

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page consists of a large, irregular shape filled with numerous small, colorful circles in shades of yellow, orange, purple, blue, and green. Scattered throughout this shape and extending into the white background are several small, circular icons of diverse people, including men and women of various ethnicities and ages, some wearing hats or glasses.

We All Have Mental Health

Promoting Mental Health in Adults

This resource is to promote mental health.

If you are in crisis or need help right away:

- **Call 911**
- **Call the Timiskaming Crisis Response System at 1-888-665-8888 (available 24/7)**
- **Visit your nearest hospital emergency department**

What's inside

- **What is mental health and mental illness**
- **Transition and life events**
- **Protective and risk factors**
- **What supports your mental health**
- **Things you can do right now to improve your mental health and wellbeing**
- **Mental Health Telephone Supports**

What is mental health?

Good mental health is important for everyone as it helps us to deal with the challenges we face and enjoy life. Mental health affects how we think, act and feel. When our mental health is good it helps us get the most out of life.

We all have highs and lows in our mental health/wellbeing. A low period does not mean that you have a mental illness. It's normal to have feelings like anger, sadness, or anxiety when facing challenges.

Good mental health and wellbeing are important at all stages of life – from infancy through childhood to adulthood.

What is mental illness?

There is a difference between mental health and mental illness. A mental illness is a state of mind that affects our mood, thoughts and behaviour. Examples of mental illnesses are depression, anxiety, eating disorders, schizophrenia and addictive behaviours. With early diagnosis and treatment, many people fully recover from their mental illness or can manage their symptoms.

Whether or not you have an illness, knowing about mental health and how to keep mentally healthy is important for everyone. We can all improve our mental health.

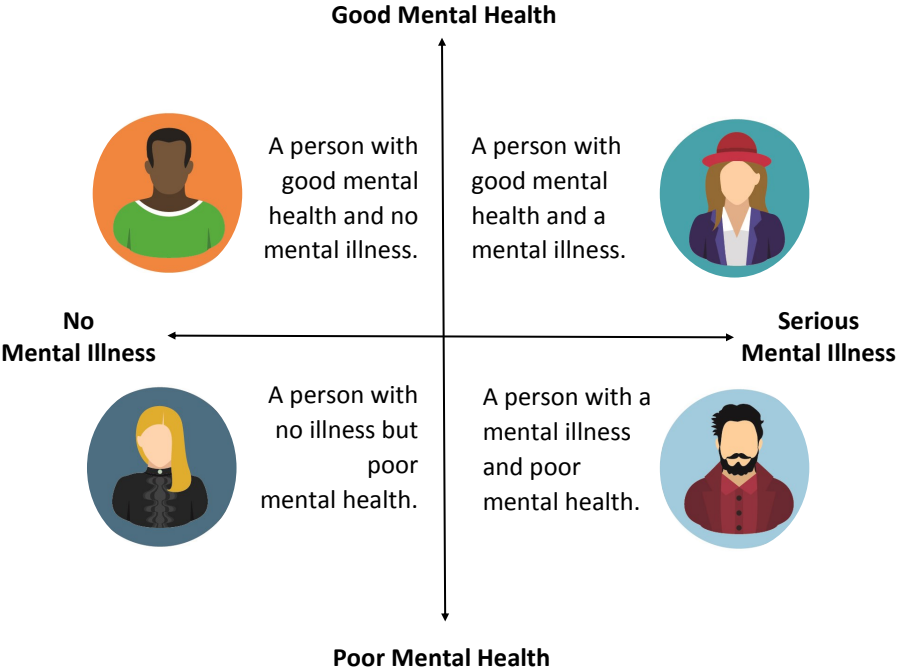


1 in 5 people will live with a mental illness in their lifetime.

4 out of 5 won't, but this doesn't mean they are doing well mentally.

We all have mental health.

Mental health can be affected each day through our interactions, relationships, behaviours and by the things we do. A person may not have a mental illness but can still have poor mental health. A person living with mental illness can also have good mental health. The diagram below shows how it can vary.



(Adapted from Ontario Public Health Standards, Mental Health Promotion Guideline, 2018)

Transition and Life Events

There are certain times in our lives when our mental health may be more vulnerable. Some of these times are known as “transitions” and the others are known as “life events”.

Transitions:

- Graduating high school and going to post-secondary education or work
- Moving out on your own
- Pregnancy and becoming a parent
- Changes to family structures
- Retiring from work

Life Events

- Being unemployed, under-employed, or experiencing work stress
- Experiencing loss, death of a loved one or getting divorced
- Having to care for someone who is dependent on you
- Immigrating to a new country
- Developing a chronic illness
- Experiencing and/or witnessing abuse, bullying, discrimination or violence

Here are some examples of how a person's mental health can vary:

Meet Gary



In his early 20s, Gary was diagnosed and treated for depression and recovered.

Gary recently lost his job with a company he had worked with for the past 15 years. He is angry, having trouble sleeping and is drinking heavily. Gary has started to have thoughts of suicide.

Gary remembers from his previous episode of depression that there is help available. He calls the local crisis line and gets help.

This is Samantha



When Samantha became a new mom, she was excited and happy.

Within a few weeks Samantha was very tired from lack of sleep, and she was feeling overwhelmed. Her friend noticed this and talked to her about it. Together they made a plan which included accepting more help from her family and friends with childcare, meals and housework.

With a good support system in place, Samantha is now able to take time for herself and is feeling like she can manage her new role.



Meet Bradley

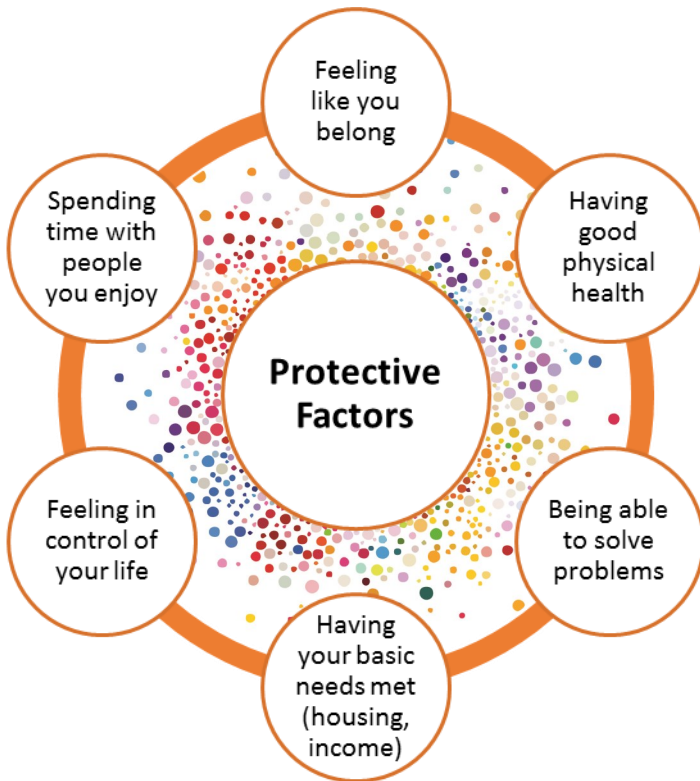
When Bradley started college he was eager to leave home and become more independent.

By mid-semester Bradley was struggling to keep up with his course work and he stopped going out with his friends. His parents noticed his mood had changed when he came home for the weekend. They talked with him about it and together they made a plan to visit their family doctor.

Bradley was diagnosed with an anxiety disorder and got treatment. He is now able to manage his school work and spend time with his friends.

Protective and Risk Factors

There are things that can protect our mental health and things that put it at risk. **Protective factors** provide a buffer and lessen the likelihood of developing a mental health problem. **Risk factors** make it more likely that a person may develop a problem. Both protective and risk factors can be impacted by individual choices, as well as the community and society.



Risk Factors

Having a parent with a mental health problem or issue

Being isolated and/or feeling alone

Traumatic life experience

Childhood trauma

Having a substance use disorder or problem gambling

Some risk factors may be out of your control, but there are always steps you can take to reduce their impact.

The key to improving mental health is to increase protective factors.

Emotional

We all experience
emotions. Positive
support our
When we are
and manage our
can improve

Resiliency

Everyone can improve their mental health by building their resiliency. Resiliency is the ability to handle life's ups and downs in positive ways and to bounce back from hard times. Making it through life's challenges strengthens our ability to handle future stressors.

What supports mental health

Healthy Coping

Our bodies are able to respond better to stress when we practice healthy coping techniques. Choosing unhealthy coping methods can be harmful to your health and hinder your ability to deal with stress.

Wellbeing

experience a range of positive emotions and mental health. Being able to express our emotions, it improves our health.

Does sports good for mental health?

Physical Health

Mental health and physical health are closely tied together. Long term (chronic) stress can cause health problems. Also, having a chronic illness can impact your mental health. Maintaining or improving our physical health benefits our overall health.

Positive Thinking

At times it can be challenging to have a positive outlook when dealing with transitions and life events. Positive thinking has been shown to improve our mental health. Think of things you can control and then make a plan to improve them.

Things you can do right now to improve your mental health:

Tip #1

Connect

Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can:

- help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- give you an opportunity to share positive experiences
- provide emotional support and allow you to support others

If possible try making time each day to connect with family, visit a friend you haven't seen in awhile or plan a virtual chat to keep in touch with loved ones.



Tip #2

Be Active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness, it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- raising your self-esteem
- helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood

It's best to find activities you enjoy and make them a part of your life, like yoga, walking, swimming, snowshoeing or riding your bike.



Tip #3

Keep Learning

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem
- helping you to build a sense of purpose
- helping you to connect with others

Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life, like trying a DIY project, taking up a new hobby or learning to cook something new.



Tip #4

Be Mindful

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.



Tip #5

Give to Others

Acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental wellbeing by:

- creating positive feelings and a sense of reward
- giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- helping you connect with other people

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, lending a listening ear to a friend or family member, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community or helping a neighbour with a project.



Tip #6

Get Outside

Spending time in green space or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing. For example, doing things like growing food or flowers, exercising outdoors or being around animals can have lots of positive effects. It can:

- improve your mood
- reduce feelings of stress, anxiety and anger
- help you take time out and relax
- help you be more active
- help you make new connections



Tip #7

Eat Healthier Foods

Choosing a variety of foods from Canada's Food Guide and drinking plenty of water when you're thirsty not only affects our physical health, but research suggests that what we eat may also affect the way we feel.

Choosing some healthier foods can help:

- improve your mood
- give you more energy
- help you think more clearly.

While eating healthy all the time is difficult, try to choose plant-based foods more often.



Tip #8

Connect with Your Culture

Connecting with culture can have a positive impact on your sense of belonging and identity – and in turn, on your mental health and overall wellbeing.

Maintaining activities that align with your culture provides a sense of self-identity, value and connection.

Consider connecting with older relatives (Elders) to learn about how they lived and traditions that are important to your culture.



Mental Health Telephone Supports

Timiskaming Crisis Response System	1-888-665-8888
<u>Bounce Back Ontario</u>	1-866-345-0224
<u>Connex Ontario</u>	1-866-531-2600
<u>Kids Help Phone</u>	1-800-668-6868 Text: CONNECT TO 686868
<u>Good 2 Talk</u> <i>(for post secondary students)</i>	1-866-925-5454 Text: GOOD2TALKON to 686868
<u>Crisis Text Line</u>	Adults text: WELLNESS to 741741 Frontline Workers text: FRONTLINE to 741741
<u>Ontario Online & Text Crisis Services</u>	Text: 258258 between 2 p.m. - 2 a.m. Online chat also available
<u>Canada Suicide Prevention Service</u>	1-833-456-4566 Text: 45645 between 4 p.m.-12 a.m.

TRANSLifeline

1-877-330-6366

LGBT Youth Line

1-800-268-9688

Text: 647-694-4275

Talk4Healing
(for Indigenous Women)

Crisis Line: 1-888-200--9997

Helpline: 1-855-554-4325

**First Nations and Inuit Hope
for Wellness Help Line**

1-855-242-3310

**Métis Nation of Ontario 24hr
Mental Health and Addictions
Crisis Line**

1-877-767-7572

**Assaulted Women's Helpline –
Ontario**

Text: **SAFE** to 7233

Seniors Safety Line

1-866-299-1011

Most people do a good job of taking care of their mental health; however, we all benefit when we learn the facts.

Promoting mental health to everyone:

- improves mental health
- reduces stigma
- helps people to recognize risks and know when and how to get help

If you have concerns about yourself or someone you care about, talk with a health care provider.

If you are an adult experiencing a mental health or addictions related crisis:

- Call ConnexOntario at 1-866-531-2600
- Call Timiskaming Crisis Response System at 1-888-665-8888
- Call 9-1-1 or visit your nearest hospital emergency department

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Services de santé du

TIMISKAMING

Health Unit



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**

Cochrane-Timiskaming

Mental health for all