



## TIPS FOR PARENTS + CAREGIVERS

“When little people are overwhelmed by big emotion, it’s our job to share our calm, not join their chaos. — L.R. Knost

### Key Priorities for Parents and Caregivers

- Maintain the positive quality of your relationship with your child.
  - A key to this is in your own ability to stay calm and regulated and to utilize coping strategies when needed.
- Focus on a relationship and environment that nurtures security, safety, and trust.

### Key Outcome

*The effective long-term contribution to your child’s development of well-being, mental health, and resiliency—that is, the ability to cope through challenging times*

As your child navigates through school, there may be events that cause them to feel uncertain and overwhelmed. These events may also make you feel concerned about how their education and your family may be affected. This tip sheet was developed to help reassure you that there are resources available to support you during these times.

1. **Refer to your child’s school website** for specific information related to their needs within the context of current and updated planning, practices, and procedures.
2. **Create a positive relationship with your child’s teachers/school team.**
  - Advocate for a system of communication that works for you—much of the information will be available online. If you do not have Internet access, please state the communication tool that will work best.
  - If you have any questions or concerns, or require information related to you or your child at school, your school connection is key. It is important to utilize the expertise and resources within your own school to help limit anxiety.
  - If you have additional concerns about your child, you may be able to access the support of a school counsellor in some schools. Your child’s teacher would be able to provide you with information about how to access that support.
  - Most school divisions in Manitoba offer access to clinical psychologists and social workers who may offer support services for your child or family. Ask your child’s teacher, school counsellor, resource teacher, or principal how you can gain access to these supports.

- If you continue to have questions or concerns or if you are seeking information about potential mental health and stress-related responses or worries, please contact your or your child's primary healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider is the person who is in the best position to assist you in finding the right resources to meet your child's needs.

### **3. Search out information and resources in response to your questions.**

## **Resources and Supports You May Find Helpful**

### ***Manitoba Parent Zone***

This is a guide developed by Healthy Child Manitoba for parents of pre-schoolers and Kindergarteners who are starting school.

[www.manitobaparentzone.ca/tips-news/pdf/getting-ready-school.pdf](http://www.manitobaparentzone.ca/tips-news/pdf/getting-ready-school.pdf)

### **Kids Help Phone (KHP)**

This resource offers tips to support youth as they go back to school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-involved/programs-resources/resources-caring-adults/3-tips-to-support-youth-with-back-to-school-during-covid-19/>

### **Healthychildren.org**

This American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) website offers a number of resources related to parenting during the pandemic.

[www.healthychildren.org/](http://www.healthychildren.org/)

### **The Strongest Families program**

The Strongest Families program provides evidence-based services to children and families seeking help for mental health and other issues affecting health and well-being.

It provides timely care to families by teaching skills through our unique distance coaching approach—supporting families over the phone and Internet in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. Programs are designed to support children and youth from 3 to 17 years of age. Referrals are made through the student services administrator in your school division or your regional health authority.

For more information about the program, go to <https://strongestfamilies.com/> or talk with your child's school team or your family physician.

### **My Mental Health Checklist**

This checklist is a great resource, particularly on days where your child is feeling a little down or anxious.

<https://youthtoolkit.stigmafreesociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/FINAL-FINAL-MY-MENTAL-HEALTH-CHECKLIST-1.pdf>

### **Your Regional Health Authority**

Each of Manitoba's regional health authorities offers child and adolescent mental health supports.

- Northern Health Region  
<https://northernhealthregion.com/programs-and-services/mental-health/>
- Prairie Mountain Health  
[www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/mental-health](http://www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/mental-health)
- Southern Health  
[www.southernhealth.ca/en/finding-care/find-a-service/mental-health/](http://www.southernhealth.ca/en/finding-care/find-a-service/mental-health/)
- Southern Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Referral Form  
[www.southernhealth.ca/assets/Finding-Care/e40085c484/Referral-Form-Child-and-Adolescent.pdf](http://www.southernhealth.ca/assets/Finding-Care/e40085c484/Referral-Form-Child-and-Adolescent.pdf)
- Interlake-Eastern RHA  
[www.ierha.ca/programs-services/mental-health/](http://www.ierha.ca/programs-services/mental-health/)
- Winnipeg RHA – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centralized Intake  
204-958-9660 or <https://matc.ca/services/centralized-intake/>