



# Aionkwatakari:teke

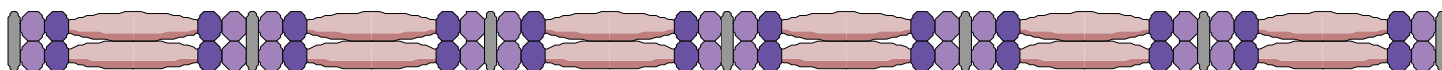
(A-YOU-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

*"For us to be healthy"*

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Kahnawake's Only Health and Wellness Newsletter

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<b>INSIDE THIS ISSUE</b>	Cannabis and Mental Health .....	3
	Teens and Mental Health .....	4-5
	Help Resources .....	5
	Profile: Lance McComber .....	6
	Ami-Quebec .....	7

New Year's for Families .....	8
Holiday Spending .....	9
Toy Safety Tips .....	10
Heating With Wood .....	11
Measuring Postive Mental Health .....	12

## Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawà:ke Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawà'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative and educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

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This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace, the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor.

## Editor's Notebook



**T**HIS COMMUNITY HAS BEEN THROUGH THE WRINGER OVER the past month or so. Too many deaths in too short a space of time. Too young. Too many lives affected. But out of this, there is hope. There have been women's meetings and there is the collective impact initiative that is gathering momentum in the community, ways through which several people are trying to improve the quality of life for the whole community.

It's also poignant to remember that, even during this solemn period in the community...many were quick to lend a hand when a call went out for help in the search for four missing Cree hunters in Waskaganish, near James Bay. Sadly, that search turned into a recovery mission with only two of the men found. Our hearts are with everyone who was affected by any of these happenings.

Not to mention that this time of the year can be a tough time for several people. KSCS is here for you and your loved ones. You can reach an on-call worker at 450-632-6880. As well, on page 5, we have a list of resources that you or someone you know may find useful. Please have a safe and happy holiday season. Celebrate safely with your family and loved ones.

*Sken:nen,*

*Marie David*

*Cover: Photos by Christine Taylor, background from Freepik, cover design by Marie David.*

*Page 4: background photo by Mike Dennler/Unsplash.*

*Page 8: graphic created by Freepik.*

*Page 9 and 11: graphics from Open Clip Art.*





# Cannabis and Mental Health

BY JESSICA OESTERREICH, PREVENTION

Attitudes surrounding cannabis use have changed dramatically since the “Reefer

Madness” era. At that time many people believed that there were no benefits to the use of cannabis.

In modern times we know that for some very specific illnesses and disorders (chronic pain, muscle spasms from multiple sclerosis, chemotherapy related nausea and vomiting, seizure disorders) that the chemicals extracted from cannabis offer users relief from, or an end, of their symptoms<sup>1</sup>.

While this is exciting news, the emergence of *medical marijuana* is causing confusion regarding its potential health benefits, particularly in the area of mental health.

There is a lot of stigma surrounding mental health. North American society often labels people with mental health issues as ‘crazy’, ‘psycho’, ‘weak’, or ‘lazy’. These labels leave people with a fear of speaking about their experiences. On top of that, many people avoid talking about mental health because of the stigma surrounding it, leaving many people living with mental health issues without the knowledge that they have a treatable mental health condition.

The fear and silence built around mental health may influence people to self-medicate. Self-medication refers to the usage of substances to manage symptoms without the

supervision of a doctor. Some people may find that marijuana does help with their symptoms of depression or anxiety but they may not know the risks that come with using marijuana to manage mental health.

The first important factor to remember is that much of the research done on the medical uses of cannabis is done using man-made cannabis based pills or oils that are taken orally. This eliminates the health risks associated with smoking but also allows for users, doctors, and researchers to know exactly how much THC and CBD is in the product being used. The product being used isn’t *off the street*.

Illegally produced marijuana is often contaminated by pesticides, fungus, bacteria, and heavy metals that are harmful when ingested or inhaled into the human body<sup>2</sup>.

Additionally, in the cases of many common mental health conditions the use of cannabis may make symptoms more intense. At the beginning of 2017, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine published a review of cannabis related research showing that

- heavy cannabis users are more likely to report thoughts of suicide,
- daily cannabis users who live with bi-polar disorder have more symptoms, and

- regular “use is likely to increase the risk of developing schizophrenia, other psychoses, and social anxiety disorder, and to a lesser extent depression.”<sup>i</sup>

No matter how you choose to manage your mental health, be honest with your doctor and yourself. If you have questions and mental health or substance use, call KSCS at 450-632-6880.

## (Endnotes)

1 “Health Effects of Marijuana and Cannabis-Derived Products Presented in New Report.” *National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*, 12 Jan. 2017,

2 Handwerk, Brian. “Modern Marijuana Is Often Laced With Heavy Metals and Fungus.” *Smithsonian.com*, *Smithsonian Institution*, 23 Mar. 2015.





# Teens and Mental Health

## How We Can Support Our Youth

BY KARINA PETERSON, PREVENTION

As our society continues to shed more light and create awareness of mental health issues, it is important to keep our youth at the forefront of our thoughts, as they are the future generation.

Mental illness is defined as, “health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behaviour associated with distress and/or impaired functioning” (Public Health Agency of Canada 2006).

Often overlooked, a shocking Canadian statistic shows that Canadian youth between the ages of 15 – 24 years old have the highest rate of mental illness across all age groups (Chai 2017). This article will explore what is happening with the teen population, what mental health issues are most prevalent, and what we can do to help support our youth.

As our children get older, they go through a number of developmental stages and phases at different points of their life. The brains of teens and early adults are constantly being flooded with hormone surges that are being stimulated by the brain, released by the glands, processed by the body, and returned to the brain for re-release.

The teenage brain is like a computer that is constantly downloading, updating, and running hundreds of

programs all at the same time. The brain is overloaded and that can have a direct effect on all aspects of development, including mental health (Arnett 2007).

The risk factor for adolescents and young adults to have issues with mental health are higher than any other age group in Canada (Chai 2017).

There is no single known risk factor for mental illness. Aside from the “teenage brain”, some of the other risks include predispositions to mental illnesses, and socio-economic, and psychological factors. Cultural background, and gender differences are all factors, as first nations and teenage girls have higher rates of mental illnesses (Public Health Agency of Canada 2014, Public Safety Canada 2017).

Mood disorders (depression, bi-polar disorder), schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, eating disorders, and substance dependency are the most common mental illnesses for youth (Chai 2017).

The most prevalent mental illness for youth are depression and anxiety disorders. Symptoms of depression include feelings of sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness and guilt, changes to eating and sleeping habits, unhappiness in previously enjoyed social and cultural activities, and

suicidal thoughts or behaviors (Public Health Agency of Canada 2014).

Only a professional can diagnose mental illness. The majority of youth that suffer from mental illnesses do not receive access to appropriate treatment or support (Public Safety Canada 2017), so it is important to report all symptoms to a doctor or a professional.

Recognizing the symptoms and reporting them to a professional will ensure that more adolescents and young adults get the appropriate help they need.

Without support and treatment, our youth face problems in the future. Statistics show that crime rates, problems with law enforcement, substance abuse and suicide are all strongly linked to inappropriately treated or non-treated mental illnesses (Ibid 2017). Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages 15–24 years old (Chai 2017).

Prevention and awareness are the most effective way to support the development of our young people (Ibid 2017, Public Safety Canada 2017).

Getting enough sleep is important — it is a fact that teens and young adults physically need more sleep to accommodate the developmental changes happening in their bodies and brains (Public Health Agency of Canada 2015, UCLA Health 2017).

Eating well, engaging in physical and/or creative activities, fostering positive relationships with friends or social groups, and connecting to spiritual practices are all effective in preventing mental health issues (Ibid 2014).

As supporters, listen to them, let them vent, and do not be afraid to ask them questions. Validate their feelings, take them seriously, and have empathy (Ibid 2014). Trust them, be honest with them, and in turn they will be honest with you. Let them know that they can rely on you to help them when they need it.

By creating good relationships with our youth, we create a strong community. A strong community can help lead our children into positive, healthy, productive lifestyles, and in turn they will become strong individuals and leaders.

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## Help Resources

### In Quebec

For a suicide crisis (from anywhere in Quebec)

1-866-APPELLE

1-866-277-3553

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Gay Line (from anywhere in Quebec)

1-888-505-1010

(7 P.M. – 11 P.M.)

First Nations & Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line

1-855-242-3310

Kids Help Phone (from anywhere in Canada)

1-800-668-6868

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Tele-Jeunes (from anywhere in Quebec)

1-800-263-2266

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Suicide Prevention Hotline:

514-723-4000 (Montreal)

450-699-5935 (Chateauguay region)

911 in Montreal

### In Kahnawake:

Kahnawake Peacekeepers

On-call (at night, weekends, holidays)

450-632-6505

Kahnawake Shakotii'a'takehnhas Community Services

450-632-6880

[www.KSCS.ca](http://www.KSCS.ca)



## Profile: Lance McComber

BY TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS



Lance McComber: photo by Tyson Phillips.

Over the past few years there's been a better understanding of the different forms of mental illness; depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc. A person with a mental illness can get better with the help of doctors, support from family and friends, and prescription medication if necessary. Community member Lance McComber shared his story.

Lance was in his early twenties when he began isolating himself from the outside world. "I would stay in bed for two days straight. I just wanted to sleep," he said. He missed a lot of work. And then, one day "I had a major breakdown. I was getting my kids ready for school and I found myself yelling at the kids and their mother," he said. He was terrified. "So I locked myself in a closet. I didn't want to hurt anyone." Lance was taken to the Anna-Laberge

hospital's psychiatric ward where he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and prescribed medication.

"The medication made me feel like crap. I was like a zombie at work," he explained. He returned to the ward for a few more weeks. After his release, Lance was seeing a psychologist and a support worker at KSCS. Sadly, Lance went through another difficult period when his father committed suicide in May 2010. He struggled to get through this time but was hospitalized again in November 2010.

Lance continued to get help from KSCS. "I worked a lot with the psychologist," he said. It was during this time that it was determined that Lance wasn't bipolar but had a personality disorder and he stopped taking his medications because they weren't working for him.

Lance explained that with a bipolar disorder, there is a chemical imbalance in the brain but there is no chemical imbalance in a personality disorder. "The illness affects my thought process. I become fixated on certain thoughts and cannot move forward. People's thoughts are like a wheel, it's always moving forward," he explained. "With my thoughts, the wheels get stuck in the mud and can turn and turn but not move forward."

Lance received treatment with the KSCS psychologist and was able to break the pattern of thoughts that

kept him at a standstill. His health was improving and in 2012, Lance took the Career Building Skills Program at Tewaohnni'saktha.

Then, Lance heard a radio ad about a video game design workshop at Concordia University. "A group of us from Kahnawà:ke designed a game about a young man's journey on becoming a warrior." *Skahìon:hati: Rise of the Kanien'kehá:ka Legends* won the Best New Media Award at the 2013 ImagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival in Toronto.

In 2013, Lance went on to study civil engineering at Concordia University and graduated from the program this year. He is now working at the Kahnawake Environment Office as an environmental inspector.

"I want people to know that I am not cured," Lance said. "I may have a mental illness but it is under control. I still have bad days but I am able to function and go to work. It's something I may have to live with for the rest of my life. If you have been diagnosed with a mental illness, get the help that is needed." If you need help, call KSCS at 450-632-6880.



# Ami-Quebec

BY JILLIAN RITCHIE, AMI-QUEBEC

**A**MI-Quebec is a community organization, dedicated to helping families manage the effects of mental illness in a loved one. Through guidance, support and advocacy, we encourage carers to acquire tools and skills that can help them get through challenging times.

Mental illness is a family affair. When a loved one is diagnosed with mental illness, the whole family is affected. Family caregivers need ongoing access to information, guidance and support to fulfill their caregiving responsibilities effectively and to minimize the risk to their own well-being.

Inadequate recognition and support may generate significant emotional, physical, financial and social burdens. When these situations create chronic stress for families, they too often become *collateral casualties* of mental illness.

Well supported family caregivers can play a facilitative role in the recovery journey of their ill relative, in the improvement of their quality of life and in their inclusion in all aspects of community life.

Additionally, adequate support can mitigate the stressors often associated with caregiving. The absence of such supports, on the other hand, can lead to negative effects for family

caregivers that jeopardize both their capacity to provide care and their own health and well-being.

Families often underestimate their own needs as they offer support to their loved ones, even though in Canada, \$12.6 million is spent out of pocket on expenses related to caregiving, and nearly 30 per cent of Canadians over the age of 15 dedicate an average of 10 hours a week caring for a loved one (Statistics Canada, 2013).

AMI-Quebec's main preoccupation is supporting families in their daily struggles. Most services are free of charge. We are located at 5800 Decarie and offer information sessions and workshops on various mental-health related subjects, one-on-one counseling for carers and support groups for families and for individuals with lived experience of mental illness. We have a rich resource library for members.

In addition to direct programs for families, through our outreach program we offer presentations to schools, universities and businesses with the goal of informing and educating about mental health and mental illness.

Last January, we began speaking on a monthly radio show at K103.7 in Kahnawà:ke. The host guides the conversations on specific mental health topics, and KSCS Prevention Worker, Jessica Oesterreich brings in

a perspective of how addictions can affect mental illness. Usually there is a volunteer who shares a personal experience with a particular illness, reminding that behind each diagnosis there is a person.

This past summer, AMI-Quebec was invited to present to a group of youth at the Kahnawà:ke Youth Centre to get youth speaking about challenges they are facing. Most importantly, we share the word that mental illness is no one's fault, and while having mental illness is not a matter of choice, improving one's mental health is certainly a choice and everyone can do it.

You can find out more about Ami-Quebec on our [website](#) or by phone at 514-486-1448 (1-877-303-0264 outside Montreal).



# New Year's for Families

BY FRANKIE MASSICOTTE, PREVENTION



The clock strikes twelve on December 31, bringing with it a brand new year of resolutions, good fortune and well wishes. Traditionally a holiday for grown-ups because of its late night celebration, it leaves some parents wondering how to make it a fun, family event that is fitting for all ages.

There are many ideas you can choose from depending on the age of the children and their interests. Any of the following are sure to be a hit for your 2018 celebration:

- **Make a ball shaped piñata** for your own ball drop. Instead of having it descend at midnight, ring in the New Year earlier so that little ones can partake in the fun. The fireworks can be the explosion of goodies which are hiding inside. Or have the kids blow up balloons and then have a “balloon” drop instead. For instructions or inspiration, check out sites like [Instructables.com](http://Instructables.com) or [Pinterest](http://Pinterest.com).
- **Dress up.** Ladies pull out your best dress and gents your bow ties. Get the bling and beads out and don't forget to shine your shoes. Now everyone is picture perfect. Prepare a photo booth with accessories which can be prepared in advance with your creative little

helpers and paparazzi away. Just one last thing...

smile! Check out [homedit.com](http://homedit.com), [diyprojects.com](http://diyprojects.com) or [HGTV.com](http://HGTV.com)

for other photo booth ideas, including printables.

- **Family Karaoke.** Have fun singing alone or all together. Imitate your favorite singer or rock it out as a band. Vote on the loudest, funniest and most original. Let your superstar shine! There are apps like Lucky Voice Karaoke that work on either your iPhone or iPad or Karaoke Sing and Record that works on Android or web-based fun via Karafun or the Karaoke Channel (we are not endorsing any of these apps or websites)
- **Have a pajama party.** Get matching PJ's or wear your favorite ones. Set up forts, have a pillow fight. It's fun to be a child all over again. Your kids will think it's cool and don't forget the flashlights.
- **Create a vision board** for the coming year. Members can share different ideas of what they want and see for the future as a family. Using old magazines, crayons and

print outs from the internet. These visuals can be helpful in displaying those goals. As a tradition bring out the board every year and see how much has been attained. Add new ideas and goals. Don't forget to be thankful for the past year of experiences and memories created.

- **Prepare a traditional family meal.** Invite everyone to bring a traditional dish or cook all together and share recipes. Involve the little ones with the mixing and prepping. They will enjoy being sous-chefs
- **Traditional family singing.** At Christmas instead of commercial presents under the tree, wrap water drums, horn rattles and purchase social songs CDs. Then enjoy the beautiful melody of singing together with your family on New Year's Eve.
- **Check out the Kahnawà:ke Community Calendar** for any events happening in the area. A great opportunity for families to get together and celebrate in a safe, alcohol free environment where there is food, entertainment and a fun time for all to enjoy as a community.

Whatever you choose to do for New Year's Eve, the most enjoyable will be spending it with the ones you love. Enjoy!



# Holiday Spending

BY MARIE DAVID, COMMUNICATIONS

Most holidays can be a source of stress, especially those holidays that are marked with overboard behaviours of consumerism.

Those holidays in particular can be difficult when it comes to spending or staying on a budget. After all, your regular monthly or weekly bills aren't going to take a holiday. They'll be back next month as usual and there is really no reason to add onto the debt pile by racking up more bills unnecessarily.

One of the best pieces of advice I came across while searching the Internet for tips was to examine your intentions: is it to say "thank you" or "I love you" or is it to reciprocate or match the dollar amount of a gift given to you or a member of your family?

The real point of gift giving is to show your appreciation for someone and often-times saying those two words is worth more than any store-bought gift.

- **It's okay to NOT keep up with the Jones'.** We've all fallen into the trap of thinking we're in a race with our friends, family or neighbours to accumulate the most — or the most expensive — material goods. We're not. And if we fall into that trap, we have a mountain of debt as a result.
- **Start saving for the holidays early in the year.** For instance, putting away five dollars a week for 52 weeks results in saving

\$260. Maybe that doesn't seem like a lot but that's \$260 that's not going on your credit card. If you do go this route, consider setting up a separate savings account and use it only for this purpose and be strict about it.

- **Set up realistic spending or gift limits and stick to it.** For instance, set a limit of 1–3 gifts per person or child. Make one the main gift and the others can be stocking stuffers or smaller items.
- **Give a homemade gift.** There's no shortage of talented people in Kahnawà:ke. Homemade gifts don't have to be extravagant or time consuming. So many people bead or paint or sew, the possibilities are endless. Even if you don't bead or paint or sew, maybe you cook. Make a batch of cookies, quick breads, pies, or bread. Pair it with some special teas or coffees, maple syrup for the pancake mix, cookie cutters for the cookies, or homemade jam or preserves for the bread. Or, maybe you have a favourite family recipe for pancakes, cookies, or soup. Whip up a mix (of the dry ingredients only) and gift it in a pretty jar — don't forget to include the instructions for baking or cooking.
- **Shop around.** If you're buying a big ticket item do your research. Some of the best sales will actually

take place after the holidays. Some retailers offer deals to beat competitor's prices, so keep that in mind when shopping.

- **Do away with gift giving all together.** It's not really our way anyway. Spend time with loved ones, especially those you don't always get to see in our hectic lives. Make memories to share and laugh at years from now. That really is priceless.

So there you have it. Shop around. Consider making homemade gifts. Be realistic about expectations and spending but most of all be realistic about why you are giving a gift or spending an X or Y amount and consider spending time together. Whatever you choose to do, we hope you experience the very best of the holidays.



# Toy Safety Tips

TAKEN FROM HEALTH CANADA

**I**n Canada, all toys are regulated to make sure they are safe for use by children. Even so, unsafe toys can make their way onto store shelves and into homes. And sometimes the ways toys are used can expose children to hazards. Being informed and aware of potential risks will help you protect your child's health and safety. Here are some general tips to follow:

- When buying toys, look for sturdy and well-made ones that include the manufacturer's contact information.
- Read and follow all age labels and safety messages. Toys for older children may have small parts or other hazards that make them unsafe for younger children.
- Keep small toys and any loose parts/accessories out of the reach of children under three years of age, as these are choking hazards for children who still put non-food items into their mouths.
- Repair or throw away broken toys. Check often for loose parts, broken pieces or sharp edges that could harm children.
- Keep all toys - especially plush and soft toys - away from heat sources like stoves, fireplaces and heaters.

## Storing toys

Use a toy box without a lid. Heavier lids (often found on older wooden toy

boxes and chests) can fall on a child's head or neck, causing injury or even death. If you use a toy box that has a lid, make sure the lid is light and the box has holes to allow air inside.

Never give children access to airtight storage bins, trunks or boxes. If they climb inside, they could suffocate.

## Tips for specific kinds of toys

### Ride-on toys

- Make sure any riding toys you buy are right for your child's age, size and abilities.
- Check that the ride-on toy will not tip when your child is using it. The toy should be stable when weight is placed on any riding point.
- Serious injuries and deaths can occur when children use ride-on toys in dangerous areas. Make sure children don't use ride-on toys near stairs, swimming pools or other dangerous areas-including hazards like lamps, cords, decorations or appliances that could be knocked or pulled down.

## Did you know...

### Baby walkers

Baby walkers are very unsafe. They were banned from being sold in Canada in 2004 and should not be used by any child.

### Latex balloons

- Balloons should be used for decoration only - not for play.

- Always keep uninflated balloons and pieces of broken balloons out of the reach of children. These pieces can be easily inhaled and block a child's airway.
- Balloons should be inflated by adults only.

## Trampolines

Trampolines are not toys - they can seriously injure children, even when an adult supervises them. Children under the age of six should never go on a trampoline. Children over six using a trampoline should be supervised at all times.

Source:

"Toy Safety Tips." Health Canada, Government of Canada, 17 Dec. 2014.



# Heating With Wood

BY DONALD GILBERT, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Think of building your dream house? Have you put much thought into how you plan to heat it? If your thoughts are leaning towards wood, it's best to do some homework before you light that first fire.

Wood burning appliances have changed a lot since Tota's days. New internal stove designs and fireplace inserts make burning wood more efficient, burning the fuel cleaner and more completely. Wood pellet stoves even eliminate the need for splitting logs.

With any appliance that produces a flame, you must be aware of the consequences of poor maintenance, poor installation, and poor judgement. The results can be deadly.

The solution to a safe and enjoyable wood burning experience is to plan properly, install correctly and maintain the equipment.

Safety first. What you don't know about creosote can result in a visit from the fire department. Creosote can buildup in chimneys, causing fires. To reduce creosote, burn clean well seasoned wood that has been split and dried properly. Seasoned wood burns better and releases less smoke. "Green" wood burns with more smoke, the main cause of creosote.

Wood stoves are designed to burn wood, not trash. Plastic's, particle-board, painted or stained wood does not belong in your woodpile. Another threat is treated wood and wood with preservatives that will release toxic chemicals as it burns. We don't need to

be releasing these chemicals into the environment.

Seasoned wood should be stored outside and only bring in the amount of wood you'll need for a day's worth of fuel. Don't store the wood inside to dry. The wood will release moisture or worse, release molds that will start deteriorating your beautiful dream house. Cover and keep the wood off the ground.

Figuring out where you want the appliance can have an effect on its performance. Basement installations have a tendency to overheat the basement while attempting to warm up the whole house. This wastes fuel and shortens the life span of the appliance. Unfinished and poorly insulated basements tend to absorb the heat and transfer the heat outside therefore, avoid putting it in the basement.

Chimney location and arrangement has a big impact on how your appliance will operate. Chimneys work best when they run straight up from the appliance, through the house interior. Long runs with multiple elbows create a particular set of problems, as does a chimney installed on the outside of a house. Considerations have to be taken into account for minimum chimney height above the roof and clearance from nearby obstacles.

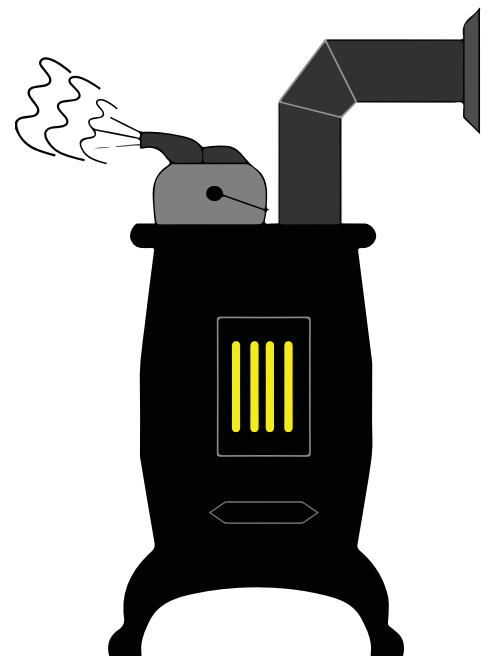
Safe clearances from walls and floors and walls with shielding need to be respected. These are basic guidelines that have to be respected if you want to enjoy a relatively safe wood-burning season.

When everything is said and done, you still have to take a look at what

impact heating with wood will have on those in your home that may suffer from asthma or other respiratory problems such as emphysema or allergies. A poorly installed wood-burning appliance could allow smoke into your home and possibly trigger an allergic reaction.

There are guides available for you to assist you in operating a wood-burning appliance. Some titles include; *The Guide to Residential Wood Heating* ♡ *All About Wood Fireplaces* ♡ *Introduction to Home Heating With Wood* ♡ *Buying a High-Efficiency Wood-Burning Appliance* ♡ *Getting the Most Out of Your Wood Stove* ♡ and *Burn It Smart*.

These guides are available through KSCS Environmental Health Services at 450-635-9945 or you can contact the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).





# The Back Page....

*"Experience is not what happens to you; it's what you do with what happens to you."*

*~ Aldous Huxley*

## MEASURING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN CANADA: SOCIAL SUPPORT

### POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

is the capacity of people to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance the ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges.

### POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH IS ABOUT

#### FEELING GOOD

means feeling happy and satisfied with life.

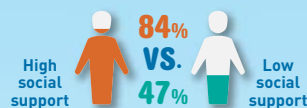
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#### FUNCTIONING WELL

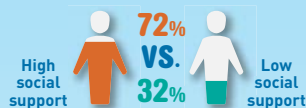
means participating in meaningful activities and having positive relationships with others.

### Adults with strong social support are more likely to:

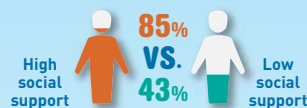
Report being happy



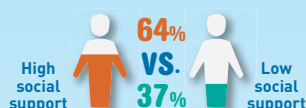
Have high psychological well-being



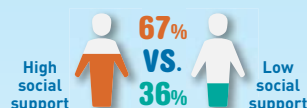
Report high life satisfaction



Report a strong sense of belonging to their local communities



Report their mental health as "very good" or "excellent"



### Social support

means feeling loved and cared for, and having a network of family, friends, neighbours, co-workers and community members that are there in times of need.

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey – Mental Health 2012, based on self-reported data of Canadian adults aged 18 years and older.

This infographic is the second in a series of knowledge products responding to the need for better data on positive mental health, as identified in the Mental Health Commission of Canada's Strategy "Changing Directions, Changing Lives" developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

The Public Health Agency of Canada is working with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and other key experts to identify, organize, and present data on positive mental health outcomes, and protective and risk factors. This infographic provides some examples of these data.

Please visit us online for the latest data: <http://infobase.phac-aspc.gc.ca/positive-mental-health>



Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

Canada

### Tsothóhrha/December 2017

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 5 Intl. Volunteer Day
- 6 Natl. Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women
- 10 Intl. Human Rights Day
- 17 Anti-Bullying Day
- 17 Holiday Parade
- 21 Winter Solstice
- 22 KSCS Closed (check [www.kscs.ca](http://www.kscs.ca) for more info)
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 Boxing Day

### Tsothohrhkó:wa / January 2018

- Alzheimer's Awareness Month
- 14–20 Natl. Non-Smoking Week
  - 1 New Year's Day
  - 3 KSCS reopens
  - 17 Weedless Wednesday
  - 25 Bell Let's Talk Day
  - 27 Family Literacy Day

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

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