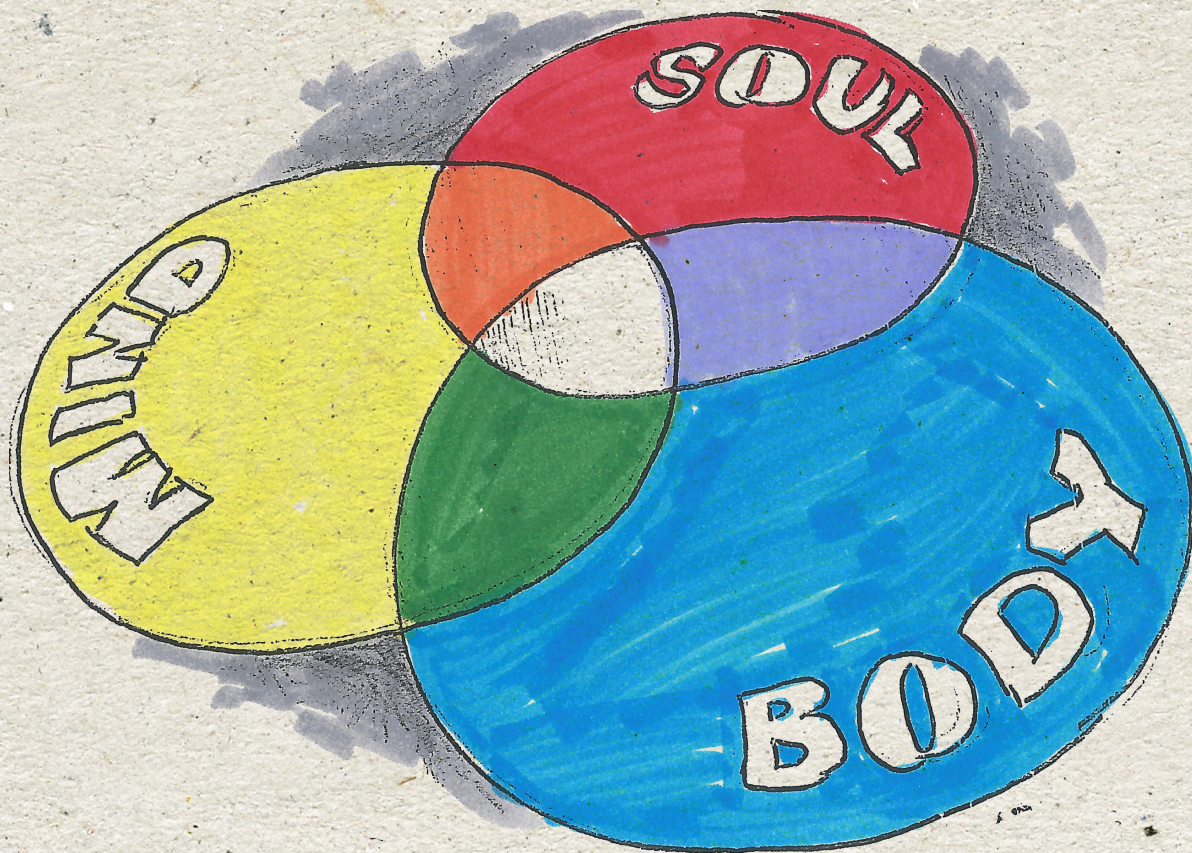


Not Just Talk

MENTAL WELLNESS

AN EASY TO READ GUIDE



New Brunswick
Association For
Community Living

Association du
Nouveau-Brunswick
pour l'intégration
communautaire

Acknowledgements

This project has been graciously funded by Bell Let's Talk with additional contributions provided by the Saint John Community Living Board. The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the specified funders.

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How to Use This Guide

Mental Wellness? An Easy Read Guide is a resource to help people understand what it means to be mentally healthy.

It can be used with or without help from someone like a friend or family member.

Sometimes your body gets sick and you think “I feel sick”. Your mind can also get sick and it usually takes a long time to get better.

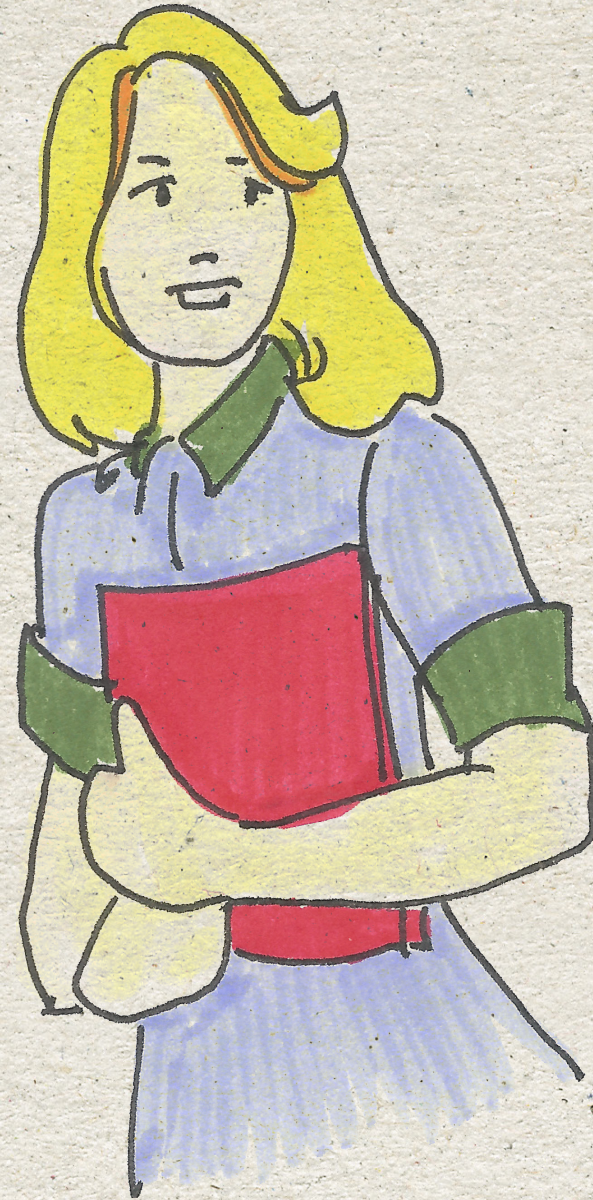
It’s good to do what you can so that your mind does not get sick. This is called “mental wellness”. This Easy Read guide will tell you about mental wellness and how you can help to keep your mind well.

At the end of the guide you can read Elizabeth’s Story, which will help you to understand some of the things you might do keep your mind well.

Taking care of your health is important.

This includes taking care of your whole body, which includes your mind.

- When you take care of your body you are also taking care of your mind.
- If you feel good in your **mind** you will feel happy, and good about yourself.
- If you want to enjoy life, it is best to have a healthy mind in a healthy body.
- If your **body** feels good, it helps your mind to feel good.
- If you mind feels good, it will help your body feel good.



It is important to make sure that:

- You look after your body and your mind.
- You know who to talk to if you feel unwell in your body or in your mind.



Mental Wellness is:

When you feel good about yourself.

When you think you are a good person and can do good things.



When you feel that you can be friendly and do things you like with other people.

You will enjoy life much more if you keep having these good feelings and doing what you need to do to have these good feelings.





There are ways that you can take care of your mental wellness:

1. You can make sure you do things you enjoy.
2. You can volunteer or get involved in the community.
3. You can get a job or do some work.
4. You can visit or talk with friends and family.
5. You can take time to relax.



1. YOU CAN MAKE SURE YOU DO THINGS YOU ENJOY.

- Doing things you enjoy can help to make you feel good. Keeping your mind and body busy is important. It will help you feel well.
- Make sure that you do lots of different things and that you don't have too much time with nothing to do. When you don't have anything to do it can make you feel sad.
- You can ask your friends, family, or someone else to help you find things to do. Making a list of things you enjoy can help remind you.
- Some ideas of things to do are:
 - » Take a class.
 - » Draw or paint pictures.
 - » Join a group or community centre.
 - » Dance or play some music.
 - » Go shopping.
 - » Spend time with friends.
 - » Read or watch a movie.
 - » Play a game.

2. YOU CAN VOLUNTEER OR GET INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY

- It feels good to be a part of your community.
- If you have the internet, you can look for opportunities to be involved on your computer or get someone to help you.
- You could volunteer at:
 - » An animal shelter
 - » The local library
 - » A food bank
 - » For an event
 - » You could walk a neighbour's dog
 - » You could help a neighbour with some yard work



3. YOU CAN GET A JOB OR DO SOME WORK:

- It feels good to have a job.
- Plus, you can earn some money by working.
- Think about what you enjoy doing and what you can do.
- You could ask a family member or friend to help you with this.
- If you have the internet, you can look for jobs. Get someone to help you if you need to.
- Sometimes finding a job is hard. If you don't have a job, try to do other things that keep you busy.





4. YOU CAN VISIT OR TALK WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY:

- It feels good to visit and talk with family and friends.
- There are many ways you can get talk to friends and family:
 - » Call them on a phone
 - » Use Skype
 - » Email
 - » Mail a letter
 - » Text
 - » Use Facebook
 - » Go get coffee or do something else
- Some things your friends or family members could help you with are:
 - » Transportation to places you want to go
 - » Going to events with you
 - » Talking to you on the phone every week
 - » Taking you to get groceries
 - » Helping you to make a budget

5. YOU CAN TAKE TIME TO RELAX:

- Relaxing can help you feel well in your body and in your mind.
- Relaxing is also important when you feel sick.
- Try to do relaxing things like:
 - » Listen to music.
 - » Take a short nap.
 - » Do some breathing exercises.
 - » Read a book.
 - » Watch a movie.
 - » Exercise.

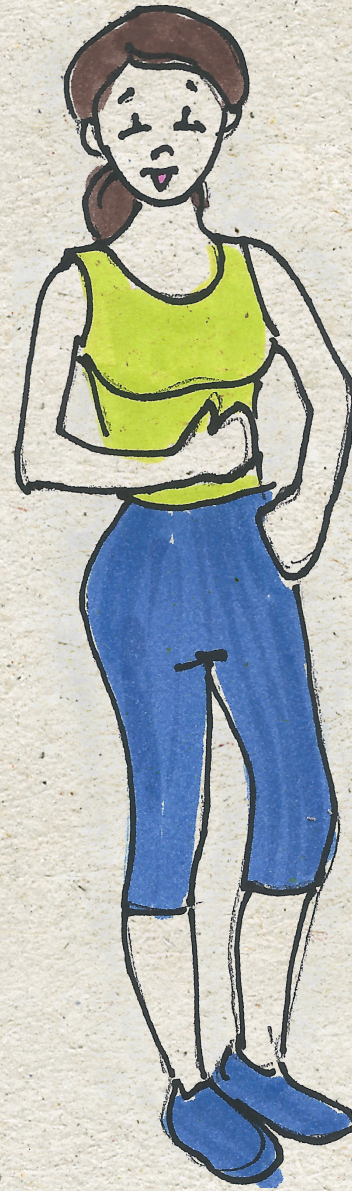
If you find it hard to relax, talk to someone you trust. They may be able to help you find ways to relax.



Physical Wellness

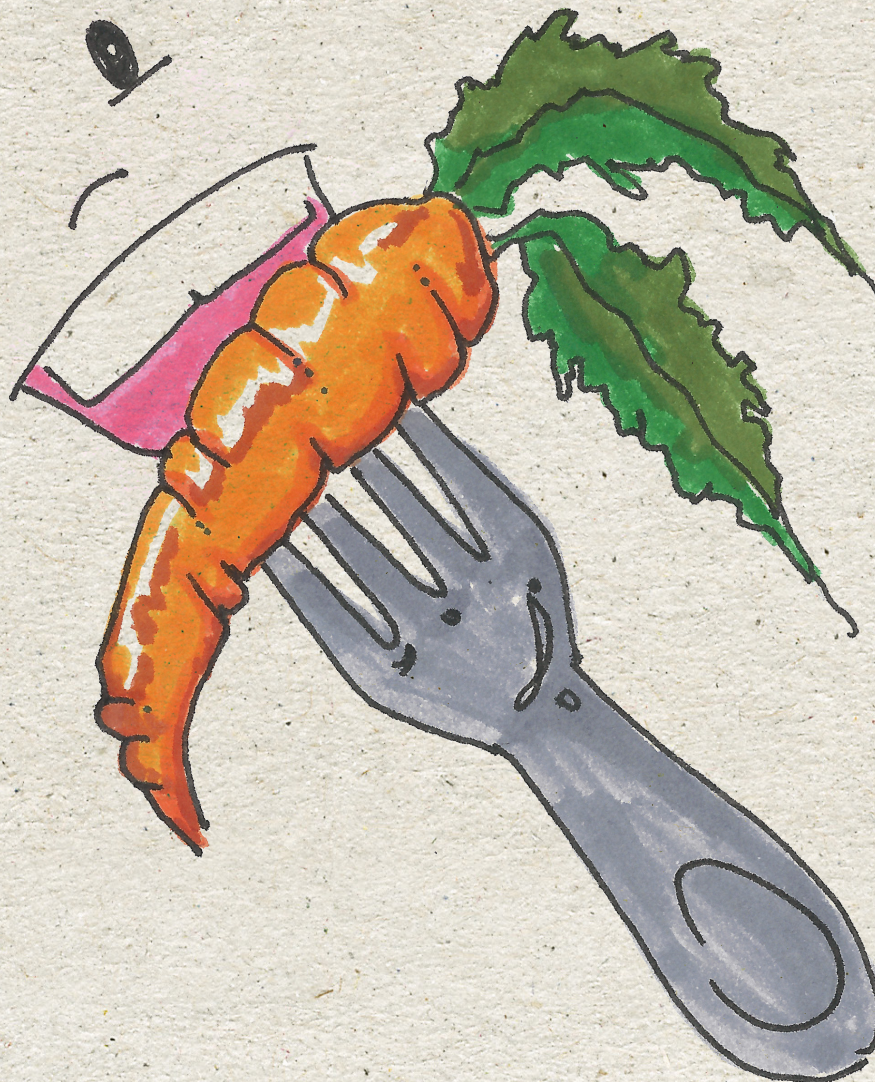
*When you feel good about your body
your mind usually feels good too.*

*When you move your body or exercise
regularly, your body usually feels
good and so does your mind.*



Physical Wellness

When you eat good food, your body feels good and so does your mind.

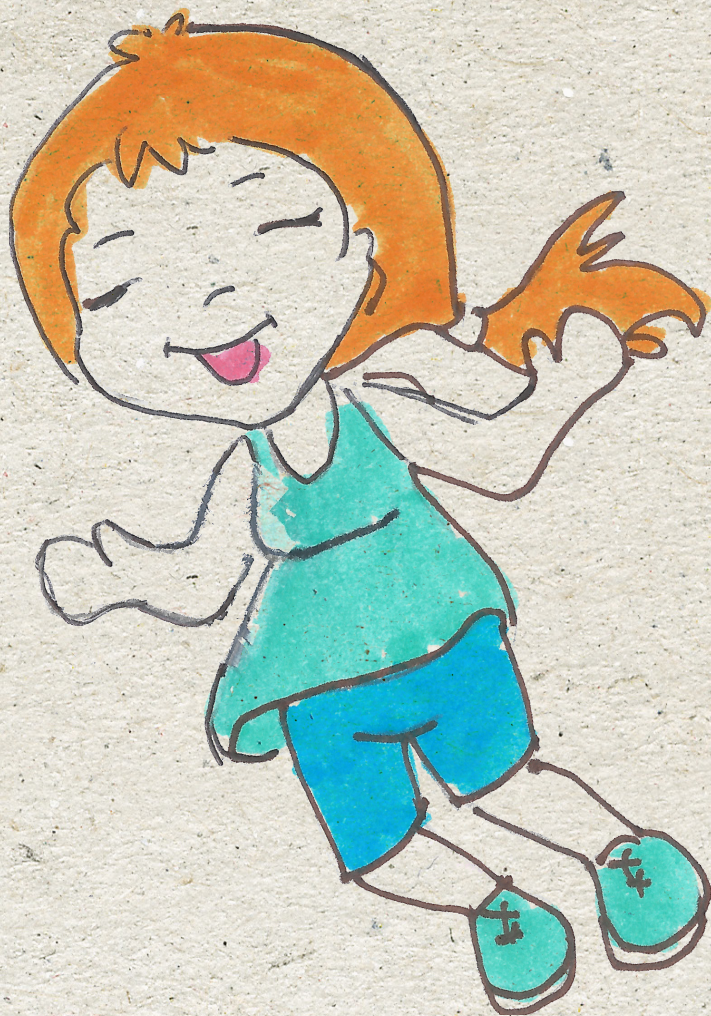


Sometimes you can become unwell:

You can get sick in your body, like when you have a sore stomach or headache. You can also get feel unwell in your mind.

Sometimes there is nothing you can do on your own when you feel unwell in your mind. So it is important to do what you can so that you do not feel unwell in your mind.





In order to take care of your **mental wellness**, you have to take care of your **physical wellness**.

Feeling good in your body is as important as feeling good in your mind.



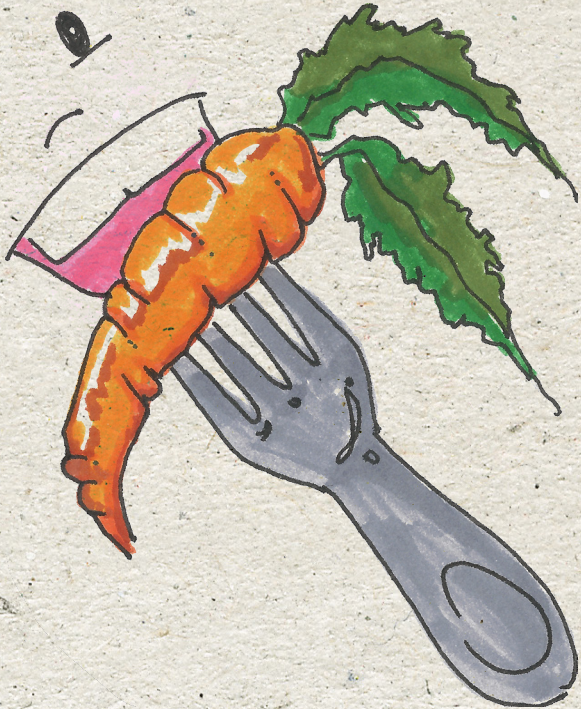
There are many ways you can take care of your body:

1. You can drink water. Water is better for you than pop or other drinks, which are not healthy.
2. You can eat healthy food.
3. You can exercise.
4. You can make sure your body is clean.
5. You can go to the doctor when you need to.
6. You can make sure you get lots of rest.
7. You can avoid alcohol, drugs and cigarettes.

1. YOU CAN DRINK WATER:

- It is important to drink water.
- You should try to drinks lots of water each day.
- It can help to carry a water bottle with you which you can refill so you can drink throughout the day.





2. YOU CAN EAT HEALTHY FOOD:

- What you eat can affect how you feel.
- Only eat a few sweets or sugar. Too much sugar is bad for our brains and bodies.
- A healthy diet includes:
 - » Fruits like bananas, apples, oranges, blueberries, and raspberries.
 - » Vegetables like carrots, tomatoes, lettuces, spinach, beans, and peas.
 - » Proteins like fish, eggs, and meats.
 - » Different kinds of milks like cow's milk, almond milk, soymilk.
 - » Foods like olive oil, butter, granola, and yogurt.
 - » Foods like potatoes, breads and pastas.

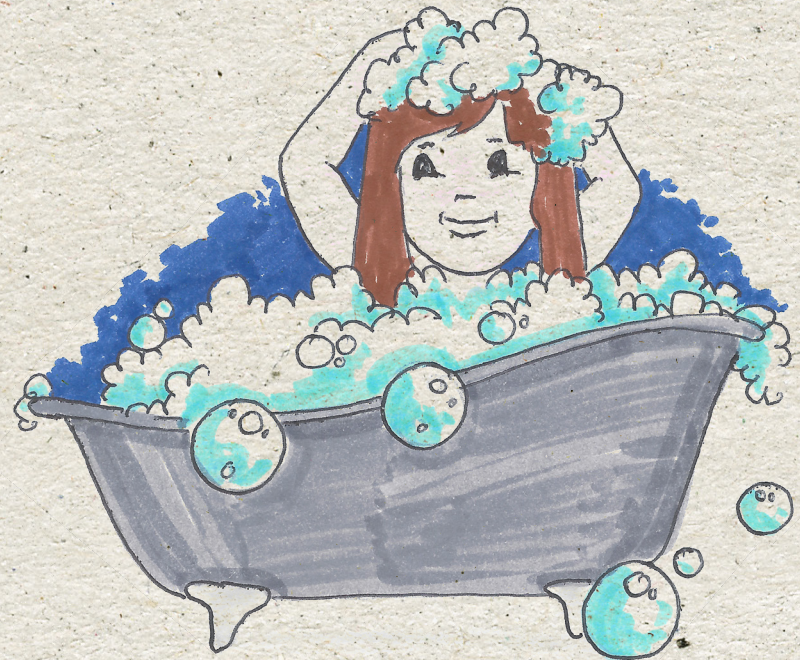
3. YOU CAN EXERCISE:

- When we move our bodies it can help us to feel well.
- Exercising a little bit everyday can help our body and our mind.
- Start a little exercise everyday and bit by bit add more exercise.
- It is good to exercise at least 3 to 4 days a week; everyday is better.
- There are lots of ways to exercise.
- You can walk, run, or swim.
- You can stretch your body.
- Remember, exercise is better than no exercise so do whatever exercise you like and can do, and do it as often as you can.



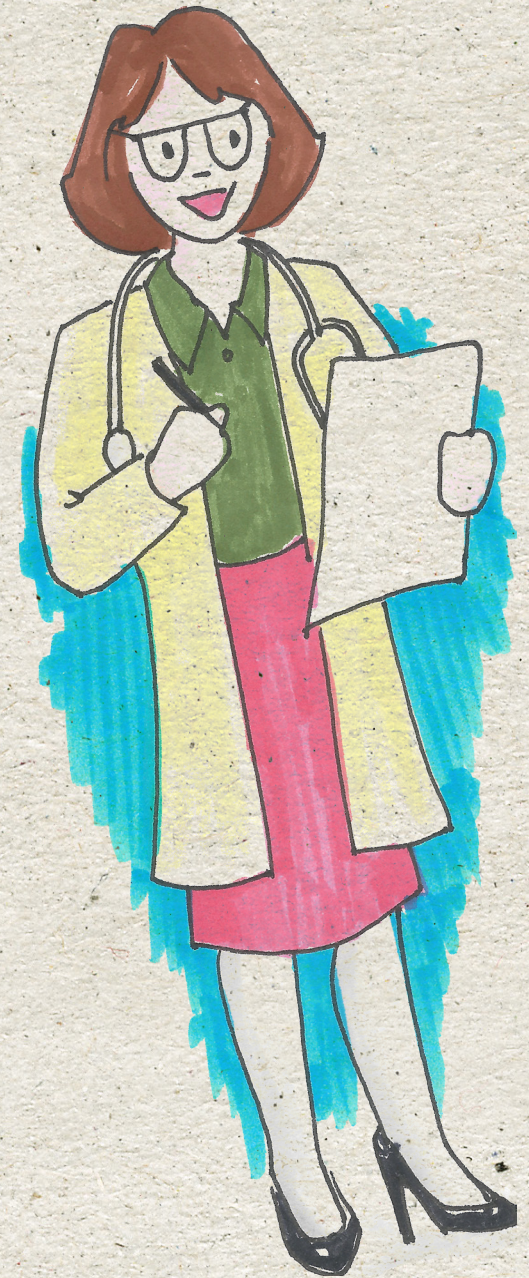
4. YOU CAN MAKE SURE YOUR BODY IS CLEAN:

- Keeping your body clean is one of the best things you can do to stay healthy and well.
- Keeping clean can also help you to feel good about yourself.
- When you are not clean, you are more likely to get sick.
- It is important to shower or take a bath at least every two days. Make sure to wash your hair and clean your body from top to bottom.
- After you clean yourself, put on clean clothing.
- It is also important to keep your home and bedroom clean. You can get someone to help you to clean if you need to.



5. YOU CAN GO TO THE DOCTOR WHEN YOU NEED TO:

- Sometimes when you feel sick, you are going to have to go to the doctor.
- It is good to go to the doctor at least once a year for a regular check up.
- If you are feeling sick or unwell go to the doctor. Ask him or her what you can do to get better.
- Call your doctor's office to make an appointment for a check up or have someone help you call to make an appointment.
- If you would like, take someone with you to help you talk to your doctor.
- The doctor may give you medicine or they may tell you to rest and relax for a few days.
- Listen to what the doctor says. But also ask any questions that you have.



6. YOU CAN MAKE SURE YOU GET LOTS OF REST:

- Getting lots of sleep is important to staying well.
- It is healthy to get enough sleep, but sleeping too much is bad for you.
- Most people need between 6 and 8 hours of sleep a night.
- Try not to use a computer or TV an hour before going to bed. Looking at a screen before bed makes it harder to fall asleep.



7. YOU CAN AVOID ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND CIGARETTES:

ALCOHOL

- If you are above the age of 19, there is nothing wrong with enjoying a drink of alcohol every once in a while.
- But drinking too much alcohol can make your body sick and your mind sick.
- Drinking too much alcohol can also make you forget things, make you sad or make you tired. Some alcohols you might know are beer, wine or coolers.

DRUGS

- Some drugs you might know are marijuana, cocaine, or ecstasy.
- Taking these drugs can make you sick. Some drugs are illegal.
- Taking these drugs can also affect your brain. It is ok to take drugs or medicine that a doctor has given you.

CIGARETTES

- Smoking cigarettes is one of the worst things you can do for your body. Smoking can damage your skin and make your teeth yellow.
- Smoking hurts your lungs. You get sick more when you smoke.
- Standing or sitting close to someone who is smoking is also not good for you. Breathing in smoke from that person's cigarette can hurt your body.
- If you smoke you might have a harder time to breathe. You might not be able to move around as much or play sports.
- Smoking can cause bad health problem.

Make a plan

Making a plan to help you stay well in your body and mind is good to do.

Talk to a friend, a family member, or someone else about creating a plan for mental wellness.

You can include things like:

- What to eat on a daily basis.
- Where you like to go in the community.
- Activities you enjoy.
- Reminders to get exercise

Your mental wellness plan can include whatever you want, because it is your plan.

Read Elizabeth's Wellness Plan for an idea of what Elizabeth does to stay mentally and physically healthy.



Elizabeth's Wellness Plan

ELIZABETH LIVES in her own apartment. Elizabeth loves living in her own home. Last week, Elizabeth met with her best friend Anne to talk about the things Elizabeth can do to help Elizabeth feel good about herself. It is important to Elizabeth that she feels happy and does things each day that help her continue to feel happy. Anne helped Elizabeth make a mental wellness plan. This plan lists all of the things in Elizabeth's life that make her happy, and some things that Elizabeth can do every day to continue feeling happy.

Below are all of the activities that she is planning to do to keep herself well:

TIME OF DAY**ACTIVITIES****Morning**

- Get out of bed at 8am
- Drink a glass of cold water
- Make a pot of coffee
- Shower (wash from head to toe; every second day wash my hair; dry myself off with a towel)
- Put moisturizer on my face
- Brush my teeth
- Get dressed in clean clothes and underwear
- Eat breakfast
- Go to bus stop
- Arrive at work

Afternoon

- Take the bus to my art group
- Eat lunch
- Get on the bus to head home

Evening

- Make supper
- Exercise
- Watch TV or read a book
- Brush my teeth
- Put on my pajamas
- Call my mom

Below is a blank plan for you to fill out or talk about with a friend, family member, or someone else. You can include things that you can do throughout the day to stay healthy and well.

TIME OF DAY**ACTIVITIES****Morning**

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Afternoon

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

Evening

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

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