



# WSD HEALTHY MINDS WEEK 2021



## Daily Tips for Self-Care for Elementary Schools May 3 to May 7, 2021

### May 3

#### **Healthy Minds Tip:** Mindfulness

Guess what? It's Healthy Minds Week in Winnipeg School Division (May 3 to May 7). Being healthy involves taking care of both our bodies and our minds. Now in its sixth year, Healthy Minds Week is a WSD week-long event devoted to recognizing and promoting mental health and wellness among students, families, staff, and the community. To keep our bodies healthy, we do things like eat healthy foods, get a good night's sleep, and be active every day. We also need to keep our minds healthy. We can do this by learning about our feelings, connecting with others, and practicing strategies like mindfulness. Our bodies and minds work together so we need to try to do all of these things to feel our best. This week, we will be learning about different ways to have a healthy mind and body. We know there have been so many changes over the last year so it is extra important that we find things that make us feel good and healthy.

With that in mind, we would like to offer a daily Healthy Minds tip for students (and families!) this week. Today's healthy minds tip is **MINDFULNESS**. Mindfulness is a way of breathing and staying in the moment that can help your mind and body feel super healthy. Mindfulness can help us at all times, but especially when we are feeling worried or overwhelmed. Get someone to read the following and try to follow along the best you can. It is okay if it's tricky at first and your mind wanders – mindfulness takes lots of practice!

Today we are going to focus on our breathing. As we begin, close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you continue breathing, focus on the way your breath feels coming in and out of your nose. Is it cold or warm? Shallow or deep? Next, focus on your chest. Can you feel it rise and fall as you breathe? Try to imagine what your breath might look like coming in and out through your nose. Now, gently move your focus to your belly. Notice it rising and falling as you breathe. Can you feel your breath filling your belly? Now focus on your breathing as a whole. Do you notice anything you did not notice before? When you are finished, take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth and slowly open your eyes. Notice how your body and mind feel after taking these moments to practice being mindful.



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### May 4

#### Healthy Minds Tip: Sleep & Exercise

Today's healthy minds tip is **SLEEP AND EXERCISE**. It is really important for both your body health and your mind health to take care of our bodies by being active and getting enough sleep at night. Your mind needs sleep so that your brain can remember things you have learned, help you pay attention, solve problems and be creative! Your body needs sleep so that your muscles, bones and skin can grow and your body can stay healthy and fight sickness.

Some tips for getting a good sleep are:

- 1) Try to go to bed around the same time every night.
- 2) Get lots of movement and exercise in during the day.
- 3) Try not to drink pop or eat sugary treats before bed because these things can make us stay awake!
- 4) Try not to use technology or watch TV/videos at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- 5) Have a bedtime routine that makes you feel good and feel sleepy. Maybe try taking a bath before bed or reading/listening to your favourite story or some nice relaxing music.

It is also important that we take care of our minds and bodies by being active! Try to get at least 30 minutes of movement in a day. This can look like dancing, doing yoga, playing tag or going for a nature walk. Check out this cool nature scavenger hunt walk that you can do while getting outside and staying healthy. [Five Senses Scavenger Hunt](#)





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### May 5

#### **Healthy Minds Tip:** Connection

It is really important that we make sure to connect with friends and loved ones in creative ways! Today's healthy minds tip is **CONNECTION**. Some ideas might include setting aside time to FaceTime or video chat with family and friends (try MessengerKids for younger kids so you can approve and know of who they are talking to and when), or even drawing pictures and writing letters to send to people in the mail! Try to take a little time every day to connect in some way!

We can also connect through helping others. Remember mindfulness? Today let's practice a mindfulness strategy that focuses on helping others. Have someone read the following and try to follow along the best you can.

As we begin, please close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. Think about a way that you can help another person today. This can be something simple like putting special drawings or thank you notes in our windows, or even just staying home! Other ideas could be dropping off some food at a local food bank or sending messages of thank you to all the helpers in the world right now. Visually picture what this will look like. Think about how you will feel and how you will make the other person feel. Think about what it would be like if you made helping others something you did every day. How would that make your life different? When you are done, take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth and slowly open your eyes.



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### May 6

#### Healthy Minds Tip: Gratitude

It's Thankful Thursday! Today's healthy minds tip is **GRATITUDE**. Gratitude is a just a fancy word for being thankful. Being grateful (or thankful) is important because it keeps our minds healthy, helps us better understand other people, makes us feel happy and even helps us sleep better. Here are some ideas to practice being grateful.

- 1) Gratitude Alphabet: Think of something to be thankful for from each letter of the alphabet. Example: A can be for AIR, B can be for BEST FRIEND, C can be for COOKIES!
- 2) Gratitude Collage: Cut out pictures from magazines and newspapers and make a collage of all the things that you are thankful for and then share this with someone.
- 3) Gratitude Jar: Get an empty jar or container, some pieces of paper and some markers or pens. Get everyone in your house to write down one thing that they are grateful for. At the end of the day pull out a gratitude note and read it to everyone. Do this daily or a few times a week and you will have lots of great ideas to pull from at any time!
- 4) Gratitude Art: Make a gratitude drawing or put up a big piece of paper in your house and get everyone to write/draw things they are grateful for. Another idea is to trace your hand and write down something you are thankful for on each finger. Put all the hands on a drawn tree trunk and you have your very own gratitude tree.
- 5) Gratitude Walk: Go for a walk and pay attention to all the things you are grateful for.
- 6) Go around the table with your loved ones and talk about three different things you are thankful for from the day! Take turns and try to come up with different things!



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### May 7

#### **Healthy Minds Tip:** Creative Expression

Today's healthy minds tip is **CREATIVE EXPRESSION**. Today let's focus on getting creative! We can do this in so many different ways. Art, dancing, singing, baking, cooking, making up stories, taking pictures, building with Lego and playing are all great ideas to try getting out your creative spirit. Remember, you don't need to be perfect! Being creative should be fun and make you feel good. Simply immerse yourself in creativity in whatever way makes sense for you. Have fun and improve your health at the same time. Try something creative today!