



UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

TEAM
KENTUCKY

CABINET FOR HEALTH
AND FAMILY SERVICES

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH,
DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

LEARN

The resources included in this guide can help increase knowledge about mental health and wellness topics.



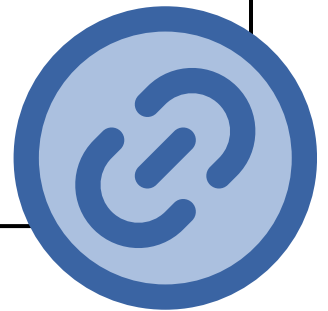
BUILD

The resources included in this guide are designed to help build the skills to monitor, improve, and maintain good mental health and wellness



PREVENT

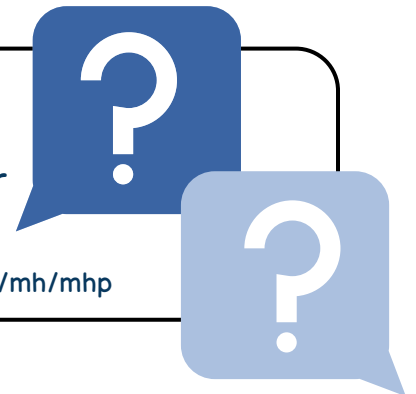
Using these resources to improve mental wellness can help to prevent mental health problems and crises from occurring in the future.



QUESTIONS

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To access more mental health resources visit <https://dbhdid.ky.gov/mh/mhp>



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WHY IS SCREENING IMPORTANT?

EARLY DETECTION IMPROVES OUTCOMES

Just like with physical health conditions, **identifying mental health problems early** means you can be connected to care as soon as possible.

There are often delays between when mental health symptoms first begin and when someone seeks treatment.





The biggest reason for this delay is that **symptoms are not recognized** by the person experiencing them.

By checking in with yourself about your mental health regularly, you can get the help you need **before** a mental health problem becomes a crisis.



**Visit MHAscreening.org
to take a mental health test**

If you are feeling overwhelmed or having thoughts of suicide, reach out for help right away.  Call-Text-Chat 988 

WHAT IS MENTAL WELLNESS?

Being mentally well is more than just the absence of a diagnosed mental health condition.

It includes our overall emotional, psychological, and social well-being.



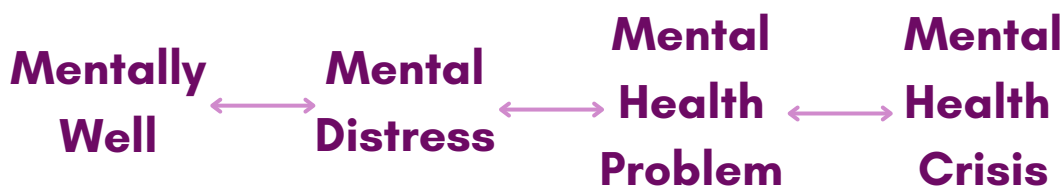
AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?



Our level of mental wellness impacts our ability to cope with stress, engage in meaningful activities, and build positive relationships.

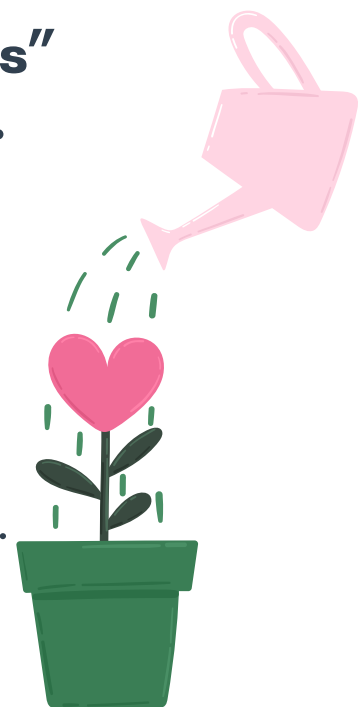
EVERYONE HAS THE CAPACITY TO BE MENTALLY WELL

Mental health exists on a continuum from “mentally well” to “mental health crisis” and contains a whole range of emotions.



Based on a variety of factors, including biology, genetics, and circumstances, we move along the continuum in both directions as we move through life.

ANYONE CAN EXPERIENCE MENTAL WELLNESS OR A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS.



10 BENEFITS OF MENTAL WELLNESS

Being mentally well can have many good impacts on your overall physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being.

Focusing on your **MENTAL WELLNESS** can...

- 1 Reduce risk of physical health problems such as heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes**
- 2 Reduce risk of developing depression and anxiety**
- 3 Increase positive outlook and ability to enjoy life**
- 4 Increase ability to cope with stressful or difficult life events**
- 5 Increase creativity and openness to new experiences**
- 6 Improve relationships with the people in your life**
- 7 Increase productivity to allow you to reach your potential**
- 8 Enable you to make meaningful contributions to your family, community, and society**
- 9 Increase ability to think clearly and make healthy decisions**
- 10 Improve mood, self-esteem, and confidence**

REMEMBER: EVERYONE HAS THE CAPACITY TO BE MENTALLY WELL, regardless of whether or not you have a mental health condition

LEARN MORE:

- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/caring-for-your-mental-health>
- <https://positivepsychology.com/benefits-of-mental-health/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm>

what are the signs of MENTAL WELLNESS?

Being mentally well means you are **thriving** and experiencing no major issues.



- Frequently experiencing positive emotions
- Experiencing few sleep problems
- Minimal changes in mood
- Generally feeling calm
- Maintaining optimism
- Taking challenges in stride
- Having a good sense of humor

- Performing well
- Feeling physically well
- Having a good energy level
- Being socially engaged
- Using alcohol or substances on a limited basis
- Participating in gambling infrequently
- Controlling symptoms of any mental health conditions



what are the signs of MENTAL DISTRESS?

Mental distress is **common and expected discomfort** in response to the stresses of everyday life.

These feelings usually go away when the stressful event ends.

- Feeling irritable or impatient
- Feeling sad or nervous
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Procrastinating
- Being forgetful
- Having trouble concentrating
- Experiencing minor sleep trouble
- Performing adequately



- Feeling muscle tension/headaches
- Experiencing lower energy level
- Decreased social engagement
- Regular but controlled alcohol or substance use
- Regular but controlled gambling
- Symptoms of mental health condition may be increased but manageable

what are the signs of a

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

Mental health problems often occur as a reaction to **major life changes or challenges**.

These feelings can be intense and may last awhile, but usually go away after enough time has passed.



- Frequently experiencing difficult emotions
- Experiencing anxiety or panic
- Sporadic attendance
- Poor performance
- Poor concentration
- Increased aches and pains
- Increased fatigue

- Consistent sleep problems (restless/disturbed sleep or too much sleep)
- Social withdrawal or avoidance
- Difficulty controlling alcohol or substance use
- Difficulty controlling gambling
- Difficulty managing symptoms of mental health conditions




Call-Text-Chat 988

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SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

what are the signs of a

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS?

A mental health crisis refers to **extreme or intense symptoms** that severely **impact ability to function**.

Symptoms may be sudden and resolve quickly or may persist for a long period of time.



- Consistent negative emotions
- Excessive anxiety/panic
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Angry or emotional outbursts
- Severe sleep problems (insomnia, nightmares, or sleeping too much)
- Unable to perform
- Consistent absenteeism
- Socially unresponsive (not going out, not answering calls or messages)
- Feeling physically unwell
- Unable to control alcohol or substance use
- Unable to control gambling
- Symptoms of mental health conditions are uncontrolled




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MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN

Ask yourself these questions every day to keep tabs on your mental health.



If you notice you are struggling in a certain area and do not know how to address it, a mental health provider may be able to help.



HOW AM I FEELING TODAY?

Take notice of your mood and how your body feels.

Physical signs of mental health issues might include:

Headaches | Body Pains | Skin Rashes | Stomachaches
Muscle Tension | Frequent Urination | Appetite Changes
Weight Changes | Changes in Energy



WHAT HAS BEEN WORRYING ME?

Identifying your stressors can help you address them.



AM I TAKING CARE OF MY BODY?

- Eating healthy, regular meals
- Drinking plenty of water
- Maintaining personal hygiene
- Moving my body
- Getting enough sleep
- Going outside



WHAT AM I DOING TO BRING MYSELF JOY?

- Creative hobbies (cooking, art, music)
- Reading books for fun
- Watching a show I enjoy
- Spending time with my pets
- Keeping a gratitude journal



WHO IS IN MY CORNER?

- Someone who gives good advice when I ask for it
- Someone who is respectful and trustworthy
- Someone who listens to me
- Someone who has my best interests at heart

If you are feeling overwhelmed or having thoughts of suicide, reach out for help right away. Call-Text-Chat 988

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Visit <https://www.psychologytoday.com> to learn more about mental health treatment or to find a provider near you

Make a **CODE RED** Safety Plan

A safety plan is designed to be a safety net when you are in crisis or having your worst day. It is important to plan ahead and be prepared by making a safety plan before you are in crisis or having your worst day. Keep your plan easily accessible so that if/when the day comes, you will have a plan to keep yourself safe and connected to help.

Instructions: Take time to fill in each block of your safety plan. Draw, write or stick pictures from a magazine inside each block of your safety plan. This is **YOUR** plan and unique to you. Your plan may change and that's okay, you can update it any time you want to!

Note: If you have made your contact, done your delay decisions, relax and distract and you are still needing help please call, text or chat 988 where someone is there to help 24/7.

CODE RED

CONTACT

Who is a trusted adult I can reach out to, to help me?
i.e: teacher, coach, youth pastor, mentor

DELAY DECISIONS

What are my reasons for living? What are the things that will help delay me from making any decisions that could harm myself?
i.e: goals, dreams, pets, people in my life

Always call 911 if you are in immediate danger of harming yourself.
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988
dial 2 for Spanish speakers
dial 3 for LGBTQIA+ specific support

Crisis Text Line: text "KY" to 741-741
Kentucky School STOP tip line (to report bullying, violence, or other school issues, anonymously if desired): 866-393-6659

What helps me calm down? What will slow my breathing and relax my body?
i.e: yoga, walking, nap, bath, music.....

RELAX

What can keep my mind off things upsetting me? What can I do in 30 seconds, 3 minutes, 30 minutes, or longer that will help?
i.e.: watch a silly video, listen to a song, organize, play outside, read a book, play with a pet

DISTRACT

BECOMING AND STAYING MENTALLY WELL

The keys to mental wellness are

LIFE SKILLS



RESILIENCE

SELF-CARE



SOCIAL CONNECTION



WHAT ARE LIFE SKILLS?

Life skills are a group of skills important for dealing with the stresses of everyday life.

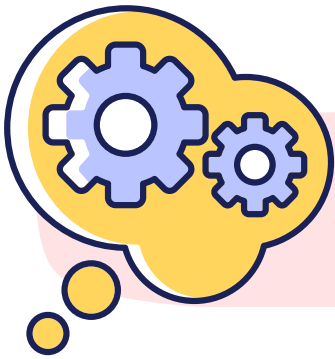
LIFE SKILLS INCLUDE:



PROBLEM SOLVING



STRESS MANAGEMENT



CRITICAL THINKING

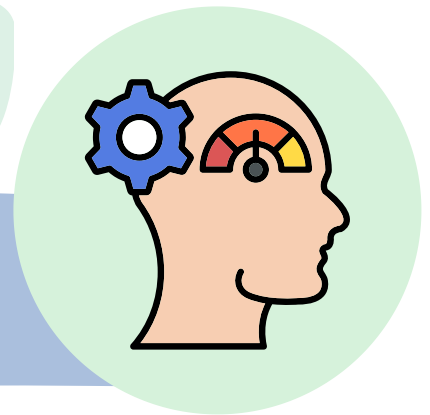


CONFLICT RESOLUTION



COMMUNICATION

SELF-REGULATION



Adults can improve their life skills through self-help resources like workshops or books or by seeking the guidance of a professional like a life coach or mental health counselor.

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

“Resilience” refers to the ability to adapt to difficult or challenging experiences.

COMMON TRAITS OF RESILIENT PEOPLE INCLUDE:



SELF-AWARENESS

Your ability to reflect on aspects of yourself to help you manage behaviors and adapt to situations.



SELF-EFFICACY

Your belief in your ability to complete a task or achieve a goal.



SELF-COMPASSION

Your ability to be kind, gentle, and patient with yourself as you navigate new or difficult situations.



PERSEVERANCE

Your ability to continue the pursuit of a goal despite experiencing obstacles or setbacks



HEALTHY OPTIMISM

The tendency to focus on what is good about a situation. This does not mean ignoring difficulties or setbacks.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Having people in your life that make you feel good about yourself and offer support in difficult times.



Adults can build resilience through self-help resources like workshops or books or by seeking the guidance of a professional like a life coach or mental health counselor.

10 WAYS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

Connect with others



Volunteer in your community



Stay active

Eat healthy meals



YOU ARE WORTHY

Keep a list of affirmations that are meaningful to you

Take care of your spiritual side



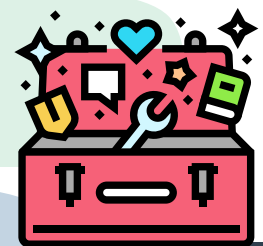
Engage in hobbies that bring you joy



Maintain healthy optimism



Build coping skills



Seek professional help when you need it



WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

Self-care means taking the time to engage in activities that help you live well.

SELF-CARE INCLUDES ANY ACTIVITIES THAT IMPROVE:



MENTAL WELLNESS



SOCIAL WELLNESS



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Where do I start?

TRY THIS!
Self-Care Checkup
scan the code



Starting a new self-care routine can feel overwhelming.

Start by choosing one simple activity with few barriers.

Once you have achieved a small level of self-care, you may feel inspired to keep going.

5 ideas for PHYSICAL SELF-CARE

Physical self-care ensures that your body functions properly.



Eat healthy meals



Find a hobby that gets you moving



Get good sleep

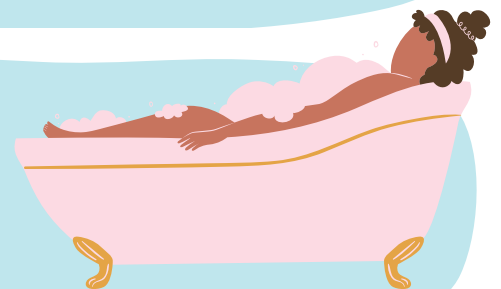


Spend time outside



Pamper your body

skin, hair/beard, or nail care, massage, bubble bath, etc.



5 ideas for MENTAL SELF-CARE

Mental self-care helps to declutter your mind and reduce stress.



Find a fun and creative hobby
(cooking, gardening, art, music, writing, etc.)



Read about topics unrelated to work or other stressors



Play strategy and puzzle games
(chess, Sudoku, crosswords, etc.)



Create an inspiration kit
(include songs, positive quotes, podcasts, etc.)

Detach from electronics periodically



5 ideas for SOCIAL SELF-CARE



Social self-care helps you to feel connected to others.



Spend time with family or friends who are supportive

Spend time with pets



Volunteer in your community

Invite a friend or family member to join you in your favorite hobby



Engage in a group activity (concerts, sporting events, game nights, etc.)

5 ideas for EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE

Emotional self-care helps you to be aware of and manage your feelings

Physically experience emotions through laughter or crying



Channel frustration or anger into action like movement or journaling



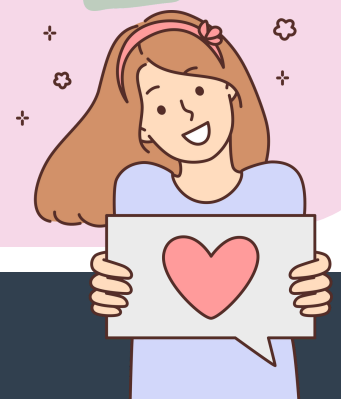
Schedule time for rest



Meditate on emotions



Practice gratitude



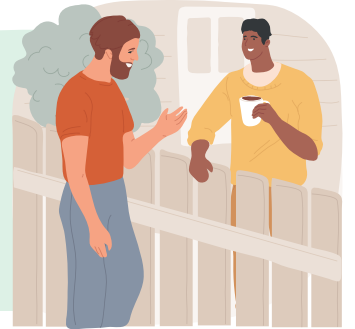
WHERE CAN I MAKE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS?

Positive relationships and community connections help to buffer us from the difficult parts of life by providing support and feelings of belonging.

We can each make connections within...

INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS

(friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.)



FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

(parents, partners, children, extended relatives)



ORGANIZATIONS

(schools, churches/religious organizations, social/sports clubs, etc.)



SHARED COMMUNITIES

(geographic location, shared culture, LGBTQ+, veterans, etc.)

4 types of SOCIAL SUPPORT



Asking for help can be difficult. Consider what type of support you want or need before reaching out. The type of support you need may vary based on the circumstances.



Emotional Support

Listening, showing empathy, telling you they care, offering comfort



Sharing Information

Assisting in problem solving by providing advice, useful facts, or personal experience



Practical Support

Providing tangible help such as gifts of food or money or offering assistance with tasks like cooking, cleaning, or child-care



Sharing Points of View

Providing encouragement by expressing confidence in you and reminding you of your strengths and successes



REMINDER

Everyone needs help sometimes

HOW DO I BUILD A SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK?



Start by **ASSESSING** your current support

Do you have people in your life who...

- Make you feel **comfortable** when they are around?
- Make you feel **valued**?
- Take your concerns seriously?
- Give you a sense that you could tell them anything?
- Can help you solve problems?

Make New Connections

If you want to add to your current network, try making new connections by...

- Enrolling in a class.
- Joining a social club that matches your interests, such as a book club, board gaming group, local sports club, or hiking group.
- Volunteering for a cause that is meaningful to you.
- Reaching out to others often.



Strengthen Existing Relationships

To get the most out of your relationships try...

- Adding reminders to reach out to the people you value.
- Committing a specific amount of time to each other.
- Listening well.
- Asking for specific kinds of help.
- Finding ways to show your respect, appreciation, and support.



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