Families Arising
Resource Centre Edmonton

FREE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING GUIDE

Supporting Your Child's Mental Health

Signs to watch for in children and teens, how to start the conversation and when to get extra help.

Children and teens have ups and downs, just like adults. Moving to a new country, changing schools, learning a new language, friendship struggles or experiences of racism can all affect how a child feels. Your support makes a big difference, and getting help early matters.

Signs to watch for

Age	Possible signs a child is struggling
Young children	More tantrums or clinginess, trouble sleeping, bedwetting after being dry, stomach aches with no clear cause, going back to younger behaviours.
School-age children	Not wanting to go to school, worry or fear, losing interest in play or friends, falling grades, frequent anger or sadness.
Teens	Pulling away from family and friends, big changes in sleep or eating, irritability, hopelessness, risky behaviour, signs of substance use, talk of self-harm.

Remember: one bad day is normal. Watch for changes that last two weeks or more, or that affect school, friendships or daily life.

How to start the conversation

1. **Pick a relaxed moment.** Side-by-side times like car rides, walks or cooking together often feel easier than face-to-face talks.

2. **Notice and name what you see.** "You seem quieter since school started. How are things really going?"

3. **Listen more than you talk.** Let them finish. Resist the urge to fix things right away.

4. **Take their feelings seriously.** Avoid "You are too young to be stressed" or "Just get over it." Say "That sounds really hard. Thank you for telling me."

5. **Make a plan together.** Ask, "What would help?" and agree on one next step.

Everyday ways to support your child

- Keep regular routines for sleep, meals and family time.
- Spend one-on-one time with each child, even 10 minutes a day.
- Encourage activity, time outdoors and limits on screens, especially at night.
- Talk openly about feelings at home, including your own, so children learn it is safe.
- Stay in touch with your child's teacher and school counsellor.
- Remind your child of their worth and their roots, especially if they face racism or bullying.

When to get extra help

Reach out to your family doctor, your child's school counsellor or call 811 if signs last two weeks or more, or if your child's struggles affect school, sleep, eating or friendships.

Support	How to reach it
Kids Help Phone (children and teens, 24/7)	Call **1-800-668-6868** or text **CONNECT to 686868**
Health advice and referrals	**811** Health Link
In crisis or thinking about suicide	Call or text **988**
Emergency or immediate danger	**911** or go to the nearest emergency department

For your family: our Junior Youniversity programs, Royal Readers and Teen Pulse, help children and teens build confidence, friendships and a strong sense of who they are. Visit familiesarising.ca/junioryouniversity.

Families Arising offers education and community support. We are not a crisis or clinical service.

Families Arising is here to help

Families Arising Resource Centre Edmonton is a registered non-profit that supports Black, immigrant, newcomer and multicultural families with programs for mothers, fathers, children and teens.

- **Mom Youniversity:** mentoring, peer support and coaching for mothers and women
- **Intentional Parenting Course:** summer cohorts for parents
- **Junior Youniversity:** Royal Tots, Royal Readers and Teen Pulse for kids and teens
- **Free webinars, guides and events** for families

Visit familiesarising.ca · Email info@familiesarising.ca · Call 780-900-1450 · Instagram @familiesarising.edmonton

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