

Fact Sheet

Return to School: Support for Families



The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is a top priority as schools are reopening. SGDSB recognizes the unique challenges that COVID-19 has placed on individuals and families. Many of us are concerned about our physical and mental well-being. We are ready to return to learning with a continued focus on the social emotional growth of our learners. We want to provide resources and support to our students and families for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

We understand the importance of addressing the well-being of our students and communities through the integration of culturally relevant pedagogy, equity, learning about self-regulation, implementing positive behaviour strategies, engaging in self-care and building social emotional skills. We are all together as we strive to engage in learning no matter the environment.

Tips to Manage Return to Learning

We are hopeful for the future and how we are managing the COVID pandemic. These continue to be stressful times and we are all required to adapt. It is okay that this is challenging. Make sure that you are reducing pressure on yourself and your family. Make sure that you are reaching out to your school principal and school staff when you need assistance or

are feeling overwhelmed. Review the following tips to aid you in managing return to learning in fall 2021.

Take care of your mental health

Make sure you are practicing self-care, coping with stress in healthy ways and taking care of your mental health and the well-being of your family. Reach out to community services if you are needing extra support.

Focus on nutrition, sleep and exercise

Eat a well-balanced diet at regular intervals throughout the day. Utilize Canada's Food Guide. Avoid excessive caffeine and alcohol consumption and try to cook healthy meals together as a family.

Practice good sleeping habits. Have reasonable bed and wake up times. Avoid leaving tasks until late evening and late online or screen activities. Find relaxing activities to wind down. Sleep and nutrition are important in maintaining a healthy body and good immune system.

In North-Western Ontario, we can still practice social distancing and get outside. Plan for regular outdoor activity! Go for a walk, hike, snowshoe, go play in the back yard, shovel. If you have difficulty getting out, you can do yoga

Reach out to your child's educator and review challenges. Connect with other parents to see what they are doing to navigate challenges.

Prioritize your well-being and your family's mental health.
These are challenging times and we need to focus on balance and access our resources as needed.



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Develop a routine

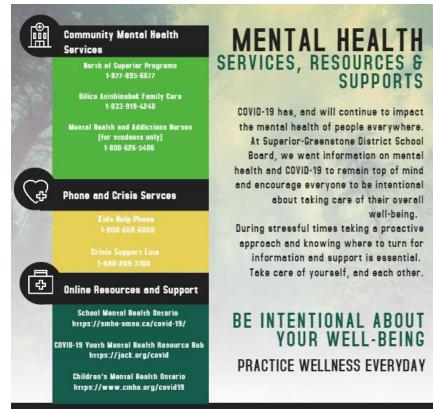
As we prepare through the summer, a good strategy is to set a routine for your whole family with a regular wake time, bed time, nutrition breaks, family breaks, exercise breaks and blocks of time for work. The best time to get work done is early morning, especially if you have children at home.

Exercise your brain-limit or reduce screen time

It is important to take a break from screen time, especially social media and news broadcasts. Keeping our minds stimulated is important to mental well-being. Learn a new skill, do something creative, do an online course, read a book or engage in professional learning.

SGDSB: Fundamental and Core Beliefs

- *Well-being, health and safety continue to be our primary focus. Prioritizing relationships and fostering connections are important.
- *We are still in a pandemic and we are working to minimize risk. Risk cannot be eliminated.
- *We have all encountered unique challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. We must be aware of this and practice from a trauma informed approach.
- *We are focused on careful planning and making intentional decisions. We will continue to be flexible and respond to the needs of our families and communities following the direction of provincial and federal governments.
- *We are all adapting. We are committed to learning, relationships and well-being regardless of the environment.
- *We will continue to learn to understand and manage stress: our own first, before we can help our students, families and co-workers manage theirs.
- *We are all constantly learning and moving towards personal growth and well-being.



TIPS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

- 1. DEVELOP A ROUTINE
- 2. PRACTICE SLEEP HYGIENE
- 3. EXERCISE EVERYDAY
- 4. FOCUS ON HEALTHY EATING AND NUTRITION
- 5. EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN: LIMIT SCREEN TIME
- 6. STAY CONNECTED WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY
- 7. REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT



*We will be providing learning opportunities with careful consideration to where our learners are at. We will place emphasis on embedding social-emotional learning in all environments.



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Ontario Government Learn at Home Resources:

https://www.ontario.ca/page/learnathome#resources parents

School Mental Health Ontario https://smho-smso.ca/parents-and-families/

Self-Regulation https://self-reg.ca/

Sleep Hygiene and Routine https://www.anxietycanada.com/sites/default/files/SleepHygiene.pdf

Nutrition

https://foodguide.canada.ca/en/

Exercise

https://csepguidelines.ca/wp-content/themes/csep2017/pdf/Canadian24HourMovementGuidelines2016 2.pdf

Mindfulness

https://www.nytimes.com/guide s/well/mindfulness-for-children

Maintaining Balance: Staying Connected to Land, Culture & Language

https://oneca.com/documents/Main taining%20Balance.pdf

