious and stressed about a fight with a friend.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> practice one of your coping strategies: maybe talk to someone, listen to music, or head out for some exercise.</p>	<p>Struggle is intense, has lasted a while and is interfering with your daily life.</p> <p><b>Physical:</b> you've come down with the flu and have been ill for a few days.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> seek help from a doctor or nurse.</p> <p><b>Mental:</b> you have been feeling down for a while, and have started to miss school and hang-outs with friends.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> speak with a trusted adult, close friend, or crisis line.</p>	<p>Struggles have intensified and help is needed now.</p> <p><b>Physical:</b> you are in a serious car accident.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> call 911 or seek emergency medical services.</p> <p><b>Mental:</b> you are having thoughts of suicide or find that your daily functioning is significantly impaired.</p> <p><b>YOU:</b> seek professional help from a doctor, crisis line, or other care provider immediately.</p>
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# Coping Strategy Wall

## Let's Talk

Coping strategies are things we can do that can help us master, tolerate, or minimize stressful situations. Often young people don't realize there are things they can do to help manage stress. At YouthNet, 46% of young people felt concerned with their stress all the time (YNRA, 2016). We need many strategies in our toolbox as every situation is different. After all you can't build a house with just a hammer! .

## Let's Do

Hand out little pieces of paper for students write coping strategies that they use or that they might recommend to a friend. Build a “take one, leave one” coping strategy wall in your classroom. This way students can put up coping strategies that work for them and others may take one if needing an extra boost.



## Let's Connect

See if youth can come up with a list of resources available in school, such as the guidance, social worker, psychology, addictions counsellor ect... invite various support service employees from your school to come in and say hello at the beginning or end of the period. This will improve help-seeking as youth will be aware of existing supports and start building trust.

# We all have a Mental Health!

## Let's Talk

Many young people are still unaware that we all have both a physical health and a mental health, and that they are very intertwined. Good mental health isn't just the absence of mental health problems. Rather, it's the presence of positive characteristics, such as being able to cope with life's challenges, handle stress, build strong relationships, and recover from setbacks.

## Let's Do

Ask students to share something they do to stay physically healthy and something they do (or want to try) to stay mentally healthy. You can use this spectrum as a jumping off point for your discussion: mental health and physical health are both on a spectrum and can change. Like physical health, there are times with our mental health when it is important to reach out for help from family, friends, or professionals.



## Let's Connect

The Be Safe app allows the user to create a digital safety plan, informs the user about mental health and addiction resources in your local community and directs users to the best options for their needs through a decision-making aid.





# Adult Ally of the Month

## Let's Talk

Having even one trusted adult in a young person's life is one of the strongest protective factors. By recognizing, naming, and talking about who these adults are we can easily promote positive help-seeking. It can introduce students to someone in the school they may not know, validates students reaching out to adults in the school, rewards the adult for being an ally to students, etc.

## Let's Do

Try having students nominate an adult in the school each month who they feel contributes to their mental wellness! Perhaps a wall in the classroom can be made, and the teacher or guidance counsellor's name put up. Another option is to have all students name, write down and put up on the wall who their trusted adults are.



## Let's Connect

You can take this one step further and have students write a letter of thanks to give to their trust adult. Or even call them and read it to them.

Watch YouTube Video: SoulPancake An Experiment in Gratitude | The Science of Happiness





# Checking-in with Yourself

## Let's Talk

Deep breaths are possibly the simplest thing we can do to promote our own mental wellness. Mindfulness has been shown to have numerous health benefits, from de-stressing to increasing productivity. Including mindful activities in class could help students to re-ground, focus, and be ready to learn!

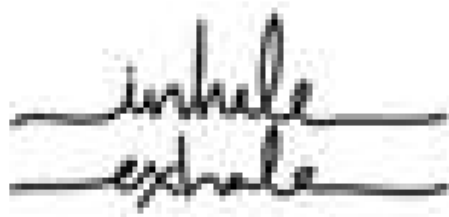
### CHECK-IN MOMENT

**PAUSE:** Check in with what you are thinking/ feeling

**BREATHE:** Notice the breath, follow it in and out, there's no need to change it

**THOUGHTS:** When thoughts arise simply notice them and bring your attention back to your breath

**GRATITUDE:** Thank yourself for taking a moment

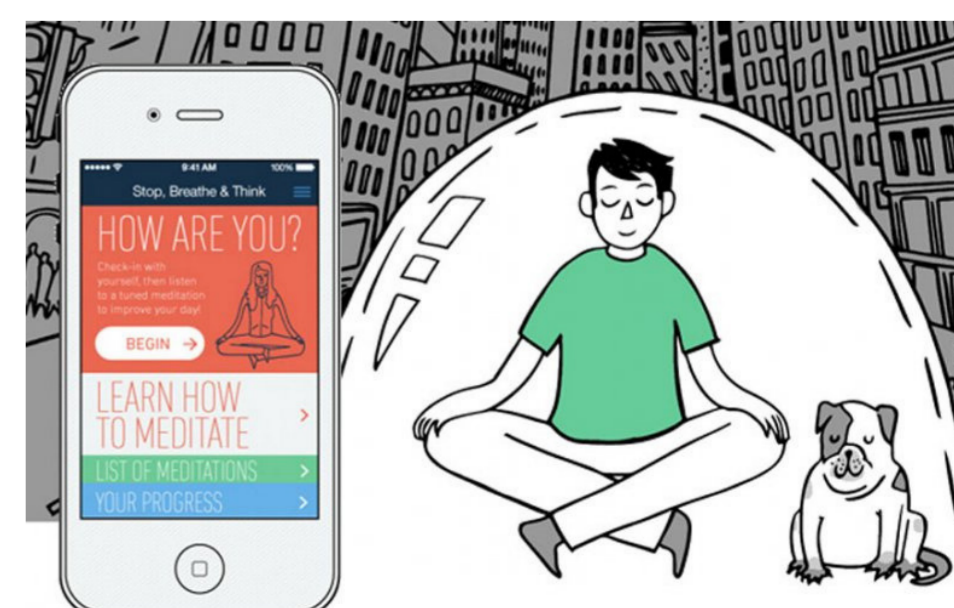


## Let's Do

Checking-in practice: During our presentation we may have done a mindful moment (we call it “checking-in with yourself”) with your class.. Encouraging students to put their heads down on their desk, tune into their breath, and mellow out for two minutes will help them feel grounded and come back ready to learn. The feedback we get from youth is that “mindfulness” carries with it some stigma and can turn students off right away, thus we encourage you to find a name for these check-ins that work for you and your class.

## Let's Connect

You can develop and apply kindness and compassion in your daily life through a process called STOP, BREATHE & THINK. A free app and website! Try going through it together in class  
[www.stopbreathethink.org](http://www.stopbreathethink.org)



# Let's Connect Game

## Let's Talk

Feeling connected is incredibly important for our mental health. . We are all connected in so many ways, but often we dont have the time or opportunity to really get to knows sitting next to us. Increasing connectedness between youth in the classroom can help students have a stronger sense of belonging and positive school experience.

## Let's Do

Have one person stand up and say a true statement (ie. "I like ice cream"). If someone else agrees with this statement they clap their hands, say "Connect", and stand up. The first student to clap or stand up continues the game. They start by re-affirming the "connecting" statement and then say something new (ie. "I also like ice cream. My favourite movie is Batman"). The game continues as the group tries and connects everyone in the group. You can play where once you have stood up once, you cannot again, this is optional. If students struggle to come up with a statement, you may suggest a food preference or a class they are taking. You could also stand up yourself and try to say something which may connect students who have not stood up yet!



## Let's Connect

At times, you or your close circle of friends might not have all of the answers. When more complex or less common situations come up, you might have some questions that are hard to answer. There are a variety of experts and professionals out there to help you through those specific challenges. Youth Services Bureau has a 24/7 crisis line, chat service (thurs-Sun 4-10pm), and walk-in Mental Health Clinic (Tues/Thurs 12-8pm)



# What helps you cope with test stress?

## Let's Talk

Coping strategies are things we can do that can help us master, tolerate, or minimize stressful situations. Often young people don't realize there are things they can do to help manage stress. We need many strategies in our toolbox as every situation is different. After all you can't build a house with just a hammer!



## Let's Do

Have students discuss (with a partner, small groups, everyone share one out loud) a coping strategy they will use before an upcoming exam or assignment.

**\*\*BONUS:** Have students write down a coping strategy they used on their test for a bonus mark at the end! You could try this first by asking students how they coped or did not cope – allowing room for the honest answer that they did not cope very well! Opening up space for honesty in mental health conversations will allow more students to feel like sharing.

## Let's Connect

The HEALTHYMINDS app is a problem-solving tool to help deal with emotions and cope with the stresses you encounter both on and off campus. The goal: Keeping your mind healthy.

