

April 27, 2011

**Children's Mental Health Week: May 1 to 7, 2011**

Dear TDSB Community,

It's an issue often overlooked, yet children's mental health is something we simply can't afford to ignore. As many as one in five Ontario youth under 19 suffers from a mental, emotional or behavioural disorder severe enough to seriously affect their lives. If no action is taken, these issues can prevent childhood achievement, both at school and in the community.

At the TDSB, we fully support the declaration of May 1 to 7 as **Children's Mental Health Week**. We must always strive to make a positive difference in the lives of our students as early as possible. This means preventing mental health issues from becoming life-changing obstacles. If you feel your child or teenager could benefit from mental health support, we provide many options. The School Support Team in each school provides a forum for dealing with these concerns. The Professional Support Services staff (Child and Youth Services, Psychological Services, Social Work and Attendance Services), are available to provide a broad range of support from school-wide or classroom-based prevention activities through to individual assessment and counselling support for students. We are also fortunate to have partnerships with community agencies that complement the work of our staff.

A wide variety of events for parents, students, school staff and new teachers are planned for the week, so check with your school's office to find out what's going on in your community. The culminating activity for the week is the **Walk for Child & Youth Mental Health on Friday, May 6**. We will be leading walks at 5050 Yonge Street (8:45 a.m.), and senior TDSB staff will be leading similar walks at 140 Borough Drive (12 p.m.) and 1 Civic Centre Court (10 a.m.). You are welcome to join us!

Mental health is an issue that needs much more than one week of awareness. It's something we should focus on every day of the year. Our children's futures are at stake – what could be more important than that?

To learn more about this issue and where to get supports, visit these websites or offer the adolescent sites to the teens in your household!

For parents:

[www.pcmh.ca](http://www.pcmh.ca)  
[www.speakingofkidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.speakingofkidsmentalhealth.ca)  
[www.kidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca)  
<http://tmh.thinkfresh.ca/brain.php>

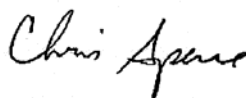
For adolescents:

[www.mindyourmind.ca](http://www.mindyourmind.ca)  
[www.yoomagazine.net](http://www.yoomagazine.net)  
[www.thenewmentality.ca](http://www.thenewmentality.ca)

Best Regards,



Cathy Dandy  
Vice-Chair



Chris Spence  
Director of Education