

# Understanding Youth Mental Health



## General Tip Sheet

### CONVERSE



- Allow space for your child to speak
- Have informed, honest and vulnerable one-on-one conversations without blame
- Use “I” statements when sharing personal feelings
- Use What & How questions versus Why, stay in the present
- Ask them what can we do together
- Take more of their input into consideration “doing it with” not “to or for” when it comes to decision making



### ACCEPT

- Set boundaries and bottom-line expectations that you can follow through on
- Be mindful and know that your child’s mental health issues are not a negative reflection of yourself
- Choose your battles and the right time to talk Remember to use self-care strategies to take care of your own mental health.

### BOUNDARIES

- Destigmatize mental health by having open conversations on it from early on
- Allow expression of feelings (don't take it personally)
- Avoid trying to fix them
- Validate emotions, “It’s okay not to be okay”
- Try not to label emotions as negative or positive

### SUPPORT



- Celebrate your child’s individuality and differences
- Focusing on their strengths
- Recognize and support small steps towards positive change
- Simply being there can go a long way even if it’s in silence
- Allow them to make mistakes in a safe environment
- Present help in a positive empowering way

### BOOKS

- *Darius the Great is Not Okay* by Adib Khorram
- *The Weight of Your Sky* by Hanna Alkaf
- *Highly Illogical Behavior* by John Corey
- *Whaley Challenger Deep* by Neal Shusterman
- *Little & Lion* by Brandy Colbert
- *For a Muse of Fire* by Heidi Heilig
- *History is All You Left Me* by Adam Silvera
- *The Astonishing Colour of After* by Emily X.R. Pan
- *All That I Can Fix* by Crystal Chan
- *CLEAN* by Amy Reed
- *The Art of Starving* by Sam J. Miller



### RESOURCES

**Hope for Wellness**  
hopeforwellness.ca  
1-(855)-242-3310

**Crisis Text Line**  
crisistextline.ca  
1-(866)-531-2600

**Kid's Help Phone**  
1-(800)-668-6868

**ConnexOntario**  
Connexontario.ca  
1-866-531-2600

**Centre for Addiction and Mental Health**  
CAMH.ca  
1-(800)-463-2338

**Parent Helpline**  
(778)-782-3548  
Info@informationchildren.com

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