



School
Mental Health
Ontario



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Celebrating 60 years of
Excellence in
Leadership in Guidance
and Career Education

Navigating the Challenge of Change



MH LIT Student
Mental Health
in Action

November 2024

Welcome and Introductions



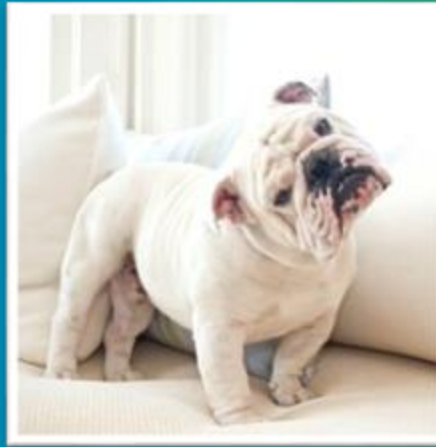
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Check In

On a scale of dog emotions, how are you feeling today?

1



4



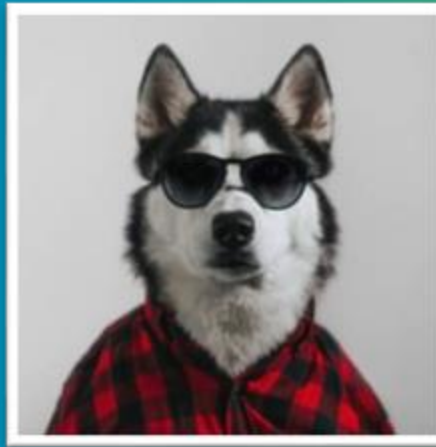
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5



3



6



Outline

- Mental health basics
- Introduction to Student MH LIT
- Navigating the Challenge of Change
 - Walk Through
- Additional Resources
- Planning and Next Steps



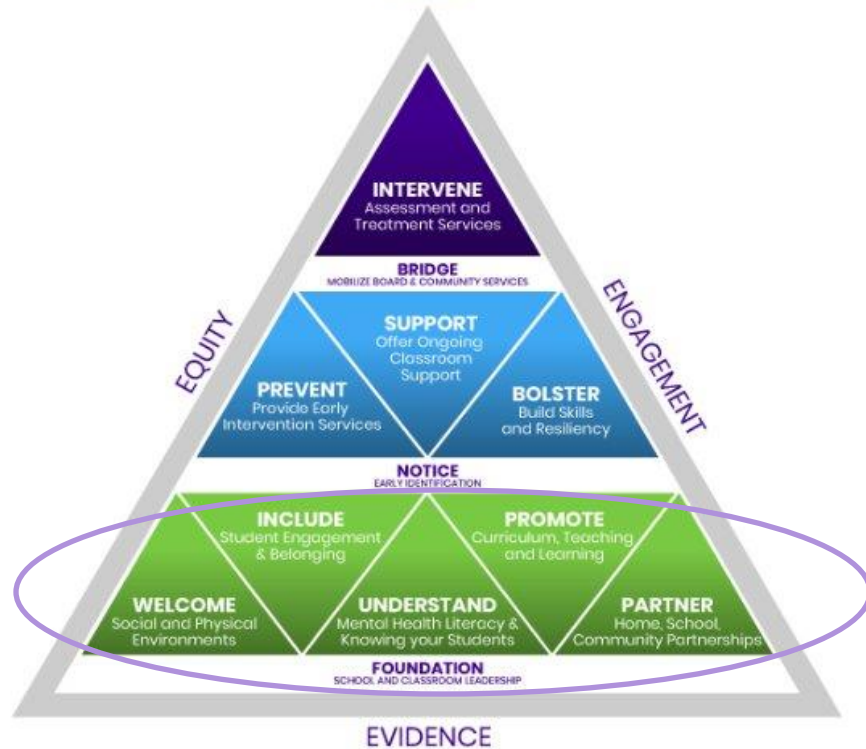
Minds On

What is the first word that comes to mind when you think about mental health?



Promotion and prevention

Aligned & Integrated Model (AIM)



“Start with connection
and relationship,
mental health will
follow.”



~ Advice to educators from **Lillian**,
Ontario grade 12 student and member of ThriveSMH



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Suggestions From Educators

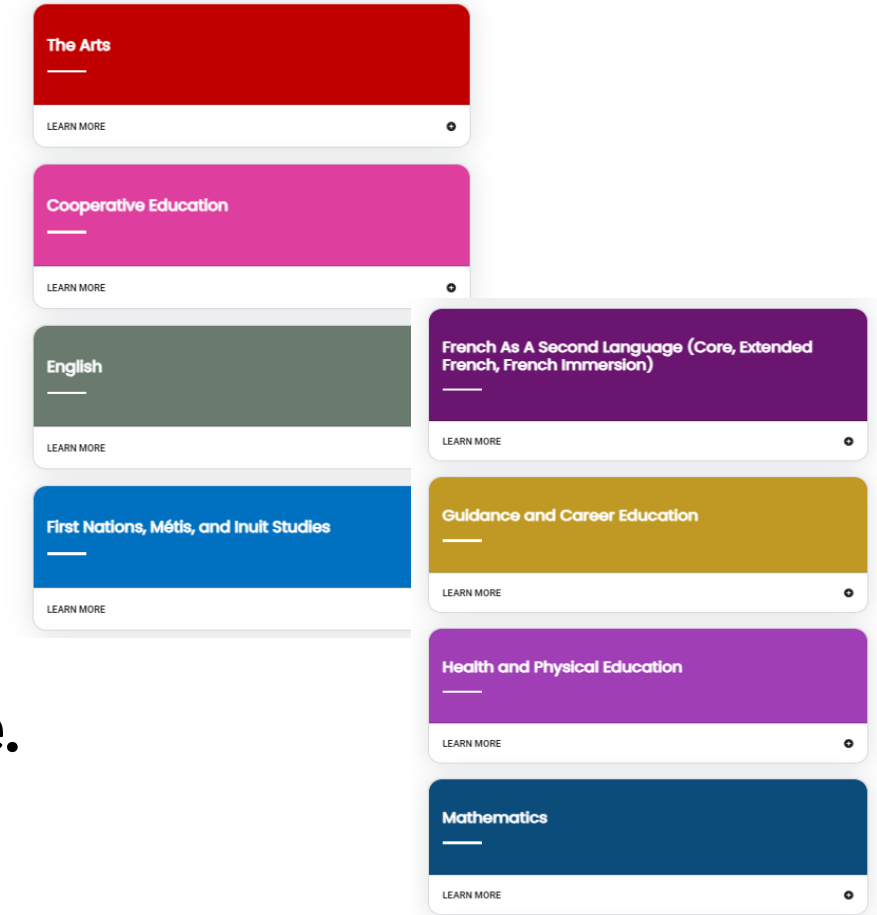
Strategically target educators who can make ready links between the lessons and curriculum.

- Health and physical education
- Religion
- Civics
- Careers
- Science (the brain)
- English (novel studies)

Ensure multiple communication pathways and opportunities to become familiar with the resource.

- Repetition is welcome!

Connections to Specific Curriculum Strands:



IDENTIFY SPECIFIC SOCIAL SKILLS
THINKING POSITIVELY
EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING
MANAGING STRESS **VITALITY**
PROMOTING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SEEKING ASSISTANCE IN UNSAFE SITUATIONS
DEVELOP EMPATHY FOR OTHERS
EXPLORE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES
NAVIGATING SCHOOL/LIFE/WORK BALANCE
ADAPTING TO CHANGE **HELP-SEEKING** SELF- AND SOCIAL AWARENESS
STRATEGIES THAT ENHANCE HEALTH AND WELLNESS
COMMUNICATE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS
UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND HABITS OF MIND
SOCIAL SKILLS **WELL-BEING** HEALTHY LIVING
RECOGNIZE PERSONAL INTERESTS
BEHAVIOURS THAT ENHANCE PERSONAL WELL-BEING
SEEKING HELP STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
EXPRESSING AND ACCEPTING POSITIVE MESSAGES
DISCUSS WHAT MAKES US HAPPY AND UNHAPPY
SOCIAL AND PERSONAL CHANGE **COPING** **HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT**
EXPRESS FEELINGS
PERSISTENCE
COPE WITH CHALLENGES
RESILIENCE **HEALTH PROMOTION**
ACKNOWLEDGE/RESPOND TO OTHER'S FEELINGS
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING SKILLS

Student Voice

“I know I am not the only student feeling overwhelmed with the ‘resource overload’ that occurs outside of class. These are critical conversations and I appreciate your efforts to facilitate them **within classrooms and combat a greater, deeply-rooted issue that is the stigmatization of mental health.”**



Video Introduction to Student MH LIT

Welcome to

MH LIT: Student
Mental Health in
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Additional Words from Educators...

Well laid out, each step builds on the last and it's easy for Educators to use! I can do as much or as little as I am comfortable doing. It builds my confidence as an Educator as well.

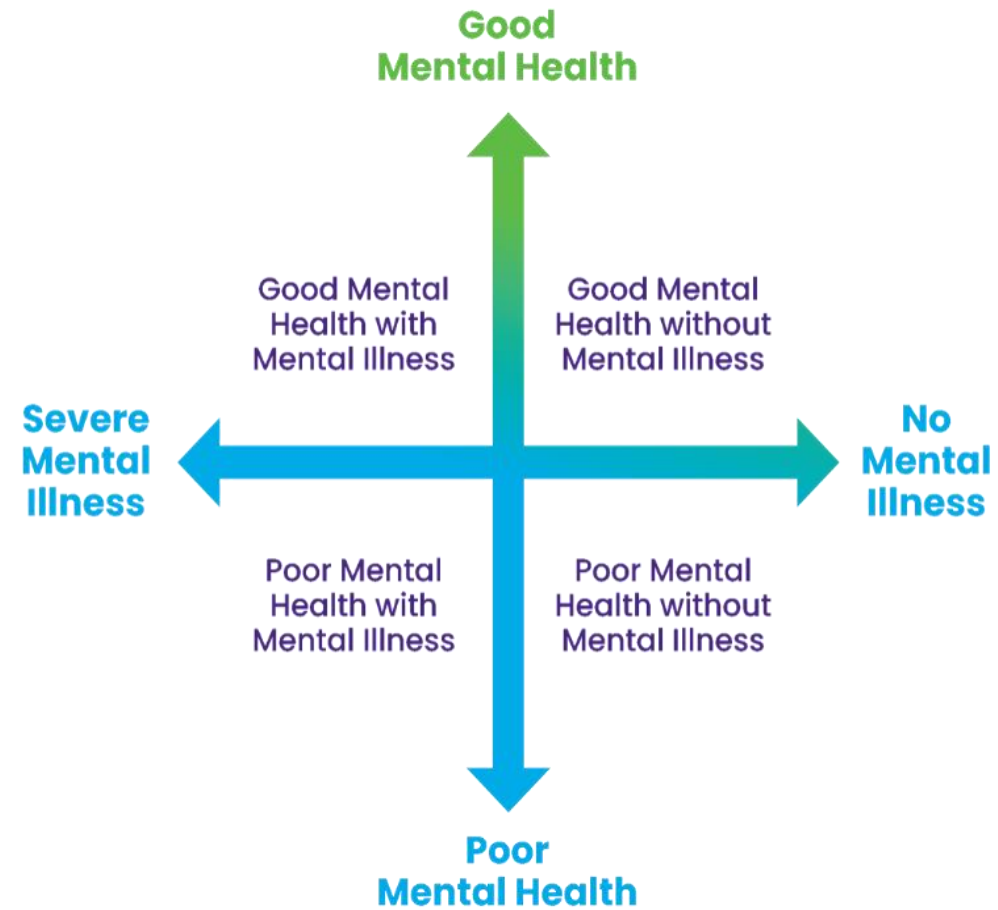
This could be used anytime you want to create culture in your classroom.

Lots of good information, I like that I can make additions to the slides to meet the needs of the group I am working with.

There are so many different initiatives competing for teacher time, but this is of central importance. I think this is number one.

The lessons were a nice break from curriculum and chance to just chat. They got them ready to do their work.

"At first when I read it over, I had some doubts about having the background to do this. But when I looked at the lessons, I felt comfortable."



MH LIT
Student Mental Health in Action
Know the Facts

Student Profiles

Jayden

MH LIT
Student Mental Health in Action
Know the Facts

Student Profiles

Bina

Test and Exam Stress Expansion Lesson

Purpose?

To help students acquire knowledge and skills to better manage stress associated with tests, exams, and other performance-based situations.



Activity

What is test and exam stress and where does it come from?

If you have a negative thought, challenge it!

Ask yourself...

- How likely is this?
- Does my entire future really depend on _____?
- What can I control?
- What will I do if this happens?
- How have I handled challenges in the past?

What would I say to a friend?

Who could help me?

Practice Relaxation Strategies

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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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 3 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 bring 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.



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Transition Expansion Lesson

Purpose?

To help students acquire knowledge and skills to better prepare for the transition from secondary school



Activity
Why is Transition Stressful?

Write a letter to your next year self

You may choose to include some of the following:

- Reminders...
 - Of how you have gotten through challenging times in the past
 - That sometimes things haven't turned out the way you expected and that it was okay
 - Of your strengths
- Support managing your expectations
- Acknowledgement of positives, even if they are not what you had hoped for or expected
- Encouraging words



Practice Grounding Techniques

PAUSE

This may be a good moment to **PAUSE**.
Take some time to reflect on your day and engage in self-care.
Grounding is a set of strategies used to help detach from challenging emotions. It does not seek to solve a problem, but offers a strategy for a person to gain control over an emotional moment.



PAUSE

P Firm pressure is great for grounding. As you are able, place your left hand on the right shoulder and right hand on your left shoulder then hold.
Power Hug Squeeze into a gentle hug. You can also try saying an affirmation while doing this exercise.
I am doing my best
I choose to love myself today
I am worthy



Transition Stress

- Do you see stress related to moving on from secondary school?
- Why do you think it occurs?
- What are the themes?



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Transition Stress

- Most **healthy transitions involve some stress** because change—even change we are looking forward to—requires us to adapt and grow.
- Some stress can be **helpful** (e.g., when it motivates us to perform our best, or when managing a situation makes us feel we are capable, learning, and growing).
- But stress that is difficult to manage can **impact our health**.

Pause and Share

How can we help students get ready for and manage transition stress, so it supports them in achieving their goals, instead of getting in the way of them?

Reflecting on Transition Stress

Educator practices

- What version of success am I portraying?
- What can I do to identify, acknowledge, and dismantle my biases?
- Am I maintaining high expectations for every student?
- How am I helping students to “know themselves,” and how am I ensuring their interests, strengths, accomplishments, and skills are valued and acknowledged?



Cultural Humility Self-Reflection Tool for School Staff

Assessment	None	Some	Intermediate	Much	Great
Understand my own Cultural awareness: I can describe my own cultural identity and how it may influence my perceptions and actions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understand my others Cultural awareness: I can describe the cultural identities of others and how they may influence their perceptions and actions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take action to reduce or eliminate Cultural awareness: I can identify and take action to address my own biases and assumptions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understand the interconnectedness Cultural awareness: I can understand how my own cultural identity is connected to the cultural identities of others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understand my role in building a culturally responsive classroom Cultural awareness: I can describe my role in building a culturally responsive classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take action to reduce my privilege Cultural awareness: I can identify and take action to address my own privilege.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understand and challenge my own biases Cultural awareness: I can identify and challenge my own biases and assumptions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Transition Stress


Stress Management Skills and Strategies for Students

Step 1: Anticipate and get ready for stress

Step 2: Manage stress early when it appears

Step 3: Seek support when it is needed

Balanced Self-Talk Journal for Students



Secondary Transitions — Navigating the Challenge of Change  **MH LIT** Student Mental Health in Action

Balanced Thought Journal

We can sometimes think negatively about ourselves, our abilities, and our futures. But that doesn't mean they are true, and this kind of thinking can add to our stress. When you notice unhelpful thoughts happening, challenge them! Try to talk back to them with more balanced thinking. Balanced thinking isn't the same as positive thinking. It's fair and realistic thinking that looks all aspects of a situation (the positive, negative, and neutral), not just one point of view.

Examples of unbalanced thoughts and ways to talk back to them:

INSTEAD OF... (UNBALANCED THOUGHTS)	I COULD TRY... (BALANCED THOUGHTS)
If I don't get the job I want, my life will be ruined.	My happiness in life will come from many things. Work is only one of them.
If I don't go to college/university, I'm a failure in life.	My worth as a person doesn't depend on what I'm studying, my educational success, or what job I have.
Grade 11 is when I need to make all the decisions that will impact the rest of my life.	Decisions for post-secondary are not permanent. I'm never stuck. Many people change paths.
I'm never going to get the marks I need to get into the program I want. I'm going to fail.	I will try my best and focus on the learning rather than the marks. By studying, staying organized, and taking care of myself I put myself in a position to do my best.
I should be better than I am.	I don't have to be perfect. No one is. I'm going to learn from my experiences instead of criticizing myself.
My parent(s)/caregiver(s) expect me to have a certain career. I don't want to disappoint them.	I'll try my best, but I can't, and I don't control everything. There are other ways I can make my parent(s)/caregivers(s) proud too, like through the person I am, not just what I study or what job I have.
My sibling/friend had much better grades and was more successful than I'll be.	My sibling/friend and I are different people and have had different experiences. It isn't fair for me to compare us.

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Ask yourself...

- Is there any evidence to support my thought?
- How likely is it?
- Is there another way to think about things?
- Are there other explanations or viewpoints?
- What would I say to a friend?



Balanced Self-Talk

Instead of... (Unbalanced thoughts)	I could try... (Balanced thoughts)
If I don't get the job I want, my life will be ruined.	My happiness in life will come from many things. Work is only one of them.
Grade 11 is when I need to make all the decisions that will impact the rest of my life.	Decisions for post-secondary are not permanent. I'm never stuck. Many people change paths.
My sibling/friend had much better grades and was more successful than I will be.	My sibling/friend and I are different people and have had different experiences. It isn't fair for me to compare us.





Examples from the Field



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School boards have...

- Supported leadership students to deliver the lessons to younger students
- Provided time for the safe and healthy schools consultant to visit schools and offer the lessons as a model to educators
- Placed the lessons on their board Virtual Learning Environment
- Built mental health professional/educator collaborations to share the lesson in 'school to community' classrooms
- Made the lessons part of a Religion course
- Bundled the lessons as a mental health module/certification for SHSM

What are my next steps and opportunities?

Direct Teaching

- **Where does this learning fit?**
- **How might students be involved in planning ?**
- **Who else could be part of this learning?**

Leadership

- **How could I help build the confidence of my peers, so they feel comfortable delivering the lessons in the classroom?**
- **How might I help others understand that Mental Health Literacy is worthwhile, independent of their subject matter?**

Student Voice

Instead of talking about mental health for just one week or a day going back to mental health, stress, and help-seeking at least once a week.

Show us some chill ways to take care of ourselves and where to go if we need help.

Normalize conversations about mental health and practicing strategies throughout the year.

Secondary

Identity-Affirming Approach to Teaching and Learning

As you plan to engage in these lessons and activities, consider students' varied strengths, needs, identities and experiences. Consider if there is anything you would add or adapt to affirm the identities of students. These learning activities provide a starting place but use your professional judgement and collaboration with students and/or parents/caregivers to differentiate as needed.

Knowledge and Refinement

Leadership, Participation, and Agency

Instructions

★	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	★
<p>Set the stage: Before you dive into mental health literacy, spend some time getting to know your students. Mental health content is best delivered once you have established trusting relationships with students and a caring culture in your classroom. Try an ice-breaker from Class Conversation Starters, "I in Image" from the Grab and Go tools, or a Self-Awareness and Self-Identity activity from Everyday Mental Health Classroom Resource or Faith and Wellness: A Daily Mental Health Resource. Come together as a class community!</p>	<p>Student MH Lit Core Lessons: Know the Facts / Know Yourself / Help Yourself / Help a Friend</p> <p> </p> <p>May be delivered within Health and Physical Education or Religion, or there are many additional curriculum connections.</p>	<p>Virtual Field Trips: Breathing / Distraction / Muscle Relaxation</p> <p></p> <p>May be used to reinforce the mental health strategies and supports introduced in grade 9.</p>	<p>Student MH Lit Expansion Lesson: Transition</p> <p> </p> <p>Ideally delivered prior to grade 12 course selection (which can be connected to pathway stress).</p>	<p>Virtual Field Trip: Gratitude</p> <p> </p> <p>Provides an opportunity to reflect on the secondary school experience for all students, regardless of their unique pathway.</p>	<p>Review and Reflect: As you approach the end of your time with students, take a moment to pause and help students consider what they have learned about mental health and themselves.</p> <p>Celebrate and Anticipate: As you wrap up your course (and potentially the school year), help students prepare for transition by celebrating the current school year (including all they are grateful for, love, and value), preparing for summer, and looking forward to what is coming next.</p>
	<p>Student MH Lit Expansion Lesson: Test and Exam Stress</p> <p> </p> <p>Ideally delivered prior to exams/EQAO math.</p>	<p>There is more to come! Materials are currently being developed for the grade 10 Career Studies course and will be updated when the new grade 10 curriculum is confirmed.</p>	<p>Virtual Field Trip: Thought Changing</p> <p></p> <p>Provides an opportunity to focus on thoughts related to pathway choices and expectations for post-secondary options and outcomes.</p>		
	           				
	<p>Leadership, participation, and agency deepening from 9-12</p>				

 - Provides parent/caregiver connections and suggestions to continue the conversation  - Contains press and play videos



Tense and relax



Push your shoulders
up towards your ears
and hold



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Tense and Relax

This poster has four different rows of tense and relax activities. Do one row at a time. Consider covering the other rows to help focus on one activity at a time.

First
○○○



Squeeze your hand
into a flat

Next
○○○



Count to five

Then
○○○



Relax your hand



Push your shoulders
up to your ears



Count to five



Relax your shoulders



Push your feet into
the ground



Count to five



Relax your feet



Squeeze your belly



Count to five



Relax your belly



Thank you!








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We work together with Ontario school districts to support student mental health

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