

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The health and safety of students and families is a top priority during the COVID-19 pandemic and return to school. The purpose of this communication is to provide information about resources to help students and families know where to reach out for access to mental health services, as well as to promote positive mental health and well-being. We are all in this together.

There is no right or wrong way to react to the changes to our everyday life in response to the pandemic. Some people may experience feelings of anxiety, panic and worry, while others may feel calm, and/or seem unaffected. It is important to remember that acting or feeling different than usual is normal and expected during an abnormal event.

Parents and guardians benefit from increasing self care strategies to support their own well-being, and modelling healthy strategies for children and youth. All children and youth benefit from having the universal support of a caring, responsive adult that is available to listen, talk and offer support. For many children and youth, this universal support is all that is required. Find mental health resources on the RCDSB [student](#) and [parent](#) website.

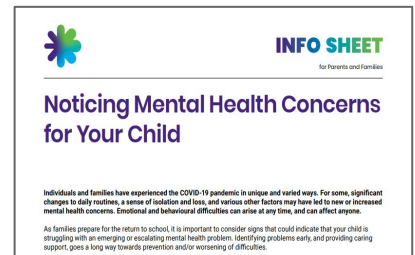
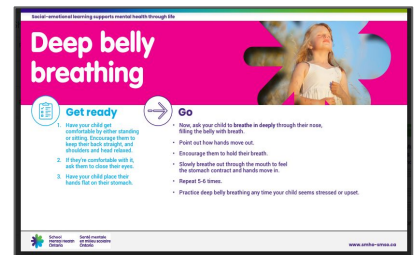
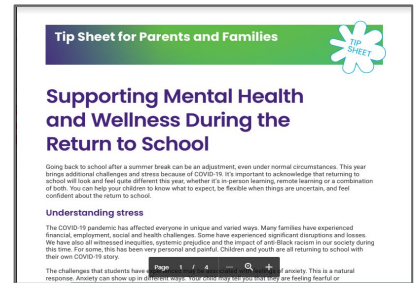
For some students, professional support may be required. Parents/guardians are encouraged to seek professional mental health services if they notice that their child or youth is showing significant changes in their thoughts, feelings and behaviors that indicate the level of disruption that the child or youth is experiencing is intense, frequent, and interfering with their ability to cope with everyday life.

The Renfrew County District School Board has supports and services for student mental health both in the classroom and remotely. We have a dedicated team of of School Support Counsellors and School Board Social Workers for providing school support and facilitating referrals to appropriate community services. [Click here for a list of each school, staff names, and emails to get more information and/or access mental health supports and services.](#) We are here to help students access the supports and services they need.

What to do if my child requires immediate mental health support?

If you are concerned about your child or youth's safety, seek immediate care by calling 911 or visiting your local emergency room immediately. Due to the pandemic, CHEO now offers virtual emergency room visits - click [here](#) for more information and to request a visit. Help lines are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - you can speak confidentially with a professional for support and/or to learn about services in your area.

Click the images to access these great resources!



Help Lines

- [Crisis Line](#) - 1 866 996 0991
- [Kids Help Phone](#)
1-800-668-6868, Text CONNECT to 686868
- [Crisis Line for Children, Youth, Families](#): 1-877-377-7775
- [PLEO | Parents' Lifeline | Soutien aux parents](#) for parental support
1-855-775-7005