

# Student Mental Health and Well-Being



TCDSB Mental Health Services provided by **Psychology, Social Work, and Guidance** personnel

## Technology: Teaching Students How To Use It Appropriately



The use of technology and access to the internet has enabled students to connect to others as well as gain information instantaneously. It has enabled children to use interactive games to learn information, practice social skills through online communities, and has opened up a world of endless possibilities. While this has been a tremendous benefit, it has also brought with it many challenges. “Technology use presents a problem when it interferes with young people’s ability to do the things that are expected of them, such as attending school regularly and on time, maintaining good grades, participating in family life and engaging in face-to-face friendships” as indicated by CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health). According to CAMH, it’s important to consider the following questions:

- **“Where do young people use technology?”** Is your child using technology in an open space where you can see what they are viewing?

We’re pleased to send you the May edition of the Student Mental Health and Well-Being Newsletter.

Please feel free to share and pass it along!

- **“What are they doing with it?”** Is their use of technology appropriate? Are they viewing content that is age appropriate? Are they gossiping about others and texting inappropriate pictures of themselves or others? Are they connecting with strangers online?
- **“How much time do they spend using it?”** Are they using technology to complete homework and assignments or are they staying up all night playing games or texting? Is their use of technology interfering with other activities or people in their lives?

“Excessive use of technology may not produce physical symptoms in the same way as excessive use of alcohol and other drugs does, but it can lead to significant negative impacts on the life of a young person, leading to poorer physical and mental health.” Some students with learning challenges may spend excessive time online in order to avoid homework that they find difficult. Other students may spend an excessive amount of time researching a topic, while some may focus all their attention playing online games rather than interacting with peers.

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## **Fostering The Family:**

### **The TCDSB Pastoral Plan 2015-18 “ Together With one Voice: Harmonizing Our Faith Through Family, Parish, and School” 2016 focuses on the PARISH**

Friday May 5<sup>th</sup> is Parish Family Day. There will be a special celebration at the Catholic Education Centre to showcase student work focusing on the ways that our parishes and our parish priests contribute to our schools and communities.

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### **Month of Mary**

The month of May is a special time for us to celebrate and pay homage to our Blessed Mother Mary.

### **A Child’s Prayer to Mary**

Holy Mary, mother fair,  
Filled with love for God,  
Pray for us in all our needs.  
Pray for us today.

Amen

*Obtained from [www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org)*

Some students may spend time on websites where they share self-harming techniques or engage in role-playing video games in order to pretend to be someone else as a form of escape.

CAMH outlines several tips for teaching children how to use technology safely. Here’s a few to consider:

- Prior to allowing your child to use technology have a discussion about appropriate and safe use. Engage in open conversations about the possible dangers of using the internet and communicating with others via social media.
- Discuss family “rules” around the use of technology and how to respect others eg. you may consider a “no-texting” rule during mealtimes.
- Monitor your child when they are using technology. This can be done by having a computer in a common area of the house or having access to their accounts.
- Discuss priorities and having a balanced lifestyle. Establish limits with regard to use of technology versus doing other tasks or activities eg. completing homework, getting together with friends, playing sports etc.
- Pay attention to your own use of technology and remember that you are a great role model.
- If you have concerns regarding your child’s use of technology engage in an open conversation with your child. You can also speak with a school mental health professional for further support.

*Information obtained from CAMH “Youth, Families and Interactive Technology, 2016” at [www.camh.ca](http://www.camh.ca)*

## **Mental Health Initiatives 2016-2017**

- Support for schools in developing a mentally healthy classroom. See Supporting Minds on the Ministry’s website and [edugains.ca](http://edugains.ca).
- Inclusion of mental health to school SLIPs
- safeTALK suicide awareness workshops for staff available via PAL
- Building partnerships with community agencies, families, and parishes.
- Psych. And SW supporting Newcomer Mental Health

## Suggested Websites:

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**CAMH Treatment Services for Problem Gambling, Gaming and Internet Use** (for 16 and older) 416 535-8501, press 2

**Children's Mental Health Ontario** [www.kidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca)

**Kids Help Phone** 1 800 668-6868 [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**MediaSmarts** A Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy. [www.mediasmarts.ca](http://www.mediasmarts.ca)

**Mind Your Mind** [www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)

**TextED.ca** An initiative of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, this interactive website is designed to teach Canadian teens how to be safe, responsible and respectful users of texting technologies. [www.texted](http://www.texted.ca)

## A Laugh A Day...



## TCDSB Celebrates Children's Mental Health Awareness Week May 1-5, 2017



TCDSB Celebrates  
Children's Mental Health  
Awareness Week  
First Week in May 2017



Resources and Daily Activities at

<https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/SpecialEducation/mhs/News/mhw/Pages/Childrens-Mental-Health-Awareness-Week.aspx>

Patricia Marra-Stapleton, Psychological Associate/Mental Health Lead

[patricia.marra-stapleton@tcdsb.org](mailto:patricia.marra-stapleton@tcdsb.org)

Marci Buhagiar, Psychologist [marci.buhagiar@tcdsb.org](mailto:marci.buhagiar@tcdsb.org)