

# World Mental Health Day



10<sup>th</sup> October 2018



## **"Young people and mental health in a changing world"**

World Mental Health Day marked on the **10th of October** is a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy. It is an initiative of the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) to raise public awareness of mental health issues worldwide. This year WFMH's mental health campaign is focusing on ***"Young people and mental health in a changing world"***.

The World Federation for Mental Health wants to bring to attention the issues our youth and young adults are facing in our world today and begin the conversation around what they need in order to grow up healthy, happy and resilient.

### **The Situation**

Young people are spending most of their day on the internet – experiencing cyber crimes, cyber bullying, and playing violent video games. Adolescence and the early years of adulthood are also time of life when many changes occur; new schools, new environment, exposure to new technologies and programs. The youth are constantly facing numerous pressures (mainly from peers and parents) and challenges making them prone to mental distress and illness.

According to the WHO half of all mental illness begins by the age of 14 but most cases go undetected and untreated. In terms of the burden of the disease among adolescents, depression is the third leading cause. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-29-year-olds.

Harmful use of alcohol and illicit drugs among adolescents is a major issue in many countries and can lead to risky behaviours such as unsafe sex or dangerous driving. Eating disorders are also of concern.

When mental health, or lack of it is not addressed at a young age then we are prone to having an adult population with mental illness.

### **Prevention**

Parents and teachers can help build life skills of children and adolescents to help them cope with everyday challenges at home and at school.

Psychosocial support can be provided in schools and other community settings and of course training for health workers to enable them to detect and manage mental health disorders can be put in place, improved or expanded.

*Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which people realize their own potential, can cope with normal life stresses, can work productively, and can contribute to their community.*  
(WHO)

## Tips for Good Mental Health (Health Direct)

### Have a Strong Support System

Having good relationships with other people is the most important factor contributing to a sense of wellbeing. This can include family, friends, workmates and others in the community. Investing time and energy in your relationships can lead to great benefits for all involved.

### Exercise and Stay Healthy

Exercise has been shown to increase wellbeing as well as reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Good physical health is related to better mental health so a healthy diet, avoiding excess alcohol or drugs, and regular check-ups with the doctor can all help. Yoga has been shown to be good stress reliever.

### Identify and Use Your Strengths

We all have different strengths and weaknesses but finding out what you are really good at and using those talents can increase wellbeing.

### Develop Gratitude

Count your blessings. Try keeping a gratitude journal and write down 3 positive things for each day. This can lead to increased wellbeing.

### Create Flow

Flow is the state of being so highly involved in an enjoyable activity that you lose track of time. This usually happens when the level of challenge is about right for your level of skill. Flow can happen during work, hobbies, creative arts or sports.

### Give to Others

Making a contribution to the community, however small, increases social wellbeing. Many people feel a sense of contributing through meaningful work. This could also mean volunteering, helping a neighbour or performing small acts of kindness. Pleasant events can lead to positive emotions that can cancel out negative feelings.

### Spirituality

Being involved in spiritual or religious practices can improve wellbeing, help in coping with stress and reduce symptoms of mental illness.

### Seek Help

If you are struggling to cope reach out to Minet counselors for support. Minet offers an Employee Assistance Program-a 24/7 psycho-social support service accessible through a confidential 24 hour and 7 days a week tele counseling service that is manned by qualified professional counselors.

**0800 720029**

***"You don't have to control your thoughts,  
you just have to stop letting them control you."***