

Caring For Your Child:

Mental Health Promotion and Well-Being Information for Parents and Caregivers

Age	Key Message	Taking Action
6-9	<p>Build connection with your child so that they know they can come to you for support when the time comes. Find opportunities to strengthen this bond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be attuned to your child’s mood. Use different ways to help your child express their feelings (i.e., drawing, playing, reading a book). • Set aside time for one-to-one interaction, where you can give your child your full attention. • Encourage spending quality time with the family where everyone is present and engaged. • Give your child reassurance and comfort when they need it. Reinforce the message that asking for help is okay, that they can come to you. • Don’t forget to stay connected to yourself and your own needs, you will be more available to be in tune with your children’s needs.
	<p>Set the stage for educating your child and bringing awareness to substance and alcohol use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a conversation and encourage open communication about substance and alcohol use. Inviting and allowing open and honest conversation can strengthen your relationship with your child. • Start to give information about what alcohol and drugs are and the consequences of using on the individual, family members, and friends. • Find out what messages your child is getting from peers, at school, media, and entertainment sources (TV shows, movies) about drugs and alcohol. Ask your child what they think about what they’ve heard. • Find out what other parents are teaching their children about alcohol and drug use.
	<p>Foster your child’s capacity to manage stress and cope with frustration. This can act as a protective factor for future situations that your child can be faced with.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start building a self-care toolkit with your child. Customize this to what works best for them. This can be a project you can work on together. Include things that could be comforting to them (i.e., a favourite book, photos, drawings, stuffed animal, etc). • Teach your child ways to cope and self-soothe when they feel upset/stressed (i.e., counting slowly, asking for a hug, listening to music, colouring, etc). • Basic self-care includes ensuring that your child is eating regularly, getting enough quality sleep, and physical activity (walking, running, swimming, playing).

Age	Key Message	Taking Action
	Empower your child to make decisions for him/herself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your child about peer pressure. Discuss ways they could deal with a bully or how to respond when they are feeling pressured into something they are uncomfortable with. • Give your child an out. Let them know that they can leave situations that make them feel bad about themselves and that they do not need to stick with friends who hurt them. • Allow opportunities for them to practice making decisions at home. For example, it could be as simple as what to wear for the day or what they want for lunch.

<p>Websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Here to Help BC: heretohelp.bc.ca • Kelty Mental Health: keltymentalhealth.ca • Kids and Drugs - A Parent's Guide to Prevention: drugfreekids canada.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/kids-enfants-enf-kid-eng.pdf 	<p>Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>10 Mindful Minutes</i> by Goldie Hawn (2011) • <i>Hold On to Your Kids</i> by Gordon Neufeld & Gabor Maté (2013) • <i>Happiness Advantage</i> by Shawn Achor (2010) • <i>How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk</i> by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish (2012)

Cultural Awareness and Aboriginal Health
<p>It is important to recognize and honour Aboriginal cultural differences in order to foster a sense of belonging, pride and well-being amongst Aboriginal children and youth. Aboriginal families can make connections to culture, language, and traditions, by linking with any of the following programs and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westbank First Nation Community Services 1900 Quail Lane, West Kelowna 250-768-0227 • Ki'Low'Na Friendship Society 442 Leon Avenue, Kelowna 250-763-4905 • Metis Community Services Society of BC 2949 Pandosy Street, Kelowna 250-868-0351 • BC Aboriginal Child Care Society http://www.acc-society.bc.ca

Concerned about your child's mental health? Contact Child & Youth Mental Health Services:
(250) 861-7301

For the full range of community services, supports, and events, see KCR – Community Resources:
www.kcr.ca