

BACK TO SCHOOL, *Back To Balance*

A GUIDE FOR TEENS & FAMILIES

Practical tools.
Real support.
Stronger together.



Pathstone 
Mental Health

**WE'RE HERE
IF YOU NEED US.**



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This toolkit is here to help you and your family
start the school year with confidence,
connection, and balance.



WEEK 1: RESET YOUR ROUTINE

Build healthy habits and set the foundation
for a balanced school year.



WEEK 2: CHECK IN, NOT JUST CHECK GRADES

Prioritize mental health and open
conversations at home.



WEEK 3: FINDING YOUR PEOPLE

Build connection, navigate friendships,
and create your support circle.



WEEK 4: LOOKING AHEAD

Set goals, build confidence, and grow
resilience for the road ahead.



PARENT RESOURCES

Guidance, tips, and tools to support
your teen every step of the way.



PATHSTONE IS HERE FOR YOU

Free, confidential support for teens
and families in Niagara.

*Small steps.
Stronger you.*



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YOU'VE GOT THIS.

Starting (or returning to) high school brings a lot—new classes, new faces, big decisions, and even bigger feelings.

This guide is packed with tools, tips, and real talk to help you take care of your mental health, build your support team, and find your balance.

Small steps.

Real support.

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WEEK 1

RESET YOUR Routine

Strong routines create a strong foundation. Building healthy habits now can reduce stress, boost your mood, and help you show up as your best self all year long.



KEY MESSAGE:

Success starts before the first bell rings.

THIS WEEK, FOCUS ON:



SLEEP

Aim for 8–10 hours of sleep each night.
Good sleep = better focus, mood, and energy.



MORNING ROUTINES

Start your day with intention, not rush.
A calm morning sets the tone.



SCREEN TIME

Find balance. Less mindless scrolling, more time for what matters.



HEALTHY HABITS

Move your body, eat well, and drink water.
Small choices = big impact.



QUICK WIN IDEAS



- ✓ Go to bed 30 minutes earlier tonight.
- ✓ Pack your bag and lay out clothes the night before.
- ✓ Put your phone away 30 minutes before bed.
- ✓ Drink a full water bottle today.
- ✓ Take a 15-minute walk or stretch.



Small steps.
Stronger you.



WEEK 2

CHECK IN, *Not Just Check Grades*

Teens face more than just homework. Checking in regularly shows you care, opens the door to real conversations, and builds trust that lasts.



KEY MESSAGE:

A conversation today can make all the difference.

THIS WEEK, FOCUS ON:



START THE CONVERSATION

Ask open-ended questions and really listen.
Try: "How are you really feeling?"



MAKE IT A HABIT

Check in a few times this week—not just when there's a problem.



CREATE SAFE SPACE

Let your teen know they can talk to you without judgment.



BE THERE

Sometimes just knowing you're there means everything.



QUICK WIN IDEAS

- ✓ Share a meal together without distractions.
- ✓ Take a drive or walk and talk without pressure.
- ✓ Send a quick "thinking of you" text.
- ✓ Listen more, advise less.
- ✓ Celebrate the small wins and positive moments.



*Small steps.
Stronger you.*



WEEK 3

FINDING *Your People*

You don't have to do it all alone.
Connecting with others who get you
can boost your mood, reduce stress,
and help you feel like you belong.



KEY MESSAGE:

You belong somewhere.
Start building your
support circle.



THIS WEEK, FOCUS ON:



REACH OUT

Say hi, start a conversation,
or make plans with a friend.



JOIN IN

Get involved in a club, team,
or activity you enjoy.



BE OPEN

Share how you feel with someone
you trust.



CONNECT ONLINE (SAFELY)

Join positive online communities
that make you feel good.



BE A GOOD FRIEND

Support others, be kind,
and celebrate each other.

QUICK WIN IDEAS

-  Invite a friend to hang out.
-  Attend a school event
or activity.
-  Compliment someone
or say thank you.
-  Send a message to a friend
you haven't talked to in a while.
-  Try a new club, team,
or hobby.



*Small steps.
Stronger you.*



WEEK 4

LOOKING Ahead



Planning ahead builds confidence and helps you handle whatever comes your way.

Little steps today lead to big wins tomorrow.



KEY MESSAGE:

A little planning today can make a big difference tomorrow.



THIS WEEK, FOCUS ON:



SET A GOAL

Think of one thing you want to accomplish this month.



MAKE A PLAN

Break your goal into small, doable steps. Write them down.



BUILD CONFIDENCE

Focus on your strengths and past successes.



PREPARE FOR CHALLENGES

Think about what might be tough and how you can handle it.



CELEBRATE PROGRESS

Every small step forward is something to be proud of!

QUICK WIN IDEAS



- ✓ Write down three things you want to achieve.
- ✓ Pick one small step you can take today.
- ✓ Visualize your success — imagine how good it feels.
- ✓ Ask someone you trust to help keep you accountable.
- ✓ Treat yourself for progress, no matter how small!



*Small steps.
Stronger you.*



PARENT Resources

Supporting your teen starts with having the right information and support. These trusted resources are here to help you navigate challenges, find answers, and take care of your own well-being too.



Pathstone Mental Health

Free, confidential mental health support for children, youth, and families in Niagara.
pathstonementalhealth.ca



Kids Help Phone

24/7 confidential support for youth.
Call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868
kidshelpphone.ca



One Stop Talk

Free, confidential mental health support for youth and adults in Niagara.
onestoptalk.ca



Niagara Region Parenting Pathways

Tips, tools, and programs to support you at every stage of parenting.
niagararegion.ca/parenting



211 Ontario

Find local and community services near you, 24/7.
211ontario.ca



CMHA Niagara

Mental health resources, support groups, and programs for all ages.
niagara.cmha.ca

TIPS FOR PARENTS



YOU MATTER TOO

Take care of yourself so you can be there for your teen.



KEEP TALKING

Check in often and really listen. Small conversations build strong connections.



BE PATIENT

Teens are figuring things out. Your support makes a difference.



KNOW WHEN TO REACH OUT

It's okay to ask for help. You don't have to do it alone.



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WE'RE HERE IF YOU NEED US.

PATHSTONE IS HERE FOR YOU



Mental health challenges can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to face them alone.

Pathstone Mental Health is here for teens and families in Niagara with free, confidential support—when you need it most.



WE SUPPORT YOU WITH:



COUNSELLING

Confidential support for kids, teens, and families.



GUIDANCE

Tools and strategies to manage stress, anxiety, and more.



FAMILY SUPPORT

Resources and help for the whole family, every step of the way.



CONVENIENT ACCESS

Multiple locations across Niagara and walk-in options available.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE.
We're here to help.



pathstonementalhealth.ca



905-374-1414



Locations across Niagara



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