



One Small Thing:
Fostering positive mindsets
Toolkit



One Small Thing: *Fostering Positive Mindsets*

The **One Small Thing: Fostering Positive Mindsets** toolkit is filled with activities and resources designed to help you and your family support mental health and well-being. We share this initiative and toolkit with you in hopes it adds value and joy to the days and months ahead. **Now more than ever, hope, joy and laughter are needed.**

This resource includes:

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One Small Thing: Overview

What is a Mindset?

Your mindset is a set of beliefs that shape how you make sense of and experience the world. Our mindsets influence how we think, feel, and behave in any given situation.

What is a One Small Thing Mindset?

The *One Small Thing Mindset* is the belief that small and intentional actions or affirmations can lead to meaningful outcomes or change. Having a *One Small Thing* mindset means setting an intention to take small steps or actions **within your control** to enhance your mental health and wellbeing **every day**.



One Small Thing Objectives:

1. Highlight the importance of **small and intentional actions** within the individual's control that can enhance positive well-being
2. **Cultivate hope and joy**
3. **Create and enhance caring connections**, mental health and well-being
4. Aid us in **acknowledging and honouring** our feelings as well as the feelings and experiences of those around us
5. Provide information and **valuable tools to manage stressful situations** and improve mental health



One Small Thing Tool Kit

Included are five themes supported by ready-to-use activities that can be practiced at home and in other environments. These activities promote [Acknowledge](#), [Bridge](#), and [Connection](#) through **small** and **intentional** actions. Each theme and accompanying resource can be tailored to fit the needs of you and your circle of care or family.

Themes:

- [Mindful Mondays](#)
- [Thoughtful Tuesdays](#)
- [Wellness Wednesdays](#)
- [Take Care Thursdays](#)
- [Focus Friday](#)





Mindful Mondays!

Mindful Mondays!



The following [image](#) can provide a great conversation starter when speaking to your child(ren)

During Mindful Mondays; we invite you to do **One Small Thing** - Practice being mindful or in the moment. Slow things down by pausing, reflecting and being present in the moment.

Combining sensory processes with mindfulness can be especially beneficial for children and youth with unique gifts, abilities and needs.

Try and explore!

Get mindful about feelings using these [Feelings Flashcards](#)

Don't have a printer at home? Double the fun by creating your own flashcards. Use old newspapers, flyers, magazines or pictures to make your own flashcards.

Ukulele relaxation



Being mindful can look, feel and sound different for each of us.

Tell us how you practise mindfulness?

Use #OneSmallThing on social media and tag @MH_YRDSB (Twitter)

[One Small Thing submission](#) form

Or

email us at mental.health@yrdsb.ca



Thoughtful Tuesdays!

Thoughtful Tuesday!



The following image can provide a great conversation starter when speaking to your child(ren) about the power of their thoughts.

Thoughtful Tuesdays invite us to focus on the power of our thoughts. Our thoughts, feelings, and actions are all connected. Understanding this connection is an essential part of developing effective coping skills.

[Awareness of our breath](#) can soothe the nervous system, relieve anxiety, release tension and improve overall health and well-being. This skill can be especially beneficial to children with unique gifts, abilities and needs. We can promote breath awareness to slow things down to be more thoughtful.

Try and explore!

Engage in small and thoughtful actions:

- **Acknowledge** feelings and experiences
- **Smile:** A simple smile can make a difference in someone's day and yours
- **Share** thoughtful notes/ texts
- **Give** your full attention

Explore this [Youth-focused mental health resource hub](#) to learn more about the connection between thoughts, feelings and actions.

[Feather Blowing](#)



Being thoughtful can look, feel and sound different for each of us. Tell us how you practise being thoughtful?

Use [#OneSmallThing](#) on social media and tag [@MH_YRDSB](#) (Twitter)

Use [the One Small Thing submission](#) form

Or

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Wellness Wednesdays!

Wellness Wednesday!

CHAIR EXERCISES

- Put your hands behind your back, touching your elbows with your hands
- Hold your hands up in front of you (hold for 5 seconds), make fists, turn fists upwards (hold for 5 seconds), turn fists downwards (hold for 5). Bring your hands back down. Repeat 5 times
- With your feet flat on the floor, raise your heels for 10 seconds, drop them back down. Repeat 3 times
- Put your hands flat on the back of your head and bend your elbows. Turn your head left (hold for 5 seconds), turn your head to middle, turn your head to the right (hold for 5 seconds)
- Leg extension: straighten right leg in front, bring down. Straighten your left leg in front, bring back down



 School Mental Health Ontario
Santé mentale en milieu scolaire Ontario
Find out more at jack.org/covid

The following [image](#) can provide a great conversation starter to encourage wellness movement and breaks.

Wellness Wednesdays invite us to consider what helps us feel and do well. Wellness looks different for each of us. Our wellness can be connected to who we are and the things we enjoy. It can also be connected to our experiences, culture, beliefs and many other pieces that shape our identity.

Engaging in activities that connect mind and body is a great way to enhance the wellness of ALL children and youth

Try and explore!

This activity can help build a regular practice that benefits you and your family. The activity promotes focusing their attention, calming feelings of anxiety, and managing stress. Stretch in a way that feels comfortable to you.

[Let go and stretch](#)

Practice and model this activity with your child(ren).

[Body scan](#)



What is One Small Thing that helps you feel well? Tell us how you enhance or maintain your wellness?

Are there actions that you can take to help those around you improve their wellness?

Share with us by using:

#OneSmallThing on social media and tag @MH_YRDSB (Twitter)

[The One Small Thing submission](#) form

Or email us at mental.health@yrdsb.ca



Take Care Thursdays!

Take Care Thursday!

Adapt Your Self-Care Routines.

Some of your self-care strategies might be disrupted for a while (e.g. your gym or fave restaurant may close). Consider what you can do differently and take this as a chance to try something new.

jack.org

The following [image](#) can provide a great conversation starter to support your child(ren) in exploring and sharing their personal self-care strategies

Take Care Thursdays invites us to consider how we take care of ourselves and those around us. Taking moments each day to practice self-care and collective care with those around us is important.

Equipping ourselves and our child(ren) with the tools needed to Take Care and enhance positive mental health can be a great way to promote overall wellness.

Try and explore!

We invite you to explore [Self Care 101](#) with your child(ren) during Take Care Thursdays and beyond.

Visit [Kinark Autism Services](#) for fun and educational videos that support taking care

Visit [School Mental Health Ontario](#) to learn and explore resources that support parents and caregivers in improving children and youth mental health.



What is One Small Thing that helps you care for yourself and those around you?

Share with us by using:

Use #OneSmallThing on social media and tag @MH_YRDSB (Twitter)

[The One Small Thing submission form](#)

Or

email us at mental.health@yrdsb.ca



Focus Fridays!

Focus Friday!



See below for enlargement
The following [image](#) can provide a great conversation starter to support students in exploring how they might change unhelpful thoughts.

Focus Fridays invites us to pause and reflect. Considering situations in an intentional way can offer insight and clarity.

Consider the following reflection questions to share with you child(ren).

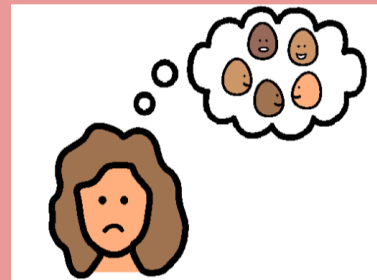
- 1) What went well today/this week? (Small things matter, even things that may seem insignificant)
- 2) Did you have any challenging or difficult moments? How did you deal with these moments?

Try and explore!

Taking time to pause and reflect can help develop an awareness of our physical and mental states.

[Pause and reflect](#)

Use [social stories](#), pictures and other forms of expression to support reflection in children and youth with unique gifts, abilities and needs. down to be more thoughtful.



What is One Small Thing that helps you focus, pause, and reflect.

Share with us by using

Use #OneSmallThing on social media and tag @MH_YRDSB (Twitter)

[the One Small Thing submission form](#)

Or

email us at

mental.health@yrdsb.ca



One Small Thing is...Anything that helps you to feel positive and hopeful

“When my daughter shares funny Tik Tok videos with me after work” Parent

“Being brave when I feel nervous” Student

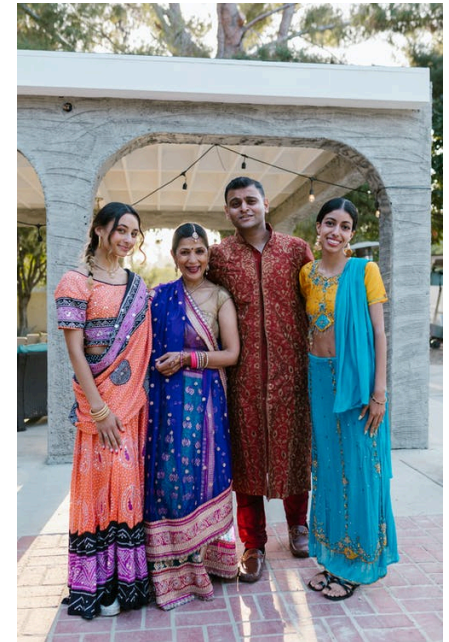
“Taking homemade lunches to school” student

“Feeling accepted” student

“My family & friends” student

Many identities, languages and expressions are missing,
how do you express One Small Thing?

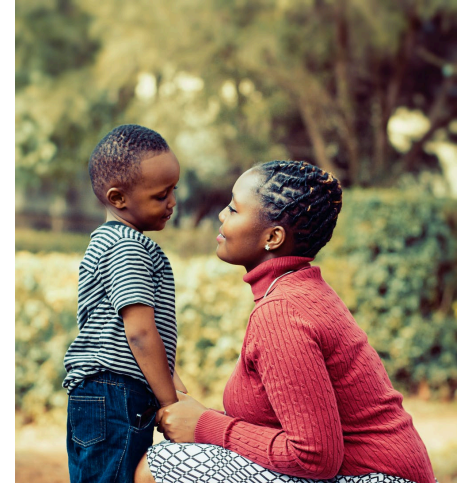
Share with us on social media @MH_YRDSB (Twitter)





One Small Thing in action through the ABCs of Mental Health

- One Small Thing that can improve your child's mental health and sense of value is knowing that they are heard, listened to and **acknowledged**.
- **Bridge:** One Small Thing is highlighting your child's strengths, assets and gifts. Seeing the positives in everyday situations. "I noticed you really tried with your homework," " I love the way you think outside the box/ your creativity"
- **Connection:** One Small Thing can also be a simple check-in: "How was your day? What was the highlight of your day?" "You seem quiet. Is everything okay?"



Pay attention to the positives every day! It's One Small Thing

- “Thanks for putting the plate/shoes/toy away”
- “Great job helping your sibling”
- “Thanks for being you! ”





We would love to learn more about how you and your circle of care are taking the One Small Thing journey. Share with us by using

#OneSmallThing

on social media **@MH_YRDSB (Twitter)**





Ways to take the One Small Thing Journey

Students

ADD YOUR OWN :)

We would love to learn more about how you and your family are taking the One Small Thing journey

#OneSmallThing
on social media
@MH_YRDSB
(Twitter)

- Engage in cultural/identity affirming activities
- Movement that works for you
- Chair stretches
- Listen to music/play an instrument
- Call a friend
- Open a window/get natural light
- Move/walk/bike around the neighbourhood
- Get outdoors
- Read/listen to a book
- Play guitar or other instruments
- Watch a show that lifts you up
- Cook, bake or create something
- Never be too afraid to ask for help
- Wash your face with cool water when feeling stressed or anxious
- Practice self-care



Families/ Community

- Check in to see how your child(ren) day went
- Use School Mental Health Ontario resources
- Game night
- Faith/spiritual practices
- Read together
- Listen to stories together
- Build routines that support the day to day
- Cooking together, i.e. making recipes
- Doing family activities together
- Connecting with elders in the community
- Family mindfulness
- Get outdoors together
- Explore nature
- Storytelling
- Get active together
- Do homework together

ADD YOUR OWN :)

We would love to learn more about how you and your family are taking the One Small Thing journey [#OneSmallThing](#)

on social media [@MH_YRDSB](#) (Twitter)



एक छोटी सी बात

شيء واحد صغير

una pequeña cosa

ਇੱਕ ਛੋਟੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਗੱਲ

Many identities, languages and expressions are missing, how do you express One Small Thing?

(See template on next page, click link to make a printable copy)

Tell us @ mental.health@yrdsb.ca or [One Small Thing submission](#)

Use #OneSmallThing on social media @MH_YRDSB (Twitter)

Одна маленькая вещь

एक छोटी सी

बात



一件小事

ஒரு சின்ன

விஷயம்

Isang maliit na bagay

یه چیز کوچیک

Một điều nhỏ



My One Small Thing is?

drawings, poems, words, art and other expressions are welcomed.





Spreading Gratitude it's #Onesmallthing

SPREADING GRATITUDE

With friends and family, **make a commitment** to send each-other one message a day to keep yourselves connected.

This can be as simple as **sending a friend** a meme, an encouraging message or a funny video, once every day or two.



Find out more at:
jack.org/covid



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Gratitude notes it's #Onesmallthing

GRATITUDE NOTES

1. Find yourself a journal or some blank pieces of paper.
2. Every morning, write one thing you are thankful for.
3. Every evening, re-read what you've written that day and in the days before.

There are many things, big and small to be thankful for in our lives. Try and hold onto these.

You're doing great.



Find out more at:
jack.org/covid



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Try something new it's #Onesmallthing

TRY SOMETHING NEW

Jumping into the things that bring us joy can be a great distraction to help us take our mind off anything that might be causing us to feel anxious.



Not all of these activities will work for everyone – but you can swap those out with your own ideas of what can help you actively distract yourself!

To find out more:
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Try something new it's **#Onesmallthing**

HAND-TRACING EXERCISE



Starting at your wrist, trace the **left side** of your hand up to your **middle finger** while taking a **deep breath** for **four seconds**

Pause at the tip of your middle finger and **hold** in your breath for **4 seconds**

Breathe out while tracing down the **right side** of your hand for **four seconds**

Repeat **4 times**



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Try belly breathing it's #Onesmallthing

BELLY BREATHING EXERCISE

In a **sitting position**, put one hand on your **chest**, and one hand on your **belly**

Take a **deep breath** through your **nose**. Feel the air moving through your **lungs**. Slowly exhale from your **mouth**

Take a **second breath**. Imagine bringing the air into **your belly**. See if you can make your belly **move more** than your chest

Breathe in for four seconds. **Hold** the air in for four seconds. Feel the movement of the air in **your belly**. **Breathe out** slowly for four seconds

Repeat



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Have you thought about ... it can be #Onesmallthing

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT:

- *Starting an art project*
- *Trying a new TV series*
- *Going for a (physically distant) walk or run*
- *Fixing up your space*
- *Starting a new book or re-reading your favourites*
- *Trying an online exercise class*
- *Listening to music*
- *Playing card games*
- *Cooking or baking*
- *Taking a shower or bath*
- *Trying some DIY activities from YouTube*
- *Listening to a podcast or audiobook*
- *Calling a friend or family member*
- *Playing a game with friends on-line*
- *Trying creative writing*
- *Going fishing*
- *Dancing*
- *Other ideas? Try them out!*



Reframe unhelpful thoughts its #Onesmallthing

UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

I made a mistake. I'm a bad person.

I haven't gotten any homework done this whole week - I'm the worst!

I ignored my friend's message. She probably thinks I don't like her anymore.

We're all going to get sick. No one is safe.

HELPFUL THOUGHTS

I am a good person. No one is perfect. We all make mistakes.

It's normal to feel less productive during a pandemic.

She probably knows I care about her. These are weird times and we all need to be understanding.

We are learning more about the virus and ways to stay safe. When we follow public health guidelines, that keeps everyone more safe.

Find out more at:
jack.org/covid



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Reframe unhelpful thoughts its #Onesmallthing

REPLACING UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

Sometimes it's hard to notice and challenge our unhelpful thinking. They are often **habits of thought** that can be persistent. Keep trying, it gets easier with practice!



If you're struggling to come up with helpful responses to your own unhelpful thoughts, it can help to put yourself in the mindset of a friend. ***If your friend was having the same unhelpful thoughts***, how would you respond?

