

Psych to Thrive

Schools and families share a common goal: ensuring student success.

Psychology staff at Dufferin-Peel work together with schools and families to promote student achievement, mental health and well-being. Our new **PSYCH 5 TO THRIVE** initiative offers 5 strategies to help students thrive at school and at home.

Each one called by name (Isaiah 43:1)

Talking to Teens About Stress

Stress isn't just a problem for adults. Young people often have unhealthy levels of stress. Many teens experience high, unhealthy stress levels. School is the top source of stress for teens, followed by deciding what to do after high school. Stress can lead to both emotional and physical symptoms.

The good news is that you can help your child learn to keep stress in check.



Recognize the Symptoms: Be aware of the signs that your teen is experiencing unhealthy stress levels. Irritability, anger, excessive worry, insomnia or sleeping difficulties, and disordered eating (overeating or eating too little) are common signs of stress in young people.



Communicate/Lend an Ear: Keep the conversation going. Spend one-on-one time regularly with your teen, and use it as an opportunity for shared decision making. Really listen to what he or she has to say, and let your teen know you value their perspective.



Teach Healthy Coping Mechanisms: Physical activity is one of the best ways to manage stress. Yoga, biking, walking and swimming are good activities for teens who don't like team sports. Encourage your teen to get enough sleep. Limiting screen time and stimulating activities in the evening helps teens fall asleep more easily. Teach your teen to develop good ways to manage stressful tasks.



Create a Safe Harbour: Family routines and rituals are reassuring for children and teens, and can be especially comforting during stressful times. Family rituals help give family members a chance to connect regularly (e.g., a daily family meal). Family dinners can give teens a chance to debrief while allowing you a regular opportunity to check in with your teen.



Model Healthy Behaviours: Actions speak louder than words, and that's especially true when parenting teens. Do your best to eat healthy foods, engage in physical activity, get enough sleep and take steps to get your own stress under control.

Ask for help if you're concerned about your child's stress. Psychologists are experts in helping people change unhealthy behaviours and manage stress.

For further information, contact the current psychoeducational consultant, Jessica Pereira at your child's school or Dr. Debra Lean, Chief Psychologist, at (905) 890-0708, Ext. 24330.

