Module **O1**Getting Started

# MODULE 01 Getting Started

# Having the Conversation



This section aims to provide you with general guidelines and a suggested approach to using the toolkit, tips to provide to parents/caregivers as they get started on this journey with their children, and additional resources

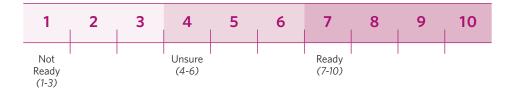
Healthy living is difficult for many people to begin and maintain. For children and adolescents experiencing mental health challenges, their symptoms, side effects from treatment, and attitudes from peers and their community can make healthy living especially difficult for both them and those supporting them. Additionally, some children and youth with mental health challenges may have difficulty communicating, concentrating, or remembering what you have said.¹ Recognizing and acknowledging these challenges is imperative when discussing healthy living with this population.

With unique barriers to healthy living confronting them on a daily basis, the small steps children, youth and their families make towards healthier lifestyles should be recognized and applauded.

#### **READINESS FOR CHANGE**

Even when the benefits of a healthy lifestyle are known, actually implementing these changes takes time and encouragement, and social and environmental factors that might influence behaviour must be taken into consideration. Change in behaviour occurs gradually through a series of stages and these changes can be difficult to maintain.<sup>2,3,4</sup> The Stage of Change model has been found to be effective for facilitating healthy living behaviour change in children and youth.<sup>2,4,5</sup> Readiness for change considerations specific to adolescents can be found in the resource section (under 'Adolescent Health Working Group').

To assess readiness for change, you could try asking the family how ready they are, on a scale from 1-10, to try making the change to their behaviour.



Here are some questions you could ask at each stage:

NOT READY (0-3) PRECONTEMPLATION	UNSURE (4-6) CONTEMPLATION	READY (7-10) PREPARATION/ACTION	LIVING IT MAINTENANCE	RELAPSE
Advise and Encourage	Explore Ambivalence and Build Readiness	Strengthen Commitment and Facilitate Action	Encourage	Encourage
<ul> <li>Would you like more information on?</li> <li>How can I help?</li> <li>Is there something else that you would rather discuss?</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>How will you know when it's time to start thinking about [healthy living topic]?</li> <li>Where does that leave you now?</li> <li>What do you see as your next step?</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>What are your ideas for making this work?</li> <li>What is one barrier that might get in the way? How will you deal with this?</li> <li>Use the Healthy Living Pinwheel Tool (described below) to develop SMART goals</li> </ul>	Congratulate them!     Ask them what is helping them, and what else would help them	<ul> <li>Encourage them to not be hard on themselves <ul> <li>change takes time</li> </ul> </li> <li>What worked for a while?</li> </ul>

Adapted from California Medical Association Foundation (2008), Simmons et al. (2003), and Zimmerman et al. (2000)

### A Suggested Approach to Using this Toolkit

The following approach is one way that you can have a conversation about healthy living with children and youth with mental health challenges and their families. The approach takes into account the child's or family's 'readiness for change' – discussing changes when a child or family is not ready can lead to resistance, denial or frustration.<sup>6</sup> For instance, if a child or youth is experiencing acute symptoms, or is faced with more immediate concerns (e.g. a youth experiencing familial difficulties), having a discussion about healthy living may be difficult or inappropriate. The steps below assume the child or family is at a 'preparation' or 'action' stage. It is also important to be aware of and respect cultural differences to healthy living when setting goals or discussing any of the topics in this toolkit.

#### 1. BROACHING THE SUBJECT

The way healthy living is brought up depends on many things, such as whether the family already has a healthy living topic in mind that they would like to talk about, if you feel that a specific healthy living topic should be addressed, and how ready the family is to consider making changes. The subject of healthy living should, whenever possible, be brought up as a result of the family mentioning a healthy living concern or touching on a related issue.

If healthy living is not brought up by the family, you could bring up a specific aspect of healthy living by tying it in to the reason for the visit, and explaining how it will help with the child or youth's specific condition or situation. If a healthy living topic is not noticeably related to the reason for the visit, or the child or youth is not interested in talking about the topic you have brought up, you could try asking if there are any healthy living topics they would like to talk about. It may be helpful to have the child or youth look at and choose one of the topics on the *Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool* (found at the back of this module).

Here are some examples of how healthy living could be brought up:

#### **EXAMPLE 1**

"We've talked today about how your child is adjusting to Risperidone [an antipsychotic medication]. Sometimes, Risperidone can cause kids to become very hungry. Have you noticed a change in your child's diet since starting the medication?"

#### **EXAMPLE 2**

For a teenager who has talked about their numerous commitments: "It seems you have quite a lot going on in your life right now. Sometimes, having a lot 'on the go' can make people feel really stressed. Would you like to spend a few minutes brainstorming a few ways to manage stress?"

#### **EXAMPLE 3**

For a youth with depression: "Many people with depression tend to feel tired or have trouble getting outside. Have you noticed a change in how much physical activity you're able to do?"

#### **EXAMPLE 4**

Looking at the *Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool:* "All of these topics on the pinwheel can help you feel better, both physically and mentally. For instance, sleep can help you concentrate better and give you energy during the day. We don't have time to talk about all of these, but we do have a few minutes to talk about one of these. Would you like to choose one?"





The Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool, found at the back of this module, can be used to identify SMART goals



Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool

#### 2. ACKNOWLEDGING EFFORTS

Acknowledging the efforts and feelings of children and youth, as well as their parents/caregivers can go a long way in building trust and rapport. This could include acknowledging their feelings (e.g. I understand you're stressed/frustrated/concerned), the efforts they've made towards a healthy living goal, or the strengths the family already possesses that can help them reach their goal.

#### 3. DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

If the child or youth is ready to make a change, you can brainstorm with the child/family 1-2 small, short-term goals. The *Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool*, found at the back of this module, can be used to identify SMART goals. SMART goal setting has been found to help children maintain focus and provides structure in changing behaviour.<sup>2</sup> The SMART acronym refers to Specific, Measurable, Attainable/Action Plan, Realistic, and Timely. You will also find a *Healthy Living Daily Tracker* at the back of this module, which can be used to track daily progress towards the identified SMART Goal. A regular calendar can also be used to track progress, depending on the preference of the child or youth. Editable PDF versions of the *Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool* and the *Daily Tracker* can be found online at: keltymentalhealth.ca/toolkits

This is also a good time to discuss any barriers the family identifies to reaching their goal, and what can help them to overcome these barriers (for example, where to find affordable healthy food in their neighbourhood, or how to fit physical activity into a busy day). Along with barriers, you can help the family identify what they see as their strengths in reaching their goal, and what can facilitate them reaching their goals (for example, having a friend to walk to school with as a way to fit in physical activity).

Here are some questions you could ask as you work through the *Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool* with the child or youth:

General Goal:	What area of healthy living does your goal fall into?	
	(e.g. Getting a better night's sleep)	
Specific:	What do you want to do?	
	Describe exactly what you would like to achieve. Being precise in your goal will allow you to focus on it and will bring you closer to achieving it.	
	(e.g. Start having 'wind down' time before bed)	
Measurable:	How much and how often will you do it?	
	Indicate a quantity, like number of times, duration and frequency, for the goal. This way you can mark down on your daily tracker or calendar when you've worked on your goal – this gives you proof of your progress and helps motivate you to continue!	
	(e.g. 30 minutes before bedtime each night)	
Attainable/Action Plan:	How will you do it?	
	Figure out ways in which your goal can be reached. Your attitudes, abilities, skills and supports should be well-matched to the goal you are trying to achieve.	
	(e.g. Do something relaxing that I enjoy, like reading a book or taking a bath)	
Realistic:	Can you do it?	
	Your goal should be challenging, but not so much so that you will not be able to achieve it. On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you can reach your goal?	
	(e.g. 7/10)	
Timely (Time to review goal):	When will you do it?	
	Specify a time period (or time frame) during which you will work towards this goal, and when you will review your progress.	
	(e.g. I'll start now and review in 2 weeks)	

 $Source: Eat \ Well \ and \ Be \ Active \ Educational \ Toolkit. \ Health \ Canada, 2011 \ Reproduced \ with \ the \ permission \ of \ the \ Minister \ of \ Health, 2011.$ 

## 4. WRAPPING IT UP: PROVIDING RESOURCES & SUMMARIZING THE PLAN

Once a SMART goal has been created, you can provide additional resources (handouts can be found at the back of each module) that the family can refer to after they leave.

Summarizing the plan can ensure that the family understands what their action plan is. An effective summarizing technique is the 'teach back' method. Research indicates that this method helps to facilitate understanding.<sup>8</sup> In the teach back method, instead of asking, "Do you understand?" ask the family (child/youth and/or parent) to explain or demonstrate what their SMART goal is. If necessary, have further discussion about the SMART goal to ensure it is well understood and the family is on board with this goal.

## Parents' and Caregivers' Role in Supporting Children and Youth

Parents and caregivers play a very important role in helping their children develop healthy living habits. Family involvement increases children's knowledge and positively influences attitudes toward healthy lifestyle behaviours. Cultural, environmental and personal differences in each family contribute to different parenting styles – when it comes to parenting, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. It can be challenging to offer parenting advice while remaining respectful of these differences and the unique challenges each family faces. Despite the many different ways of parenting, there are some key tips that are universal, and very applicable to developing healthy living habits:

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Just as parents and caregivers need to be acknowledged for their efforts, children and youth do as well. Encourage parents to acknowledge their children for their healthy living efforts, as this can help to motivate them to continue these behaviours.

#### **ROLE MODELLING**

Children and youth watch and learn from their parents/caregivers. Encourage parents to make changes with their children to integrate healthy living practices into their lives. This could include doing something active together as a family on the weekend, developing a morning routine where everyone eats breakfast, or role modeling deep breathing when stressed.

#### **CONSISTENCY**

Whether it's sticking to a bedtime routine or setting limits on screen time, being consistent is very important. Encourage parents to be consistent with rules, routines, and promises. Consistency helps a child develop a sense of responsibility and understand expectations, and being consistent means that children and teens will be less likely to test boundaries or push limits.



# Resources and Handouts



In this section, you will find resources that may be helpful to both yourself as well as to the families you see in your daily practice. At the end of this section, you will find some tools and handouts. Some of these tools will be useful for you to use with the children and youth you see (e.g. assessment tools), while others can be given to children, youth or parents/caregivers as a handout.

#### **Online Resources**

#### FOR PROFESSIONALS

COMMUNICATION/HEALTH LITERACY				
Organization	Details	Web Address		
Canadian Public Health Association	<ul> <li>Provides easy access to key information about health literacy for health professionals</li> </ul>	www.cpha.ca/en/portals/h-l.aspx		
KidsHealth	Child-Friendly Medical Dictionary	www.kidshealth.org/kid/word		
Adolescent Health Working Group	• Information on readiness for change specific to adolescents (look in the <i>Adolescent Health Care 101</i> Toolkit, p. 12)	www.ahwg.net/knowledgebase/ nodates.php?pid=79&tpid=2		
MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTAN	CE USE			
Organization	Details	Web Address		
Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance	<ul> <li>Information on ADHD for clinicians and parents, and practice guidelines for physicians</li> </ul>	www.caddra.ca		
Collaborative Mental Health Care	<ul> <li>Toolkits with resources for screening, assessment and treatment of children and youth with mental health problems</li> </ul>	www.shared-care.ca/toolkits-intro		

#### FOR PROFESSIONALS (CONTINUED)

MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE (CONTINUED)		
Organization	Details	Web Address
Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre	<ul> <li>Provincial resource centre that can help professionals link children, youth and families with appropriate resources in all areas of mental health and addictions</li> </ul>	keltymentalhealth.ca
	<ul> <li>The editable PDF Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool and Daily Tracker can be found on this site</li> </ul>	
Southern Alberta Child and Youth Health Network	<ul> <li>Quick reference tool containing interview and screening guides for primary care practitioners on mental health issues in children and youth</li> </ul>	www.albertahealthservices. ca/4718.asp
CARBC: Risky Drinking Screening Tools (youth)	<ul> <li>A resource (Alcohol Reality Check) to assist professionals who work with young people to facilitate effective screening and brief interventions related to risky drinking</li> </ul>	www.carbc.ca/HelpingCommunities/ ToolsResources/AlcoholRealityCheck. aspx

#### FOR FAMILIES

PARENTING			
Organization	Details	Web Address	
IWK Health Centre	<ul> <li>A video-taped education series provided by psychologists on different parenting topics related to kids' mental health</li> </ul>	www.iwk.nshealth.ca/index. cfm?objectid=2BACB066-F338- BC9D-1C0A2A7B3E6531D4	
MENTAL HEALTH & SUE	STANCE USE		
Organization	Details	Web Address	
Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre	<ul> <li>Provincial resource centre linking children, youth and families with resources in all areas of mental health and substance use</li> </ul>	keltymentalhealth.ca	

#### FOR FAMILIES (CONTINUED)

MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE (CONTINUED)			
Organization	Details	Web Address	
The F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health	<ul> <li>A family organization dedicated to helping parents navigate and understand the mental health system and connect to other families</li> </ul>	www.forcesociety.com	
mindcheck.ca	<ul> <li>A BC-based youth and young adult website         where visitors can connect on how they're         feeling and get connected to support early and         quickly</li> </ul>		
Here To Help	<ul> <li>Provides information and tools for people in B.C. to prevent and manage mental health and substance use issues</li> </ul>	www.heretohelp.bc.ca	
	<ul> <li>Includes a resource for parents of young teens about alcohol and other drugs (The Road Ahead: A Guidebook for Parents of Young Teens)</li> </ul>	www.heretohelp.bc.ca/understand/ alcohol-drugs#road	
Youth in BC	<ul> <li>A web-based hotline providing youth in distress an opportunity to receive one-on-one online support from trained youth volunteers</li> </ul>	www.youthinbc.com	
Distress Line	<ul> <li>Provides support, information and referrals 24/7, without a wait or busy signal</li> </ul>	310-6789 (no area code needed)	
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	<ul> <li>Offers materials to learn more about addiction and mental health issues. Includes helpful tips, FAQs, best practices and emerging knowledge</li> </ul>	http://www.camh.ca/	
CADDAC	<ul> <li>Provides education and advocacy for individuals with ADD and ADHD across Canada</li> </ul>	www.caddac.ca	
Teen Mental Health	Information for teens, families and health professionals on mental health topics	www.teenmentalhealth.org	

This module has been developed in collaboration with The F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health, and families of children with mental health conditions across B.C.

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# My Healthy Living Pinwheel Goal Setting Tool



Choose a long-term goal that you would like to achieve, and then decide on a short-term SMART goal that will help you to reach your ultimate goal. Your goal can be anything that you feel is important to your health and wellness. Remember to reward yourself when you reach your goals!

to remain yourself when you reach your goals.		
Goal:  S:	S: M: A:	Goal:
M:		Remember, setting short-term goals can help you reach your
A:		long-term goal!
R:	Goal:	
	S:	
	A:	
My Signature:		

# My Healthy Living Pinwheel (Example)



Here are some examples of SMART goals. You can choose one of these goals for yourself, or choose anything that you think would make a difference to your health and wellness!

Goal: Managing stress/worries

S: Deep breathing

SMART GOALS ARE: M: 5 'belly breaths'

A: When I feel stressed/worried

T. Next week (date)

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**ction Plan

**R**ealistic

(On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you can reach your goal?)

**T**ime (to review goals)

Pat Smith

NAME:

Goal: \_Eat healthier

s: Eat more fruit

M: 1 piece/day

A: Buy 7 pieces of fruit/week

R: 7/10

T: Next week (date)

Goal: Be more active

S: Walking

M: 45 minutes on Mon, Wed & Fri

=SiM

A: At the park, with my mom

R: 8/10

T: By the end of 2 weeks (date)

Remember, setting short-term goals can help you reach your long-term goal!

Goal: sleeping well

S: 'Wind down' time before bed

M: 30 min before bedtime

A: Do something relaxing (book, music, bath)

R: 7/10

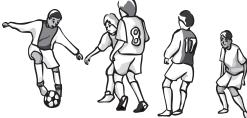
T: By the end of 2 weeks (date)

My Signature:

# My Healthy Living Daily Tracker



My SMART Goal:		My <b>SMART</b> Goal:			
	Did I reach my goal? (Put a ✔)	My notes - What did I do? - What do I plan on doing?		Did I reach my goal? (Put a ✔)	My notes - What did I do? - What do I plan on doing?
DATE:	M T W T F S S		DATE:	M T W T F S S	
DATE:	M T W T F S S		DATE:	M T W T F S S	
DATE:	M T W T F S S		DATE:	M T W T F S S	



## My Healthy Living Daily Tracker

## Examples



### My **SMART** Goal: Eat Healthier (eat more fruit)

Did I reach my goal? (Put a ✓)

My notes - What did I do?

- What do I plan on doing?

DATE:

Feb. 1 -Feb. 7

DATE:

Feb. 8 -

Feb. 14

Λ	✓
-	✓
V	
-	?
)	✓
	W

Fruit s	hake (mom made fo	or me)
Cantal	oupe (half cup)	
Forgot		
Had fr	uit leather	
Forgot		
Forgot		
Apple		

It's Monday	
Blueberries (1 cup: 2 servings)	
Banana	
Apple	
Forgot	
Orange	

DATE:	M	
	T	
	W	
	<u>T</u>	
	<u> </u>	
	S	
	S	

### My **SMART** Goal: Be more active (walking)

Did I reach my goal? (Put a ✓)

My notes - What did I do?

- What do I plan on doing?

DATE:

Feb. 8 -Feb. 14

M	✓	
Т		
W	✓	
Т		
F		
S		
S		

Walked 30 min	to school	
Didn't walk – to	oo tired	

DATE:

Feb. 15 -Feb. 21

T	
W /	
Т	
F	
S	
S	

Walked :	30 min to sch	ool	

DATE:

Feb. 22 -Feb. 28

Μ	✓	
Т		
W	✓	
Т		
F	✓	
S		
S		

	The state of the property of t	ark with moi		
Walked 30	min to sc	hool		
Walked 31	min hom	e from school	=C	

#### **SMART GOAL BREAKDOWN:**

S: Eat more fruit

M: 1 piece/day

**A:** Get mom to buy 7 pieces/week

**R:** 7/10

T: Review on Feb. 14 (2 wks)



#### **SMART GOAL BREAKDOWN:**

S: Walking

M: 35 min. on Mon, Wed and Fri

**A:** At the park or to/from school

**R:** 8/10

T: Review on Feb. 28 (3 weeks)

