



Supporting Mental Health and Preventing Suicide

MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION AND SUICIDE PREVENTION MINI RESOURCE KIT



TEAM
KENTUCKY

CABINET FOR HEALTH
AND FAMILY SERVICES

Department for Behavioral Health,
Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities

Developed 2023

Why Focus on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention?



Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

This mini resource kit is flexible in its usage and provides information that can be used to meet the needs of communities.

This toolkit offers guidance in promoting mental wellness among all individuals, supporting connectedness, healthy coping mechanisms, and help-seeking behaviors.

Childrens Mental Wellness Handouts



How To Have A Healthy Brain



Read



Reading engages your brain and helps you learn. Take time as often as you can to read.

What are some of your favorite books?



Play



Playing or enjoying an activity with friends or family can help make your brain healthy.

What is your favorite activity to play or do?



Sleep

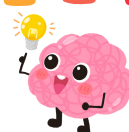


Sleep gives your brain a chance for some time off. You should have 9 hours of sleep a night.

What is your favorite part of your night time routine?



Think



Challenging your brain to think in new ways helps make it stronger.

What is your favorite school subject to learn about at school?

Eat Healthy



Eating healthy and staying hydrated make your body and brain feel better.

What is your favorite healthy snack or meal?

Laughing



Laughing increases the brain's production of endorphins. Endorphins are the body's natural mood booster.

What is one way you could bring laughter into your day today?

Exercise



When you exercise, you not only take care of your physical health, but also your mental health.

What are ways you can be active and exercise?

Socialize



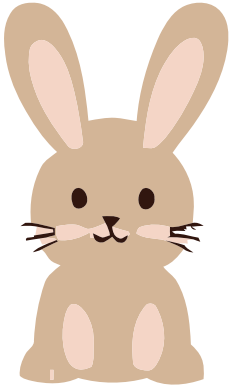
Socializing helps our brains be healthy by interacting with positive friends and family.

What are fun ways you can socialize with your friends or family?



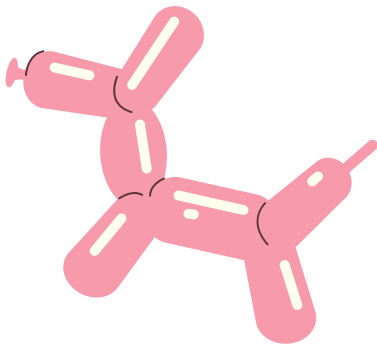
JUST BREATHE

Try these breathing exercises to relax when you are feeling overwhelmed.



BUNNY BREATHING

Sniff in 3 times like a bunny.
Hold your breath for 3 seconds.
Breathe out through your mouth slowly.



BALLOON BREATHING

Take a BIG DEEP breath in.
Pretend you are blowing up a big balloon by exhaling slowly.



BUMBLE BEE BREATHING

Take a BIG DEEP breath in.
Exhale slowly while making a buzzing sound.



BELLY BREATHING

Place one hand on your belly.
Place one hand on your chest.
Slowly take a deep breath in through your nose.
Slowly breathe out through your mouth.
Feel how your belly moves as you breathe.

5-4-3-2-1 CALM

Grounding is a self-soothing skill to use when you are having a bad day or feeling strong emotions. Try this:



TALKING ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

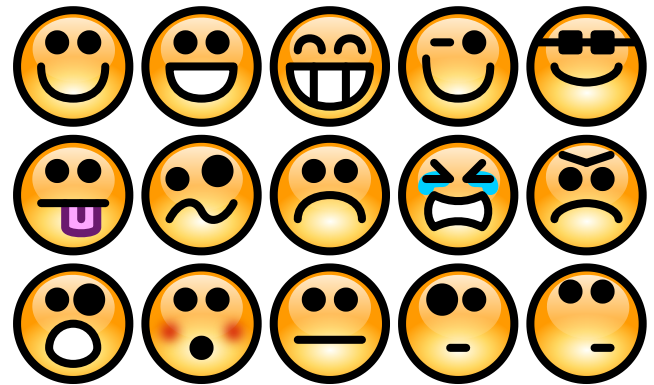
choose someone who will listen



A parent, grandparent, teacher, or friend can be a good listener. Maybe they will even give you advice, say something nice, make you laugh, or give you a hug. Sometimes just saying how you feel will help you start to feel better.

name your feeling

Start by saying "I'm feeling _____."
If you don't know how you feel, use a feelings chart to help.



think about why

Understanding **why** you feel something can help you figure out what to do. Do you have a big event coming up? Or maybe you and a close friend had a disagreement recently.

put it all together in words

"I feel _____ because _____."

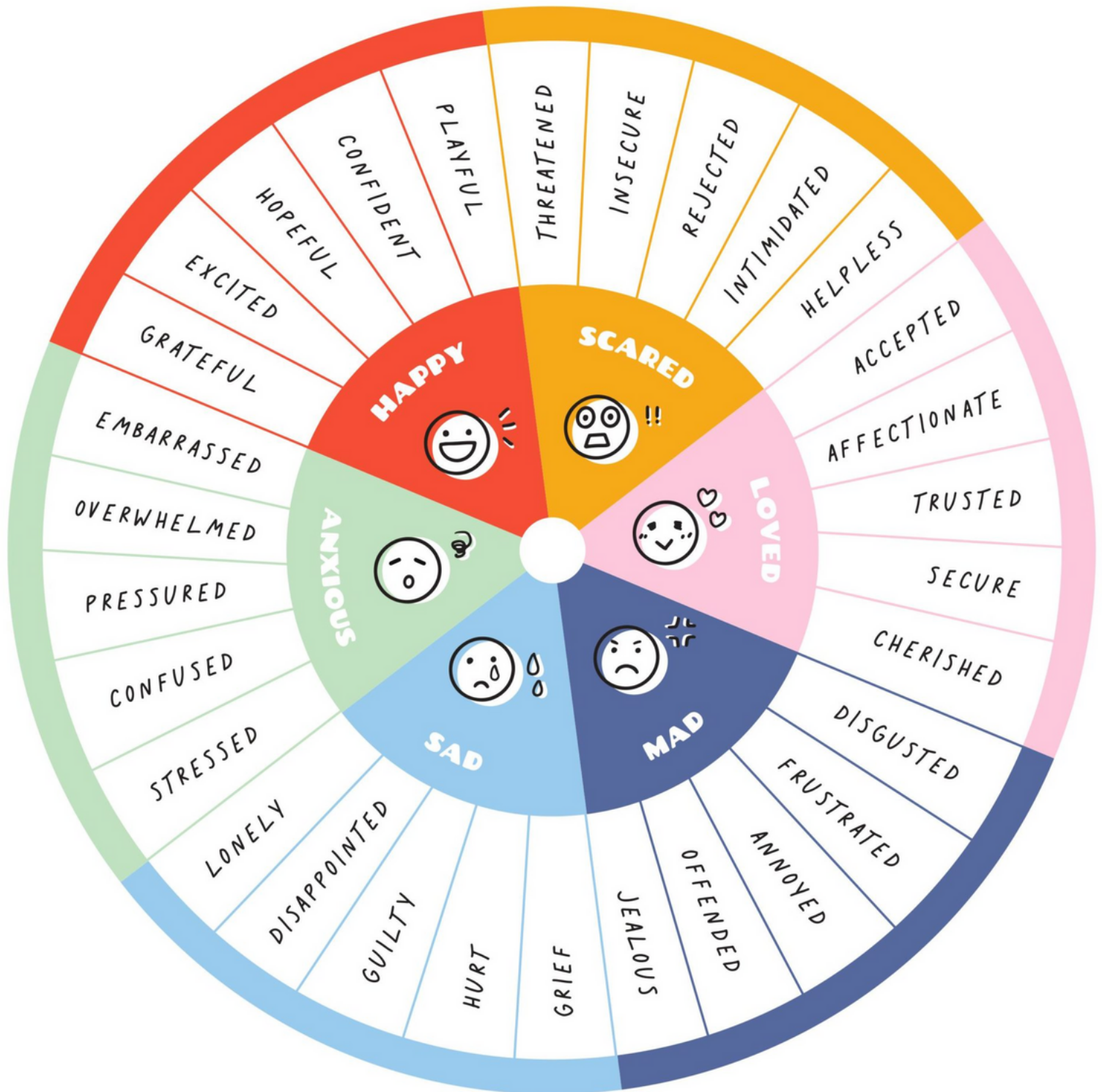
TALK ABOUT FEELINGS ANY TIME

You don't have to wait for a bad day or problem to talk about your feelings. You can say how you feel any time. It might even help to practice when you have had a good day.



the Feel Wheel

ages 5-12



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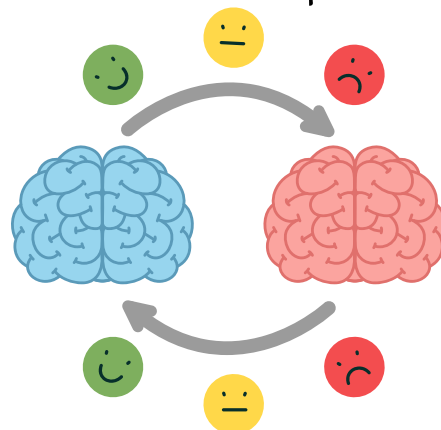
the Feel Wheel

ages 5-12

How to use the Feel Wheel:

A feelings wheel can be used to help you identify and communicate your emotions. You can use the wheel to identify a core emotion, then follow the color of the emotion to see options of more specific feelings and figure out which one best fits your current mood.

In the center are the core emotions - happy, scared, loved, mad, sad, and anxious. After choosing the core emotion that best fits how you feel, you can use your finger to identify more specific emotions that you connect with on the outer edges of the wheel. These more specific emotions help you explain to others how you are feeling and can help you and others learn how to best respond to your emotions.



Healthy Coping Activities

- Exercise
- Meditate
- Make a craft
- Write, in journal, poetry, stories, etc.
- Draw, color, doodle, paint
- Connect with positive friends, mentors, trusted adults
- Eat healthy
- Stay hydrated
- Sing and/or dance
- Play with a pet
- Play with fidgets, modeling clay, or play-doh
- Make your favorite healthy snack
- Take a nap
- Take a hot shower or relaxing bath
- Engage in your favorite outdoor activity
- Play a game with friends
- Make a favorite songs playlist
- Get together with friends and do a fun activity
- Go to or watch a movie
- Text or call a friend
- Cook and/or eat a meal with a friend or family member
- Read a book to yourself or read to others





Teen Mental Wellness and Suicide Prevention Handouts

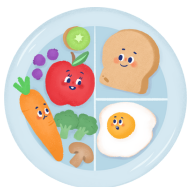


I matter

5-Minute Mental Health Self Check In!



Have I eaten healthy and regular meals?



Did I drink plenty of water?



Did I do an act of kindness for someone today?



Have I taken a shower or bath?



Am I getting enough sleep?

Have I been practicing self-affirmation?

I am enough

Have I spent time doing an activity that gives me strength



and relaxes my mind?



Have I connected with a friend or trusted adult?

*life's tough
take a break*

Did I take a break from screens and social media today?

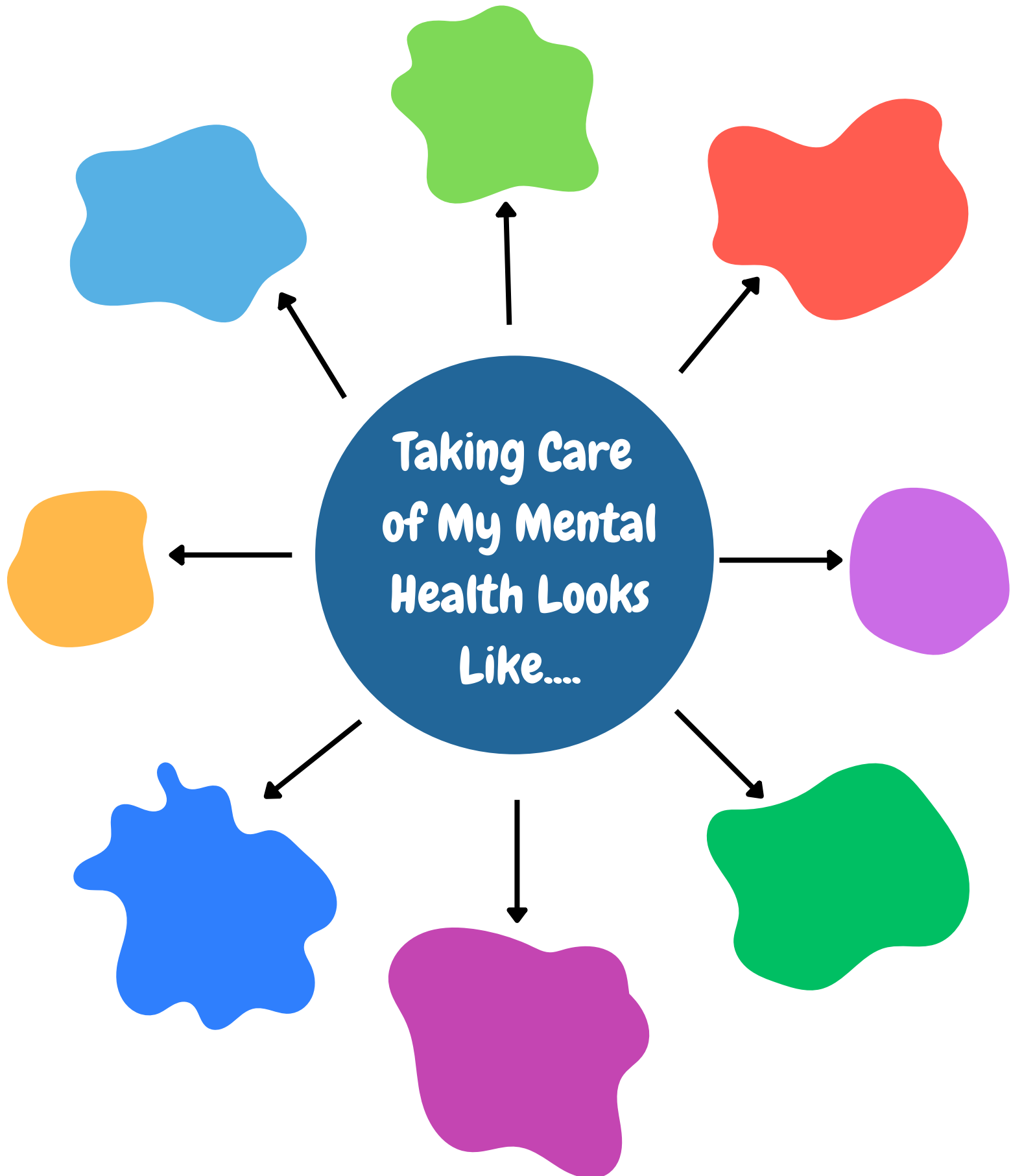
I believe in me

Taking Care of Your Mental Health Example

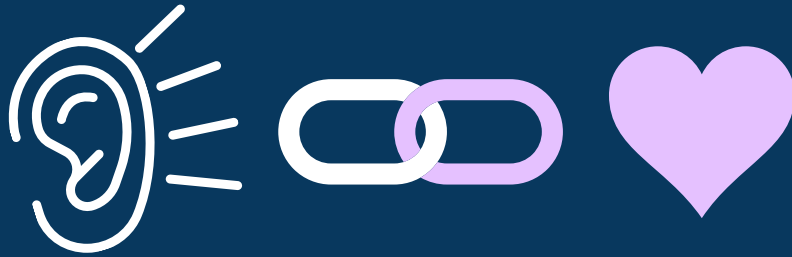
Please see the worksheet on the next page



Use the example on the previous page and fill in the spaces with what taking care of your mental health looks like for you.



Take the Time to Connect and Listen to Others



Take time to connect to a trusted adult.

Take time to really listen to your peers.

Save 988, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, in your phone and share the lifeline with others.

Focus on building and strengthening connections in your friend groups and throughout your school community.

Learn the warning signs of suicide.



Warning Signs: FACTS



Feelings - Hopelessness, anxiety, desperation.

Actions - Aggression, risky behavior, self-harm, online suicide searches, bullying behavior.

Changes - Observable changes in behavior or appearance, withdrawing from friends or changes in social activity, anger or hostility, changes in sleep.

Talk, Threats - Talking about, writing about, or making plans for suicide.

Situations - Stressful situations including loss, change, humiliation, trouble at home, or legal troubles are triggers for suicide.



How do I know when I need help?



It is natural and good to have a wide range of feelings. Happy, sad, scared, and angry are all emotions that everyone feels sometimes.

It is helpful to ask yourself, "How long do I stay upset when something bothers me?"



If you stay upset for longer than you think you should, or longer than you normally do, you should tell a trusted adult.

you are not alone

It is always okay to ask your friends, family, teachers, or other trusted adults for help when you are experiencing strong emotions.



Make a **CODE RED** Safety Plan

A safety plan is designed to be a safety net when you find yourself in crisis or having your worst day. It is important to plan ahead and be prepared by making your safety plan before you find yourself in crisis or having your worst day. Keep your plan easily accessible that way if/when the day comes you will have a plan to keep yourself safe and connected to help.

Instructions: Take time to fill in each block of your safety plan. Draw, write or stick pictures from a magazine inside each block of your safety plan. This is **YOUR** plan and unique to you. Your plan may change and that's okay, you can update it any time you want to!

Note: If you have made your contact, done your delay decisions, relax and distract and you are still needing help please call, text or chat 988 where someone is there to help 24/7.

CODE RED

CONTACT

Who is a trusted adult I can reach out to, to help me?
i.e: teacher, coach, youth pastor, mentor

DELAY DECISIONS

What are my reasons for living? What are the things that will help delay me from making any decisions that could harm myself?
i.e: goals, dreams, pets, people in my life

Always call 911 if you are in immediate danger of harming yourself.

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988
dial 2 for Spanish speakers
dial 3 for LGBTQIA+ specific support

Crisis Text Line: text "KY" to 741-741

Kentucky School STOP tip line (to report bullying, violence, or other school issues, anonymously if desired): 866-393-6659

What helps me calm down? What will slow my breathing and relax my body?
i.e: yoga, walking, nap, bath, music.....

RELAX

What can keep my mind off things upsetting me? What can I do in 30 seconds, 3 minutes, 30 minutes, or longer that will help?
i.e.: watch a silly video, listen to a song, organize, play outside, read a book, play with a pet

DISTRACT

Transitions Can Be Tough, But They Don't Have to Be

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.



Ways to Support Your Mental Health:

Eat Healthy

A balanced diet and a regular routine can help manage mood swings and ease depression.



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Relax

Practice relaxing by focusing on something you enjoy. This can help to boost your mood and improve your mental wellbeing.



Get a Good Night's Rest

Your body needs 8-10 hours of sleep.



Be Active

Thirty minutes of physical activity can greatly boost your mood.



Connect or Strengthen Your Supportive Network OR Talk With Your Trusted Adult

Being connected with others through conversation can help improve your mood. Texting and social media doesn't have the same effect as having a conversation with someone.



What Are Warning Signs of Suicide?

Be aware of these potential warning signs in conversations, behaviors, and moods:



Talk

When you hear someone talk about:

- Killing themselves
- Feeling hopeless
- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Feeling trapped
- Unbearable pain



Behavior

Behaviors that may signal risk, especially if related to a painful event, loss or change:

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Looking for a way to end their lives, such as searching online for methods
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from family and friends
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Giving away prized possessions
- Aggression
- Fatigue



Mood

People who are considering suicide often display one or more of the following moods:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Humiliation/Shame
- Agitation/Anger
- Relief/Sudden Improvement

You Are Not Alone. There Is Help Available

Crisis Text Line:
Text **KY** to **741741**

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
9-8-8

Kentucky School STOP tip line:
866-393-6659

(For anonymous online reporting of unsafe situations in a school; tip is passed to school personnel)

Crisis Resources

**Crisis Text Line:
Text KY to 741741**

**Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:
988 (call & text)**

**Suicide & Crisis Lifeline chat:
988lifeline.org**

**Trevor Lifeline:
Call 866-488-7386**

(Provides 24/7 free and confidential crisis support services to LGBTQ young people)

**Trevor Text Line:
Text START to 678-678**

**Kentucky School STOP tip line:
866-393-6659**

(For anonymous online reporting of unsafe situations in a school; tip is passed to school personnel)



Mental Health Resources for Parents and Caregivers





FAQS FOR ADULTS CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD OR TEEN

WHAT IS 988?

988 is the new three-digit dialing code connecting people to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, where compassionate, accessible care and support is available for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress—whether that is thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. **People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.**

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I CALL 988?

When calling 988, callers first hear a greeting message while their call is routed to the local Lifeline network crisis center (based on the caller's area code). A trained crisis counselor will answer the phone, listen to the caller, understand how their problem is affecting them, provide support, and share resources if needed.

WILL 988 CALLS BE REFERRED TO 911?

The primary goal of the Lifeline is to provide support for people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress in the moments they most need it. While some safety and health issues may warrant a response from law enforcement and/or Emergency Medical Services, the 988 coordinated response is intended to promote stabilization and care in the least restrictive manner. Currently, a very small percentage of Lifeline calls require activation of the 911 system only when there is imminent risk to someone's life that cannot be reduced during the Lifeline call. In these cases, the crisis counselor shares information with 911 that is crucial to saving the caller's life.

Talking to younger kids about mental health

It is never too early to talk to a child about their mental health

Signs a child may be struggling:



- Sleeping too much or too little
- Struggling academically
- Changes in eating habits or weight
- Withdrawals from social interactions
- Involvement in fights or altercations
- Changes in mood
- An extended period of sadness (2+ weeks)
- Sudden overwhelming fear with no cause

How to discuss mental health topics

- Use straightforward language that is age appropriate.
- Incorporate visual aides.
- Watch for reactions and be ready to slow down or back up if your child appears confused or upset.
- Answer questions directly and honestly.
- Listen and validate their feelings and experiences.
- Reassure your child that you are there for them.
- Have conversations about feelings often and include the whole range of emotions - positive and negative.

Care for your own mental health

The best way for you to help a child through a mental health challenge is for **YOU** to be mentally well. Lean on family, friends, colleagues, and professionals for added support.

Starting a Conversation with Teens

Know the warning signs.

- Sleeping too much or too little
- Struggling academically
- Changes in eating habits or weight
- Withdrawals from social interactions
- Involvement in fights or altercations
- Changes in mood
- An extended period of sadness (2+ weeks)
- Sudden overwhelming fear with no cause

- Bullying (in person or online)
- Suicide in their school or friend group
- Witnessing or suffering violence or abuse
- Racism, discrimination and related stressors
- Loss, including death, divorce, deployment, deportation or incarceration
- Discrimination, rejection or hostility due to gender identity or sexual orientation

Be aware of challenges your teen might be facing.

Do not wait for them to come to you.

Do not assume your child will come to you or open up when they are ready. If you notice changes in your teen or become aware of a difficult situation that is occurring, start a conversation by letting them know that you are available for support.

Continuing the Conversation with Teens

Use Active Listening.

Although it may be difficult to learn that your child is struggling, rein in your own emotions and listen without thinking about how you will respond. Stay focused and avoid judging or jumping to conclusions.

Do not dismiss what you are seeing and hearing.

Never assume that your child is exaggerating or attention-seeking. It can be scary for teens to bring up these difficult conversations. Reassure them you're glad they came to you and offer your support.

Respond with empathy.

Be mindful not to minimize how they are feeling or say that they should not think or feel what they have expressed. Reassure them that having mental health issues is common and that it is possible to feel better.

Offer help with problem solving and identifying coping activities.

Avoid telling your teen what they should or must do. Rather, ask questions to see what solutions they may have already thought of and help them to implement their ideas or identify alternatives.

What if it's someone else's child?

You can use these tips to provide support to anyone in need, but only a legal guardian will be able to assist the teen in accessing professional help if needed. If they have not told their own parents, try to understand why and offer to assist them in beginning a conversation.

How Parents Can Help Prevent Teen Suicide

Use these tips for guidance if you have opened a dialogue about mental health and suicide with your teen and are still concerned about their risk for self-harm or suicide.

Don't Wait, Seek Professional Help Right Away

Fast action is critical when mental health reaches a crisis point. Take them to the emergency department of your local hospital.

If you see signs of suicidal thoughts but don't sense immediate danger, reach out to your pediatrician, local mental health providers and/or **call 988** for resources to help support you and your teen. These providers can help you and your teen to create a safety plan.

Restrict Access to Lethal Means

Remove or secure any firearms you have at home. Other potentially lethal items to consider locking away in the case of a mental health crisis include:

- Alcohol
- Illicit drugs
- Household cleaners and other poisonous products
- Canned dusting products
- Inhalants
- Antifreeze
- Knives, razors, or other weapons
- Ropes, belts, or plastic bags

Create and Maintain Hope

Your child's care team will recommend steps to improve mental health symptoms and reduce thoughts of self-harm and suicide.

Reassure your child along the way and promote patience and self-acceptance.

TALKING TO YOUR TEEN ABOUT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH



When is it time to talk to your teen about their mental health?

- You notice something just doesn't seem right, but aren't sure why.
- Your teen's behavior has changed, but you are unsure why.
- Your teen is starting to have struggles at home, school or with friends.

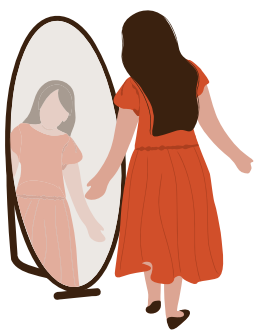
Information collected from mhanational.org

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ITS TIME TO TALK TO YOUR TEEN IF...

you notice some of the signs and symptoms below that are new and happening for more than a week

- Feeling sad, empty, hopeless, or worthless
- New sensitivity to sound, sight, smell or touch
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Not being able to focus on schoolwork
- Loss of interest in things they used to enjoy or withdrawal from others
- Changes in sleep pattern and/or energy levels
- Irritability or restlessness
- Problems concentrating or remembering
- Loss of appetite or overeating



Promoting Healthy Body Image in Teens

There are many sources of pressure related to beauty, build, size, weight, and shape. Promoting a healthy body image in teens can help to prevent issues such as low self-esteem, depression, and eating disorders.

What can adults do to help promote positive body image in teens?

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE.

Be aware of the way you talk about your own body or weight, the comments you make about others (including your teen), as well as your own diet, exercise, and weight loss habits.

DISCUSS EXPECTED BODY CHANGES.

Puberty comes with many changes that alter how our bodies look. Prepare your teen for these changes and reinforce that these changes are healthy and normal.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.

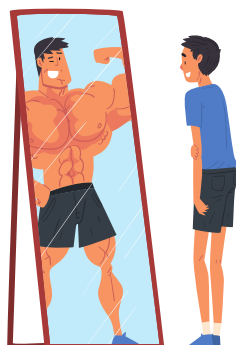
Monitor your teen's friendships and romantic relationships to ensure that they are engaging with others who promote their self-esteem, including body image.

PROMOTE BENEFITS OF HEALTHY DIET AND EXERCISE THAT DO NOT FOCUS ON LOOKS.

There are many benefits to a healthy diet and exercise that are not related to weight or how one's body *looks*. A healthy diet and adequate exercise can help improve mood, academic performance, and sports performance.

BE AWARE OF PRESSURE IN SPORTS.

Pressure to improve athletic performance by losing or gaining weight may lead young athletes to engaging in dangerous activities. Open communication between parents, coaches, and students can help to ensure that student athletes are able to reach their goals **safely**.



A Recipe for Mental Wellness

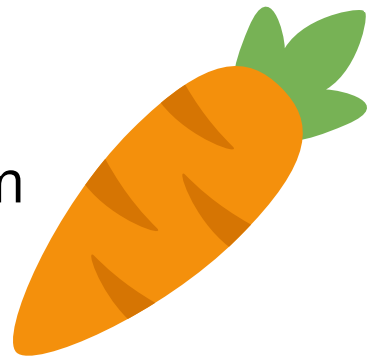
Did you know that what we eat greatly impacts how we feel? Try introducing foods rich in these vitamins and nutrients to encourage better mental health.

*Always consult with your child's pediatrician when making changes to diet or considering adding supplements.

Vitamins and Minerals to Consider:



- Vitamin A
- Vitamin B1
- Vitamin B6
- Folate (B9)
- Vitamin B 12
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Selenium



Foods to Consider:

- Turkey
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Salmon
- Cheeses (cheddar, feta, goat)
- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Citrus fruits
- Oatmeal
- Whole grains
- Almonds
- Peanuts
- Yogurt
- Brussel sprouts
- Strawberries
- Avocados
- Spinach
- Bananas
- Sweet potatoes
- Peas
- Cucumbers
- Brazil nuts
- Cauliflower
- Black beans



Family Fun to Promote Healthy Coping for All Ages



Fun Activities for Teens

The act of making and crafting with your hands can improve your mood and engage your brain.

Try some creative play every day to reduce anxiety levels.

- **Building with Legos or Blocks**- Enjoy this activity together, spending time building a specific project or free-building.
- **Journal**- Find a notebook and create a personal journal, encourage teens to write thoughts, feelings and anything else in their journal. Parents can also model this healthy coping activity.
- **Nail Art**-Painting fingernails with others. Try playing with new colors and painting patterns.
- **Color**- The act of coloring can be meditative. Try digital coloring books online offering free printable coloring pages.
- **Make Bracelets**- Make bracelets or make a friendship bracelet and give it to someone as a "thinking of you" gift.
- **Paint on canvas or rocks**- Go on a rock hunt outside; use paint markers, acrylic paint, and permanent markers to customize your favorite one.

Fun Activities for Teens

- **Knitting or crochet**- Find a local knitting or crochet class to learn with a teen. Or find an online video and learn the skill together.
- **Music Time**- Pick relaxing and calming music and share with family. Add the music playlist to other activities as well such as a craft or while cooking together.
- **Outdoor activity**- Participate in the activity as a family allowing teens to lead or teach other family members.
- **Scavenger hunt**- Allow teens to create fun family scavenger hunt for everyone.
- **Obstacle Course**- Set up an obstacle course inside or outside, then have a family fun obstacle challenge, with teens taking the lead.
- **Family Trivia Night**- Create trivia questions and incorporate into to dinner table time or family fun game night, again letting teens take the lead.
- **Game/Video Game Night**- Have teens choose their favorite board game or video game and play as a family together.

Healthy Coping Activities

- Exercise
- Meditate
- Make a craft
- Write in journal, poetry, stories, etc.
- Draw, color, doodle, paint
- Connect with positive friends, mentors, trusted adults
- Eat healthy
- Stay hydrated
- Sing and/or dance
- Play with a pet
- Play with fidgets, modeling clay or play-doh
- Make favorite healthy snack
- Take a nap
- Take a hot shower or relaxing bath
- Engage in your favorite outdoor activity
- Play a game with friends
- Make a favorite songs playlist
- Get together with friends and do a fun activity
- Go to or watch a movie
- Text or call a friend
- Cook and/or eat a meal with a friend or family member
- Read a book to yourself or read to others



Make Your Own Calm Jar!



Materials Needed:

- Glass or plastic jars with lids, 16-ounce
- 1/2 cup glitter glue or clear glue
- Distilled water
- High-temperature hot glue gun, optional
- 1–2 teaspoons glitter

Instructions:

- Pour 1/2 cup of distilled water into the jar.
- Pour 1/2 cup of glitter glue or clear glue into the jar.
- Add 1–2 teaspoons of extra glitter to the jar.
- Fill up the remainder of the jar with distilled water.
- If desired, use a hot glue gun to squeeze a ring of glue around the lid of the jar. Press the lid onto the jar and secure with the metal ring.
- Shake the jar well to distribute the glitter.
- Your very own calm jar is complete!



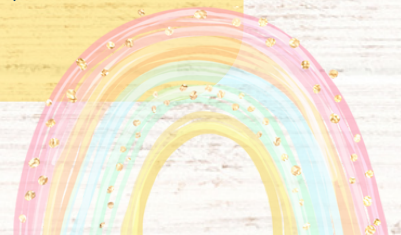
What Does The Calm Jar Do?

When kids are stressed, sad or angry, it is natural for them to have a fight, flight or freeze response.

This makes it difficult for them to make rational decisions. Encouraging mindfulness through activities like the calm jar. Practicing mindfulness regularly helps reduce stress and increase mental wellness and self-control. Have fun making a glitter calm jar together to use at home or school.



- Invite the child to sit down comfortably.
- Encourage them to shift their gaze to the swirling glitter, breathing deeply in and out as they watch it sink to the bottom of the jar.
- Next, invite them to notice the calm feeling moving through their body as they breathe.
- Perhaps their feet feel heavy and warm, and that feeling is moving up towards their shoulders.
- As they breathe, ask them to notice how their heartbeat feels steady and their body temperature feels just right. All the while breathing in...and out.
- As the glitter settles and the water clears, so will their thoughts, feelings, and body.



Dried Bean Stress Ball Activity

Materials Needed:

- Any type of dried bean or rice
- 3-4 latex balloons
- Water bottle
- Scissors



Instructions:

- Cut off the bottom of the water bottle to make a funnel.
- Blow up ONE balloon to stretch it out.
- Place the balloon around the neck of the bottle.
- Use the bottle as a funnel to pour beans inside. Go ahead and stuff the balloon full, smashing them in with your finger or a wooden spoon handle.
- Snip the balloon OFF the bottle.
- Cut the neck off 2 or 3 more balloons.
- Place a balloon over the bean ball, making sure the opening of the first balloon is centered in the **BOTTOM** of the balloon.
- Layer one or two more balloons, always making sure the openings do not overlap.

Note: Three layers of balloons should be good enough, but four is sturdier.

How Stress Balls Can Support Emotional Well-being

Stress balls can help support self-regulation when someone is experiencing strong emotions.

Reflection after the activity is complete can help support learning for emotional well-being.

Consider asking the child the following questions and have a conversation about each one together.



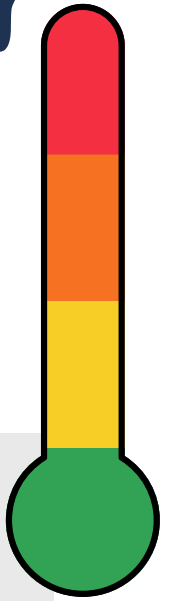
Reflection Questions:

1. What different emotions do you think your stress ball can help you with?
2. What other things can you do to calm down when you are feeling strong emotions?



Feelings Thermometer

Kids need to understand what they are feeling and that feelings can be small or big. Being able to identify how big their feelings are can also help them recognize when they are getting more and more activated. If they know when activated feelings are escalating, they can intervene and use a coping skill to manage those feelings.



How to Use A Feelings Thermometer

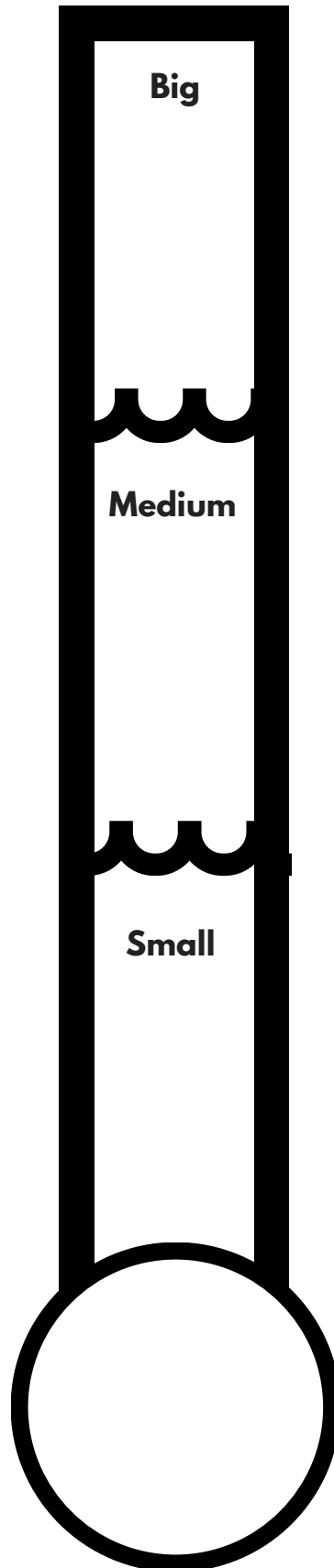
1. **PICK A FEELING:** When creating a thermometer, focus on one feeling at a time.
2. **COLOR IT IN:** Have the child pick out three colors, one for each section of the thermometer and color it in. You can laminate it to make it sturdier!
3. **CUT OUT THE ARROW:** Laminate it to make it more durable, and place a piece of velcro on the back. Then place velcro on each section of the thermometer.
4. **TALK ABOUT IT:** Let's say you are making an anger thermometer. Ask what their anger looks like when they are at the bottom of the thermometer. Do they stomp their feet, sigh loudly, growl, etc. Then move on to the next section - if they are really angry, what does that look like? Does their voice get louder? Do they start invading other people's space? Then we talk about very angry - what does that look like? Is it yelling, throwing things, running away?
5. **IDENTIFY COPING:** Once we go through and identify behaviors on the thermometer, then we work on identifying coping skills they can use to calm down. Some examples include: getting a drink of water, taking deep breaths, counting to a certain number or taking a walk. Make sure they have coping skills that will help them at each level. It's important to have a variety of coping skills for each level because not all coping skills will work all the time.

**Next time they are experiencing that feeling,
have them move the arrow to show the size
of their feeling and pick a way to cope.**

My _____ Thermometer

What I look like

What I can do



Homemade Playdough

Materials Needed:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup water
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1/3 cup salt
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- **Food coloring** (optional)



Instructions:

1. Mix together all of the ingredients in a 2-quart saucepan.
2. Cook over low/medium heat, stirring.
3. Continue stirring until the mixture is thickened and begins to gather around the spoon.
4. Remove the dough onto wax paper or a plate to cool.

Note: Cool completely before storing in a ziplock bag or sealed container.

Once you're done, have your child pick something to create and work together to make it! Have fun!

5 Minute Rainstick

Materials Needed:

- A tall plastic bottle
- 15 colored straws
- 1/4 cup of colored garbanzo beans and/or 1/4 cup of rice (can color rice if desired).



Instructions:

1. Empty the water from the bottle and let it dry.
2. Add 1/4 cup of colored garbanzo beans.
3. Cut up the straws in different sizes.
4. Add the straws to the bottle – one color at a time.
5. Layer as many colors as you want your rain stick to have.
6. Add 1/4 cup of colored rice leaving some space for the rice to move around.
7. Glue the lid with super glue to avoid your little one try to open it and spilling it all.
8. Shake to distribute the rice and then gently move the bottle upside down to hear the rain fall down.

Lets Make Dinner Together: Baked Sloppy Joe Cups

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 cup chopped yellow onion
- 1 can (15oz) Sloppy Joe Sauce
- 1 can (12oz) refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
- 2/3 cup shredded cheese



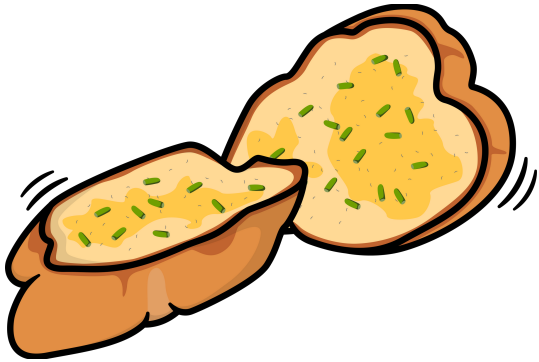
Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Heat large skillet over medium-high heat; cook beef and onion 7 minutes or until beef is crumbled and no longer pink. Drain. Add Sloppy Joe sauce; cook 1 minute more or until hot.
2. Meanwhile, press 1 biscuit into bottom and up sides of a medium muffin cup, being careful not to tear dough. Place 1/4 cup meat mixture in each cup. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown.
3. Sprinkle cheese evenly over top of each cup. Let stand 1 minute or until cheese softens. Carefully remove from pan.

Enjoy!



Lets Make Dinner Together: Garlic Bread Pizza Sandwiches



Ingredients Needed:

- 1 package (11-1/4 ounces) frozen garlic Texas toast
- 1/4 cup pasta sauce
- Shredded mozzarella cheese
- 8 slices thinly sliced hard salami
- Additional pasta sauce, warmed, optional



Directions

1. Preheat griddle over medium-low heat. Add garlic toast; cook until lightly browned, 3-4 minutes per side.
2. Spoon 1 tablespoon of sauce over each of 4 pieces of toast. Top with cheese, pepperoni, salami and remaining toast.
3. Cook until crisp and cheese is melted, 3-5 minutes, turning as necessary. If desired, serve with additional sauce.

Lets Make Dinner Together: Taco Macaroni & Cheese



Ingredients Needed:

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 pkg taco seasoning
- 12 oz uncooked large elbow pasta
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 can of Rotel (tomatoes with green chiles)
- salt & pepper to taste



Directions

1. In a large pot or skillet over medium high heat break up ground beef and cook until no longer pink. (Drain if needed.)
2. Add in diced onion. Cook until onions are soft. Add in garlic and cook 30 seconds while stirring.
3. Stir in taco seasoning, tomatoes with green chiles, and chicken broth. Season with salt & pepper if needed.
4. Over high heat, bring mixture to a boil. Stir in pasta.
5. Lower heat to a low setting, place lid on and cook for 12-15 minutes until pasta is cooked through and tender, stirring occasionally. Add more broth or water if needed.
6. When pasta is done, stir in shredded cheese. Garnish with your favorite taco toppings.

TEAM KENTUCKY[®]

CABINET FOR HEALTH
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**Department for Behavioral Health,
Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities**

Division of Mental Health

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