

#GETLOUD

66TH ANNUAL CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK
SCHOOL TOOLKIT



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
La santé mentale pour tous

INTRODUCTION

CMHA Mental Health Week is almost here! Once again, we're asking Canadians to join us and GET LOUD for Mental Health from May 1st to the 7th.

To GET LOUD taking action and using your voice to raise awareness and build support for those around you and for yourself. It means speaking out against the discrimination and stigma directed at people with mental illnesses.

Every year, CMHA selects a specific mental health-related issue to focus on during CMHA Mental Health Week. This year, we are paying special attention to the long times Canadians experience waiting for a mental health professional – and improvements to the mental health system in Canada – as part of our **Sick of Waiting: Get Loud for Mental Health** campaign. We're sick of waiting a year or more for access to a mental health professional. However, we need more than just access to a doctor and medication if we're going to prevent illness and promote mental health. We are still waiting for access to counselling, community-based interventions, and social supports that aren't funded.

In any given year, 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental health problem, and by the time Canadians reach 40 years of age, 1 in 2 will have – or have had – a mental illness. Long wait times are a serious issue for any Canadian seeking care; those with mental health problems or illnesses know this very well. Some youth reported that they had wait up to a year and a half to see a psychiatrist. These long wait times are not only frustrating, but being forced to wait for so long can make whatever problem or illness someone is experiencing worse.

During CMHA Mental Health Week, we also encourage all Canadians to reflect on their own attitudes towards mental health. Reducing discrimination and stigma is paramount, so that people no longer feel shame due to a mental illness and will no longer wait to seek the support and help they need. Some of the ways we're suggesting Canadians #GETLOUD this year include sharing their experiences and speaking out on social media, talking to a loved one or friend, and much more! For more ideas on how you can GET LOUD, visit [mentalhealthweek.ca](https://www.mentalhealthweek.ca).

This toolkit (for Grades 4-12) is intended to help your school GET LOUD for CMHA Mental Health Week.

We are going to be heard from coast to coast to coast. During CMHA Mental Health Week, encourage your students to use the CMHA Social Activation in this Toolkit to write in how they will GET LOUD and share a selfie with the image on social media.

This is our 66th annual CMHA Mental Health Week and we want to be heard loud and clear. We're proud to be the organization that started this tradition, and that Canadians have embraced it so openly.

Clear your throat, set up some speakers and a microphone, and practice your outside voice because the time for all of us to GET LOUD is right around the corner!

If you have further questions about CMHA Mental Health Week, please email info@cmha.ca

Visit ShopCMHA.ca to order any of brochures about mental health and mental illness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Social Media and Web Components	5
Sample Facebook and Twitter Posts	5
Shareable Images	9
Fact Sheet	11
General Fact Sheet	11
Letter to Parents	13
General letter to parents/guardians	13
CMHA Mental Health Week Lesson Plan	14
Lesson One: What is Mental Health?	14
Lesson Two: School Life and Stress Management	15
Lesson Three: Stigma	17
Lesson Four: Self-Esteem and Inner Dialogue	18
Lesson Five: Moving Forward.....	20
Additional Images and Handouts	22
CMHA Mental Health Week Posters.....	22
CMHA Mental Health Week Postcard.....	23
Social Activation	25

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEB COMPONENTS

SAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS

The Canadian Mental Health Association's 66th Annual CMHA Mental Health Week is May 1-7!

Help us support #MentalHealth Week and raise awareness for positive mental health. Tips on how you can #GETLOUD can be found on CMHA's website www.mentalhealthweek.ca.

Did you know that up to 70% of young adults living with mental health problems report that their symptoms started in childhood? Let's all #GETLOUD for CMHA Mental Health Week! Between May 1st and May 7th, take action and use your voice to raise awareness and build support in your community. Join us in promoting this very important week.

Work on your outside voice, because we're about to #GETLOUD. What do we mean by that? #GETLOUD means speaking up to stop the discrimination and the stigma directed towards those with mental health problems or illnesses. Each year, CMHA Mental Health Week addresses a different focus in mental health. This year, CMHA is addressing the long wait times people experience while waiting for a mental health professional – and improvements to the mental health system in Canada – with its campaign: Sick of Waiting: Get Loud for Mental Health.

Canadian youth experiencing a mental health problem or mental illness can wait a year or more before being viewed by a psychiatrist. Not only is this frustrating for someone in need of medical attention, but their illness could worsen as they wait for treatment. Something's got to give; #GETLOUD because we are #SickofWaiting.

It's the 66th Annual CMHA Mental Health Week. Join us from May 1st to May 7th as we raise our voice to raise awareness and build support networks for all Canadians struggling with mental illnesses. CMHA Mental Health Week starts May 1st! #GETLOUD for #MHWeek17 and tell everyone we're all #SickofWaiting

CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK MAY 1-7

[SCHOOL] is excited to support the 66th Annual CMHA Mental Health Week! Visit mentalhealthweek.ca to #GETLOUD

It's CMHA Mental Health Week! [SCHOOL] is a proud sponsor of #MHWeek17 and the #SickofWaiting campaign. Visit mentalhealthweek.ca for more information, and how to #GETLOUD

It's CMHA Mental Health Week! Let's #GETLOUD for mental health. Let's #GETLOUD for those who need it. And for those forced to wait over a year for a psychiatrist, let's tell everyone we're all #SickofWaiting. Together we can all make a difference. #MHWeek17

Why does our school need to #GETLOUD for mental health? Because 70% of young adults reported that their symptoms started in childhood, and because 17% of all deaths among children aged 10 to 14 in 2012 were deaths by suicide. [SCHOOL] agrees that just one death by suicide is one too many. Join us for CMHA Mental Health Week as we #GETLOUD with our students – your children.

What does #GETLOUD for mental health mean? Getting loud means speaking out against discrimination and the stigma directed at those with mental health problems or mental illnesses, or the struggles they are forced to endure. This year in particular, it means ending the long wait times youth in need of mental health care often experience. This, CMHA Mental Health Week, [SCHOOL] is supporting efforts to #GETLOUD by telling everyone we're #SickofWaiting. Visit mentalhealthweek.ca and help CMHA make some noise.

We can't hijack the PA system, so we'll settle for getting loud on Facebook. It's the 66th Annual CMHA Mental Health Week. Visit mentalhealthweek.ca and let's show Canada how we can all #GETLOUD

What are you doing to support CMHA Mental Health Week? We are [state what your school is doing]. Visit mentalhealthweek.ca for more ways to #GETLOUD

SAMPLE TWEETS

@CMHA_NTL Mental Health Week is May 1-7. Join us and #GETLOUD. Visit mentalhealthweek.ca for more details

The 66th annual @CMHA_NTL #MentalHealth Week starts May 1st. #GETLOUD for #MHWeek17

@CMHA_NTL's #MentalHealthWeek starts May 1st. Let's #GETLOUD for positive mental health. Help us get the word out. #GETLOUD and RT

Join us as we #GETLOUD for #MentalHealthWeek. We are #SickofWaiting and proud sponsors of #MHWeek17

How long have you waited to see a professional for treatment? Tell us why you're #SickofWaiting and #GETLOUD

CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK MAY 1-7

It's @CMHA_NTL #MentalHealthWeek. Let's #GETLOUD and tell everyone we're #SickofWaiting Visit mentalhealthweek.ca or retweet to #GETLOUD

It's CMHA Mental Health Week and [SCHOOL] is a proud supporter of @CMHA_Ntl #MHWeek17. Now #GETLOUD

70% of young adults with mental health problems said their problems started in childhood. Let's #GETLOUD for them this #MHWeek17

Nobody outgrows mental health problems. But there is help. #GETLOUD with @CMHA_Ntl to learn more

In 2012, 17% of all deaths by suicide were among children aged 10 to 14. One is too many. #GETLOUD for @CMHA_NTL #MHWeek17

It's @CMHA_NTL #MentalHealthWeek. Let's #GETLOUD to raise awareness & end the stigma towards #Mentalillness.

This week, #GETLOUD and tell everyone why you're #SickOfWaiting

You don't have to sing in a screamo band to #GETLOUD. End the stigma against mental illness this @CMHA_NTL #MHWeek17

Turn up the volume! #GETLOUD to end discrimination against Canadians with mental illnesses

43% of Canadians saw their doctor the same day or the day after they phoned for an appointment. We're #SickofWaiting #GETLOUD

#SickofWaiting to see a mental health professional? You're not alone. #GETLOUD and be heard

We're raising awareness for #MHWeek17. Let's all #GETLOUD for @CMHA_NTL #MentalHealthWeek and to let everyone know we're #SickofWaiting

Visit mentalhealthweek.ca to #GETLOUD. @CMHA_NTL is asking all Canadians to raise awareness and #GETLOUD for #MentalHealth. #MHW2017

#GETLOUD to promote positive mental health. #GETLOUD to end long wait times for services. #MHWeek17 #SickofWaiting

The louder we get for #MHWeek17 the bigger a difference we will make. #GETLOUD

We are raising awareness for #MentalHealth and long wait times in our classrooms during @CMHA_NTL #MHW2017

SHAREABLE IMAGES

FACEBOOK



Sample image. Please click to access more.

TWITTER



Sample image. Please click to access more.

WEB BANNER



Sample image. Please click to access more.

EMAIL TAG



FACT SHEET

To GET LOUD means speaking up for those around you – and for yourself. It means speaking out against the discrimination and stigma directed at people with mental illnesses. It means using your voice to raise awareness and build support.

66TH ANNUAL CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK MAY 1-7, 2017

#GETLOUD

GET LOUD to promote mental health.
The louder we get, the bigger the change we will make.

We all want to be healthy. No one can be truly healthy without paying attention to their mental health. It involves how we feel, think, act and interact with the world around us. Mental health is about coping with the stresses of life and contributing to our community. Ask for help or seek advice from someone with expertise—give your mental health the care it needs and deserves.

Visit MentalHealthWeek.ca to **GET LOUD** for mental health

Your path to mental well-being

Being mentally healthy isn't about avoiding problems or trying to achieve a "perfect" or "normal" life. It's about living well and having the tools to cope with difficult situations and life's many challenges.

Each person's path to mental well-being is unique. We all have our own goals, our own challenges, our own talents and our own supports. But good mental health is within everyone's reach.

Staying mentally healthy is like staying physically fit—it requires effort and support.

But the rewards are worth it! Everyone faces stresses and demands in their life, but we all need and deserve breaks from them. Daily physical exercise, for instance, not only makes you stronger and more fit, but it can also improve your mood and your sense of well-being.

Sponsors:



Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Sample image. Please click to access original file.

Taking charge of your mental well-being

- If you have a mental health concern, speak with your doctor and ask for a referral to a specialist if needed
- If you need support in your work life, speak to a career counsellor or human resources expert
- To repair relationships with loved ones and friends, enlist help from someone with a specific expertise in relationship issues
- For financial challenges, contact a financial planner or debt advisor
- If you are looking for help navigating the mental health system, you might want to speak to someone who has had their own experience, or to a qualified system navigator or case manager
- Additionally, other people with lived experience of mental health problems may be able to provide invaluable support and advice. Just remember that everyone's path to recovery is unique, and what was right for one person may or may not be right for you

POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

- Talk to your doctor if you are experiencing problems with your mental health
- Contact your local CMHA branch at cmha.ca
- Check with your employer, or your benefit provider: your Employee Assistance Plans (EAP) or benefits may provide counselling services
- Reach out to people you trust: personal connections are some of the most powerful healing tools
- Live well: a healthy lifestyle can boost your mood

RESOURCES

Here are other sources of information and inspiration that can help:

- Websites of reputable mental health organizations such as CMHA (cmha.ca), the Mental Health Commission of Canada (mentalhealthcommission.ca) and the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (camimh.ca)
- Books and apps about specific mental health problems and coping strategies
- Audio and video resources
- Courses and workshops offered through community centres, schools and universities such as Bounce Back, Mental Health First Aid, Living Life to the Full, and ASiST
- Seek out people you admire for their ability to find balance

How CMHA can help

Every year, CMHA's remarkable cross-Canada team of more than 10,000 staff and volunteers provides more than half a million Canadians with vital services and support. Contact your

local CMHA, or other community mental health organization, to learn more about support and resources in your area. For more information on mental health programs and services in your community or to donate to CMHA, visit our websites: cmha.ca and mentalhealthweek.ca.



Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is the most established, most extensive community mental health organization in Canada. Through a presence in hundreds of neighbourhoods across every province, CMHA provides advocacy and resources that help to prevent mental health problems and illnesses, support recovery and resilience, and enable all Canadians to flourish and thrive.

Sample image. Please click to access original file.

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

CMHA Mental Health Week is almost here! Once again, the Canadian Mental Health Association is asking Canadians to join them and GET LOUD for Mental Health from May 1st to May 7th.

What does it mean to GET LOUD for Mental Health? It means taking action and using our voices to raise awareness and build support for our friends, family, colleagues, and community, and for ourselves. It means calling on Canadians to end discrimination against those with mental health problems and illnesses, and to end the stigma and shame directed at them.

Each year, CMHA Mental Health Week addresses a different issue relevant to mental health in Canada. This year's campaign is called Sick of Waiting: Get Loud for Mental Health.

Long wait times are experienced by many Canadians in need of medical attention. When phoning about a medical concern, 59% of Canadians hear back from their doctors on the same day they call about a concern, and only 43% get to see their doctor either on the same day or the day after making a call. Seeing a specialist can take even longer, especially if you are struggling with a mental health problem or illness.

It is important that our school speak up about mental health problems because 70% of young adults with mental illnesses reported that their symptoms started in childhood. Despite that, little help – if any – has been offered. In 2015, 6,000 Canadian youth who needed mental health care waited up to a year before they saw a psychiatrist or any other physician-recommended specialist. That number was expected to double in 2016.

CMHA has packaged up some great GET LOUD ideas in both this toolkit and in their electronic version, which can be found at: mentalhealthweek.ca. Some of the ways they're suggesting Canadians #GETLOUD include getting loud on social media, talking to a loved one or friend, and more.

Remember: the 66th annual CMHA Mental Health Week is May 1st to the 7th and we plan on being heard loud and clear. The time for all of us to GET LOUD and tell the world we're SICK OF WAITING is right around the corner.

If you have further questions about CMHA Mental Health Week, please email or contact (Your contact information here).

CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK LESSON PLAN

INTRODUCTION TO THE CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK CURRICULUM

The following is a lesson plan to follow during CMHA Mental Health Week. Combating stigma and making a difference in our community starts with education. It is imperative that young people understand what mental health is and why it is important to have. In letting students know mental health problems and illnesses are both normal and treatable, this will not only help them understand and support peers with lived experience, but can also help students experiencing a mental health problem better understand their situation.

The following five-lesson plan has been prepared for the week of May 1st. Please conduct a lesson/workshop per day of that week.

LESSON ONE: WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

DEFINITIONS

Mental health involves a balance in all aspects of life, which enhances the ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges that arise. This includes learning better in school, working more productively, forming and maintaining positive relationships with other people, contributing to the community, and performing practical routine tasks relating to personal care, nutrition, physical activity, sleep, recreation and spiritual needs. Having good mental health means also being able to think clearly and realistically about yourself and others. Therefore, it can be understood to mean how a person thinks, acts and feels when faced with life situations.¹

Good mental health contributes to overall well-being. Mental health is just as important as physical health; in fact, they are interrelated. Inevitably, there are times when things just don't go the way we'd like them to. Life is full of changes, challenges and difficulties. When we're upset, we can feel sad, anxious, undecided or angry. It's normal. It happens to everyone. What's important at that time is to identify what is bothering us so we can understand why we feel bad and try to find solutions.²

¹ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 6

² My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 13

ACTIVITY

Ask your students how they define good mental health. Write their definitions on the board, or ask them to go into groups, have them workshop answers, and then elect representatives of each group to come forward. Afterwards, talk to the students about their answers.³

LESSON TWO: SCHOOL LIFE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL LIFE

Starting high school is often one of the first big changes in young people's lives. Some take it in stride, others find it more difficult. In this context, helping them learn to know themselves better is a winning strategy and will make it easier for them to adapt to new situations. We know that having good coping skills is a key characteristic of mental health.

We can say that a person who is well integrated into a new environment tends to have behaviours and attitudes that are characteristic of good mental health. Smooth transitioning between elementary school and high school can be expressed in a variety of ways: involvement in extra-curricular activities, positive friendships, harmonious relationships with teachers and school staff, active in-class participation, development of a sense of belonging, to name a few.⁴

Elementary school is a time of discovery and new experiences for all children. We learned a lot in elementary school, not only academically but also socially, culturally and in sport. The things we did well and of which we are proud, and the skills that permitted us to succeed in elementary school also enable us to identify our personal strengths. These strengths can be used to manage new situations. We start high school with some knowledge about the world and about ourselves. We're not starting from scratch! Now, it's time to focus on these experiences and use our personal strengths to keep moving forward.⁵

³ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 12

⁴ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 31

⁵ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 33

ACTIVITY

Divide your class into groups and ask them this: “What did I learn in elementary school?” Ask for their best answers to see what personal strengths they developed and what networks they had.⁶

STRESS

Stress is part of everyday life. Some stress is positive and stimulating. For instance, feeling a bit nervous before an exam helps prepare for it. However, other stress is negative and sometimes so intense that it becomes harmful and has detrimental effects on physical and mental health. Talking about stress management with young people can prepare them to deal with life's difficulties. It also helps prevent negative impacts of prolonged stress.

Stress is the body's reaction to an event or request. It helps us adapt to new situations, whether these are pleasant or not. We feel stress when there is an imbalance between expectations we must meet (or think we must meet) and the resources at our disposal. Prolonged, unmanaged stress can have significant impacts on a person's mental and physical health, as well as on his or her behaviour.⁷

ACTIVITY ONE

Get your students to identify different possible stressors that someone could face or experience in their lives.⁸

ACTIVITY TWO

Ask your students how they can manage stress, and identify any activities that someone could find relaxing.⁹

⁶ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 33

⁷ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 47

⁸ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 49

⁹ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 57,61

LESSON THREE: STIGMA

DEFINITIONS

Stigma refers to “a cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate the general public to fear, reject, avoid and discriminate against people with mental illnesses. Stigma is not just a matter of using the wrong word or action. Stigma is about disrespect. It is the use of negative labels to identify a person living with mental illness. Stigma is a barrier. Fear of stigma and the resulting discrimination discourages individuals and their families from getting the help they need.”¹⁰

There are many negative stereotypes about mental illness, including those just mentioned. These misconceptions have a direct impact on attitudes toward people with mental illness; they result in discriminatory behaviours and practices. These stereotypes lead to expectations that people with mental illness will fail when looking for a job, living independently or building long-term relationships. The truth is employers are reluctant to hire people with psychiatric disabilities; landlords are less likely to rent apartments to them; and supportive housing is not welcome in most neighbourhoods.

The negative reaction to mental illness leads to discrimination that can be as hard for people to deal with as the symptoms of the disorder itself. For people with mental illness, stigma can be a barrier to finding a place to live, finding a job, finding friends, building a long-term relationship and connecting to the broader community — things that everyone needs for mental health.¹¹

ACTIVITY ONE

Ask students about the first things that come to mind when they think of mental illness or a person with mental illness. Get them to write these ideas down on cue cards. Be sure to tell them there are no right or wrong answers; that it is an opportunity to bring up anything that comes to mind. Encourage them to write down as many ideas as they can, then stick the cue cards on the walls. Once all responses are on the wall, the teacher facilitates a discussion about which of the following categories each one fits into:

- myth (widely held, but false idea)
- misconception or misunderstanding
- hurtful or disrespectful language
- factual information¹²

¹⁰ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2004; as accessed from CMHA’s Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide. Pg. 64

¹¹ Talking about Mental Illness. Pg. 7

¹² Talking about Mental Illness. Pg. 23

ACTIVITY TWO

Show students the video “Courageous Not Crazy: Living With Stigma” (which is 20 minutes long) and host a discussion afterwards on what they saw, how they felt, and if it affected their view of mental health problems and illnesses.¹³

LESSON FOUR: SELF-ESTEEM AND INNER DIALOGUE

SELF-ESTEEM

Adolescence is a time during which teens begin constructing their adult identities by reorganizing their thought patterns, values and behaviours. This metamorphosis can be positive when young people evolve in favourable psychological, social and environmental conditions. It is an important period during which they can build and enhance self-esteem. As we saw earlier, self-esteem is a key characteristic of mental health. If it does not have a solid base, it vacillates according to other people's circumstances, experiences or judgments. Helping young people to acquire self-esteem is one of the most valuable gifts they can receive. No matter what their experiences were during childhood, when given proper support, teenagers can develop positive self-esteem.

Self-esteem depends on how we perceive ourselves, the opinion we have of ourselves; therefore, it is the worth we give ourselves, especially our awareness of this worth. A person can have great qualities, be talented in many areas and have undeniable skills, but without an awareness of these qualities, talents and skills, he or she may nevertheless have poor self-esteem.

Self-esteem is not synonymous with narcissism or self-centeredness. When it is a question of acknowledging one's strengths, many people hesitate: "If I acknowledge I have qualities and skills, am I just boasting? Or lacking humility?" On the contrary! Self-esteem is a realistic perception of oneself; it necessarily supposes that a person is aware of personal strengths, but also of his or her difficulties and limits in several aspects of life.¹⁴

¹³ CMHA Mental Health and High School Curriculum Guide. Pg. 65

¹⁴ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 69, 70

ACTIVITY ONE

Ask your students to identify what they like about themselves and what qualities they would want to improve upon. Afterwards, ask the following:

1. What was easier? Identifying your qualities or what you'd like to improve?
2. How do you feel, after this exercise? Do you find it difficult to talk about your strengths?
3. How is self-esteem affected by being able to identify and recognize your strong points and those that should be improved?¹⁵

INNER DIALOGUE

We all have automatic thoughts that, due to their nature, we are unaware of: they have significant consequences on our mental health, self-esteem, emotions and ability to deal with stress. When you teach young people to control their internal dialogues, you give them invaluable tools which they can use to become aware that the perceptions they have of themselves are not always realistic. You also help them discover various strategies that can help them transform these perceptions into something closer to reality.¹⁶

ACTIVITY TWO

Tell students that you are now going to do an experiment. Three of them will soon be asked to come to the front of the class to do a two-minute presentation on a topic of their choice. The three names will be chosen at random from among their names written on bits of paper that are in a box (show them a box that seems to contain as many bits of papers as there are students). They have two minutes to prepare, eyes closed, no paper or pencils. After two minutes, pretend to pick the first name out of the box; then, tell students the experiment is now over and that no one will have to do a presentation.

Ask students to write down, in silence, the thoughts that went through their heads in the two minutes during which they had to prepare. In a large group, ask students to share their answers and write them on the board, divided into two columns: positive thoughts and negative thoughts.¹⁷

¹⁵ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 74

¹⁶ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 113

¹⁷ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 116

LESSON FIVE: MOVING FORWARD

RECOGNIZING EMOTIONS

Emotions play a significant adaptive role in everyday life and have several functions:

1. **Information:** Emotions spotlight events that are important to us; they inform us that some situations affect or touch us. For instance, being sad after fighting with a friend makes you realize that this friendship is important to you; feeling happy after being invited somewhere indicates that you appreciate the person who invited you.
2. **Motivation to act:** Emotions foster certain behaviours or actions. For instance, if you're afraid of something, you avoid it or protect yourself from it; if you have fun doing something, you will probably try to do it again.
3. **Communication:** Emotions that are felt and expressed communicate needs, expectations and individuality. For example, if you're openly disappointed with a bad result on an exam, you're showing your teacher (and yourself) that you want to succeed; if you tell your father that you're happy when he spends time with you, it confirms the pleasure you have in his company and your need to be with him.¹⁸

ACTIVITY

Write the following questions on the board and collect a few answers before asking students to form teams of three or four so they can discuss them. Afterwards, ask them to present their answers.

1. Is it always easy to express your emotions? Why?
2. Why is it that sometimes you stop yourself from expressing how you really feel?
3. Are all ways of expressing emotions acceptable?
4. What's the point of expressing emotions?
5. Is expressing your emotions good for your health?
6. What connections can you make between expressing emotions and mental health?¹⁹

FINAL WORD: HOW TO HELP?

Here are some strategies for supporting someone with a mental health problem/illness:

1. Be supportive and understanding.
2. Spend time with the person. Listen to him or her.

¹⁸ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 93

¹⁹ My Life, It's Cool to Talk About It. Pg. 97

3. Never underestimate the person's capacity to recover.
4. Encourage the person to follow his or her treatment plan and to seek out support services. Offer to accompany them to appointments.
5. Become informed about mental illness.
6. Remember that even though your friend may be going through a hard time, they will recover. Stand by them. If you're planning an outing to the movies or the community centre, remember to ask your friend along. Keeping busy and staying in touch with friends will help your friend feel better, when they're ready.
7. If you are a close friend or family member of someone who has a mental illness, make sure you get support as well. Crisis training, self-help and/or individual counseling will help you become a better support person.
8. Put the person's life before your friendship. If you think the person needs help, especially if he or she mentions thoughts of suicide, don't keep it a secret – even if the person asked you to.²⁰

Recovery is an ongoing, slow process, and is different for each person. Research on recovery shows that there are a number of factors which people often mention are important: the presence of people who believe in and stand by the person who is in recovery, and that person's ability to make their own choices about important things like treatment and housing.

Other factors that can support recovery include:

1. Mutual support (self-help groups)
2. Social opportunities (church groups; drop-in centres, volunteer work, participating in community life)
3. Positive relationships (accepting and being accepted, family and friends and communicating with them in a positive way)
4. Meaningful daily activity - Being able to work, go to school
5. Medication (sticking with a treatment plan, working with doctors to find the best medications with the fewest side effects)
6. Spirituality (involvement in a faith community or individual spiritual practice)
7. Inner healing capacity and inner peace (finding a sense of meaning and purpose, even in suffering)
8. Personal growth and development (hobbies, self-education, taking control of one's life, exercise, personal goal setting)
9. Self-awareness (self-monitoring, recognizing when to seek help, recognizing one's accomplishments and accepting and/or learning from one's failures)²¹

²⁰ Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide. Pg. 85

²¹ Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide. Pg. 86

ADDITIONAL IMAGES AND HANDOUTS

CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK POSTER



Sample image. Please click to access original file.

CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK POSTCARD



Sponsors:

The Medicine Shoppe
PHARMACY

CEDA

BARRICK

CGI



Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Guardian

RemedyRx

IDA

Pearson

Sample image. Please click to access original file.

During Mental Health Week, we want Canada to **GET LOUD.**

Approximately seven million Canadians—20 per cent of us—live with poor mental health, mental illness or addiction. Too often it's kept hidden because of the associated discrimination and stigma.

This has to stop.

#GETLOUD

#GETLOUD



DONATE



WRITE YOUR MP



KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING



talk
to a loved one or friend



wear green
to show your support



follow us
@CMHA_NTL & @CMHANational

CMHA'S 66TH ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH WEEK MAY 1-7, 2017

To find out more ways to

#GETLOUD

visit mentalhealthweek.ca or
connect with your local CMHA branch.



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

Sample image. Please click to access original file.



Sample image. Please click to access original file.



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
La santé mentale pour tous

Canadian Mental Health Association, National

250 Dundas Street West, Suite 500

Toronto, ON M5T 2Z5

info@cmha.ca

CMHA.CA