

Why Is Strong Mental Health Important for Children?

Strong mental health allows children and youth to:

- think more clearly,
- develop socially and emotionally, and
- learn new skills more effectively.

It also helps to:

- build confidence,
- increase self-esteem, and
- provide a **positive** mental outlook on life overall.



All of these factors benefit children as they grow and enter different phases of life. A child with strong mental health is a child more likely to succeed in all aspects of life, including transitions into high school, college/university and work or starting their own family one day.

Active Transportation and Mental Health

Did you know that **Active Transportation** can strengthen child and youth mental health, which helps children and youth perform better academically, form social relationships, promote positive emotional feelings that increase self-confidence and overall make healthier lifestyle choices?

Children's Mental Health Ontario reports that as many as **1 in 5 children and youth** in Ontario will experience some form of mental health problem and that 70 per cent of mental health problems start during childhood or the teenage years.

Use Active School Travel To Stay Mentally Fit!

Active School Travel (AST) is an easy way for families to strengthen the mental health of children and youth and it's good for you too! Simply walking or wheeling to and from school leads to increased social connectedness, which can boost confidence and self-esteem and encourage positive behavior and skills. In adults, it also helps manage stress and promotes wellness.

Active School Travel is simple and can easily be added into your daily routine!

- Walk and/or wheel to school or to the bus stop.
- Park and walk a block to school.
- If Active School Travel every day is a challenge, choose one or two days a week to try and make a change.

Be proactive and help to strengthen your child's (and your own) mental health!

Sincerely,

YCDSB Active School Travel Team