

# Self-care for **CHILDREN and TEENS**

## WARNING SIGNS FOR MENTAL ILLNESS IN CHILDREN AND TEENS

Children and teens can experience a wide range of emotions. Pay attention to the following signs that show that something may be wrong:

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Avoiding school or poor school performance
- Returning to behaviours they have outgrown
- Difficulty paying attention and concentrating
- Excessive worrying or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and acting out behaviours in teens
- Avoiding activities they normally enjoy
- Having unexplained headaches or body pain
- Using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs

## SUPPORT YOUR CHILD OR TEEN

### Talk with your child or teen

- Help them understand what it is or what they should be doing
- Answer any questions they may have

### Be a role model

Children and teens will follow your example:

- Show them good habits, such as:
  - Taking breaks
  - Getting enough sleep and exercise
  - Eating well
  - Spending less time on social media

### Limit your family's exposure to media

- Set a schedule for news and media
- Limit consumption to a comfortable amount
- Help your children to understand the news

### Create a daily schedule or routine

- Create a daily schedule of activities you can do as a family, including:
  - Learning activities
  - Fun activities
  - Exercises
- If schools are closed, define learning time and educational activities in the holidays

### Reassure them that they are safe

- Let them know that it's okay to be worried or afraid
- Share how you deal with your own stress so they can cope with the situation
- Answer any questions they may have

### Connect with family and friends

Connect your child or teen to family and friends. Video calling is a great way to do this.

