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### Advice From A Tree

Stand Tall and Proud.  
Sink Your Roots Into the Earth.

Be Content with Your Natural Beauty.

Go out on a Limb.  
Drink Plenty of Water

Remember Your Roots

Enjoy the View

Author Unknown



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**Lori Hudson** (Vice Chair)  
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See back cover for a listing of  
Local Associations throughout the  
province.

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## Greetings from Board Chair

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Hello Everyone! I hope you are enjoying this fabulous summer weather! We are so glad to be outside most days. Our garden is thriving, and our grass has never been greener. When I look around I am able to really focus on all the positives in my immediate surroundings and although this has been a really odd, sometimes frustrating and challenging time these past 4 plus months, I can see and appreciate all the benefits of being home and I am grateful for all our blessings!

I am also very grateful for the opportunity to have served on the Board of Directors with some truly wonderful people for the last 5 years and served as your Chair for 4 of those years. As this is my last newsletter greeting, I want to use this opportunity to say thank you.

It has been my sincere pleasure to serve on the Board and to work with the Board of Directors and Staff to accomplish so many tasks and projects that have had immediate impacts on our Foster Family Community. To the Board Members past and present, thank you for your confidence in me as your Chair and thank you for all of your support-together we accomplished a great deal and provided guidance and support to a fantastic staff team.

Thank you to the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development for their ongoing financial support and staff appointments to our Board of Directors to provide advice and guidance. Many thanks to the amazing people at Waypoints for the incredible training, professional timely response to the needs of our Foster Parents and the many fun family events for our children.

Lori and Amy, thank you for being such great supports during meetings, symposiums and for carrying out your day to day duties with such passion and professionalism. I am grateful for the pleasure of having worked with you.

Diane, I so enjoyed getting to know you as one of the first people I connected with when I moved to NL 13 years ago! I have always been so impressed at your knowledge, compassionate and never failing insight and advice I sought as a Foster Parent (a journey I credit you for). I have looked to you for advice and guidance and sometimes just a shoulder to cry on; you always provided the voice of reason I needed when I had to vent. As a member of the Board of Directors your leadership, vision and passion for the work we do has been the beacon of hope that has guided this wonderful Association from one eventful and successful year to the next - I will miss our regular interactions my friend!

And to all of you amazing people with the biggest hearts I have ever known, thank you for being Foster Parents, thank you for sharing your love and homes with children at their most vulnerable. Thank you for showing love and compassion to their parents and siblings as well. May God Bless you and keep you all healthy and full of joy!

Edie

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### **2019-2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM) 7pm, Sunday, September 27,2020**

Due to the ongoing pandemic, our AGM will be held virtually this year. We will be using the Zoom Platform. If you want to attend but are not familiar with Zoom, just call the office and we will help you get setup. The 2019-2020 Annual report will be forwarded to all those who register to attend.

The AGM is open to the public but only foster parents and Directors on the Board can vote on motions. Another notice will be sent in August and there will be a Facebook page.

## Executive Director's Report

I am pleased to be writing this report from the comfort of my office rather than my bedroom at home. Covid 19 has brought so many changes for all of us since March. I hope you are all continuing to follow the public health guidelines to help ensure all our safety. I want to start this report by expressing appreciation to all our foster parents for the efforts you made these last few months to help the children in your care connect with their birth families in very difficult circumstances. You are to be commended for finding new and innovative ways to ensure contact was maintained. I also want to express appreciation to the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development for the ongoing communication throughout this challenging time. We know the decisions you have to make each day are not easy and we really appreciate your commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of children/youth, birth families and foster families.

June was very different this year with our Annual Symposium not being able to proceed. This is often the highlight of our year bringing together foster parents and social workers from across the province. We are looking forward to next year when we can all come together once again. In the absence of a Symposium, we held an on-line auction with items we had collected prior to everything closing down and raised \$1,875. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held virtually on Sunday, September 27 at 7pm. Minister Lisa Dempster will be in attendance and we are hoping that many of you will join us for this event. We were glad to return to the office on June 23 after working from home for thirteen weeks. It is good to know that if a second wave of Covid 19 does come in the Fall, we will be able to work from home again with little disruption except for our regional travel. If travel is not possible, we will find alternate ways to engage with our foster parents.

We are currently in the process of updating our website which is one of the goals of our Strategic Plan. We are also in the beginning stages of developing a new logo for the Association. Our current logo is over 20 years old and needs to be refreshed and modernized. The updated Foster Parent Handbook is almost ready for printing and we hope to have it ready for distribution by the Fall.

In June, I was invited to speak at a Family Connections webinar for foster parents and other professionals across the county organized by the Child Welfare League of Canada and the Canadian Foster Family Association. This was an opportunity to share the experiences of our foster parents with family access during Covid-19. It was also a chance to highlight the importance of ongoing communication between the Department and foster families during this time. I also attended a Diversity Summit organized by the Association for New Canadians. This online event focused on advancing inter-cultural understanding by promoting the value and importance of multiculturalism, anti-racism, and inclusion. It was a great learning opportunity.

For those of you who may not be aware, there is a social media policy for the foster care program. Pictures of children in care are not allowed to be posted on facebook or any other social media platform. If there are any foster parents who still post pictures, please remove them as this policy is in place for the protection of children. We know it can sometimes be difficult explaining to children why you cannot post their pictures, particularly if you post pictures of your own children. If you need some help with this, just give us a call.

Sadly, I have to share that we lost two foster parents since our last newsletter, Michael Shannon and Mae Wilkins. We send condolences to their families as they cope with their loss. Rest in peace Michael and Mae. You will be missed in our fostering community.

Diane

### Highlights/Ongoing Activities

- New Location
- Personal Support
- Allegation Support
- Handbook update
- Peer Mentoring Program
- Waypoints Pilot
- Strategic Plan
- Facebook Page
- Reconciliation Plan

## Regional Reports

Normally, our July Newsletter would carry all the reports that would have been presented at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in June. Unfortunately, Covid 19 changed those plans this year. These will now be carried in our October Newsletter.

Also as a result of Covid 19, our Local Associations have not been able to meet since March so there are no regional reports.

# New Office Location

We are very pleased to let you know that we are moving to Suite 211, 90 O'Leary Avenue on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

It is directly across the street from our current space.

We look forward to welcoming visitors! If you are in the area, why not drop in for a coffee and a chat. Visit our resource library where we have books on a wide range of topics that you can borrow.

Our phone numbers will be remaining the same.



### VOCM CARES/NL Foster Families Association Bursary

The role of birth and adopted children of foster parents is an extremely important one because fostering is a family affair. These young people share their parents with others and must learn to adjust to an ever changing home environment. In recognition of their contribution and support to the children who are placed in their home, VOCM CARES and the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association has established a Bursary Program to assist with educational expenses.

**Who can Apply?** A birth or adopted child of an approved foster family residing in the province. The applicant must be enrolled in a post-secondary education program.

**Bursary Amount:** One bursary of \$500.00 will be awarded each year.

**Application Deadline:** Applications and all supporting documentation must be received at the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Office by **September 15<sup>th</sup>**.

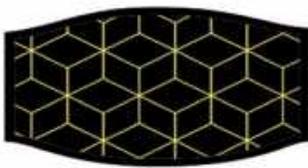
**Selection and Presentation:** After reviewing all applications, the selection committee will determine who will be awarded the Bursary. The successful applicant will receive the Bursary in October in celebration of Foster Families Month.

The application package can be downloaded from our website, [www.nlffa.ca](http://www.nlffa.ca) or you can contact the office and one will be mailed to you. 754-0213 or toll free 709-754-0218

**Good Luck to all Applicants!**



**Customizable,  
Non-Medical  
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Starting at **\$13.95** each

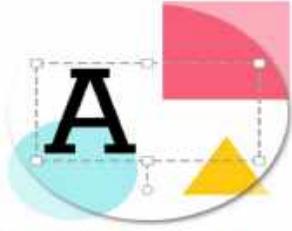


**Select A Template**

**Upload Artwork**



**Create Your Own**



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## Foster Parents Share Experiences

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Foster Parents Share Experiences is a regular feature in our newsletter. It would be great if Foster Parents would write a story of their experiences providing care for children and forward it to the office. We want to have a ready supply of stories for future newsletters. While not everyone is comfortable writing about themselves; everyone has a story to tell. If you would like to share your experiences but need help putting it on paper, you can call the office and we will give you a hand.

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### *His birth grandmother has been wonderful...*

My husband Gabriel and I chose to become foster parents when we were living in the remote Inuit village of Akulivik in Nunavik, Quebec. I taught at the only school, and he worked in youth protection.

We had the opportunity to foster over 30 children, most in emergency situations. Because we lived in the village, we knew all of the families and children already, so most kids were relieved to walk into our home, knowing they'd get fed, have a safe place to sleep, and be kept with their siblings.

We developed good relationships with the parents of the children who were in our care for longer periods of time and arranged a very easy-going visiting schedule. We now live in Newfoundland and have one Inuk foster son who completes our family of 5.

We have been fortunate enough to make great connections with other families here raising Inuit children and First Light to maintain connections to his culture. We also lucked into a bit of information leading us to realize one of his birth cousins had been adopted by very good friends of ours here. Talk about a happy surprise!

His birth grandmother has been wonderful in providing a safe and welcoming home when we visit up North, by organizing picnics and parties at her house for us all to get together. Our two, young biological sons are also fortunate enough to have travelled up North and been welcomed like family, and she was delighted they also refer to her as Anaanatsiaq, which means grandmother in Inuktitut.

With travel being quite difficult, especially now, family visits are on hold; instead, we video chat and are able to share experiences as best as we can. Now that summer is here, we're all outside as much as we can be, enjoying sea glass hunting and the resumption of softball!

Fostering has been a great experience for our family.

Lauren

**Thank you Lauren for sharing your story. It really demonstrates the old adage that it takes a village to raise a child!**

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**"Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why we call it the Present."**

Eleanor Roosevelt elt

**" I can't change the direction of the wind,  
but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination"**

Jimmy Dean

## Voices of Youth

Voices of Youth is a regular feature. This space will be available for the printing of poetry, drawings, short stories, or life experiences of young people. If submitting a drawing, please ensure you use a dark pencil. For reasons of confidentiality, the full names of those who submit will not be printed unless the individual is over 16 and has provided their consent.



Jasmine, age 3

**Thanks Jasmine for the lovely drawing! I bet Jazzy's Flower Patch is a great place to visit.**

**"There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million."**  
Walt Streightiff

**"While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."**  
Richard L. Evans

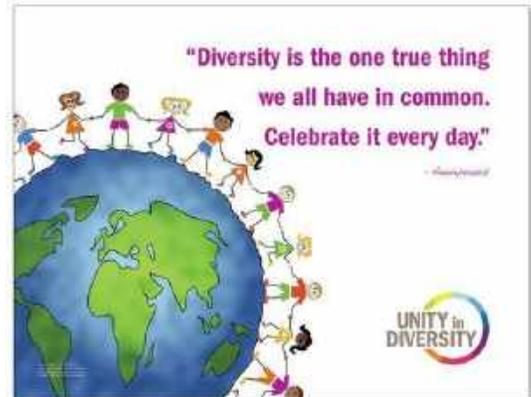
## Teen Corner

### Understanding Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

Everyone has different beliefs, experiences, abilities, appearances and more. However, certain people and groups are more likely to experience stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination.

They may be targeted because of their:

- abilities
- age
- economic status
- ethnicity and/or race
- gender identity or expression
- national origin
- physical appearance
- religion
- sexual orientation
- etc.



Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination often come from:

- inequalities in society
- ideas learned about other people/groups from family members, friends and/or the media
- not spending a lot of time with people who are different from you in some way
- not being open to different ideas and ways of living

**A stereotype is an assumption:** A stereotype means assuming that a group of people who share some characteristics also share certain attributes. In other words, when someone assumes something about you because of one part of your identity. Stereotypes are often:

- negatively impactful
- overly simplistic
- dangerous
- unfair

**Prejudice is a belief:** Prejudice is when someone has a belief (usually negative) about a person or group based on a stereotype. The belief is usually based on a person's membership (or assumed membership) in a certain group. Prejudice also divides people based on stereotypes. Examples include:

**Ableism:** negative attitudes based on physical and/or mental abilities.

**Cissexism:** negative attitudes toward people who don't identify with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Homophobia:** negative attitudes toward members of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

**Racism:** negative attitudes based on race, ethnicity and/or culture.

**Sexism:** negative attitudes based on gender identity, gender expression and/or sex assigned at birth.

**Xenophobia:** negative attitudes based on national origin/country.

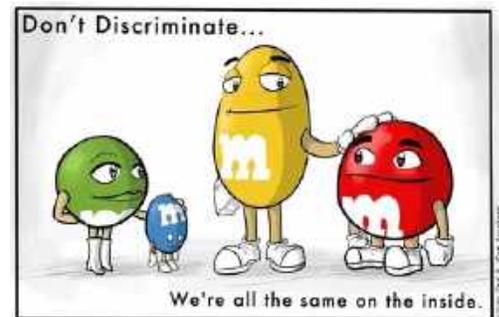
**Discrimination is an action:** Discrimination is when someone acts on their prejudiced beliefs. It can also be systemic, like the policies and practices put in place to assimilate First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Examples of discrimination include:

- a manager promoting a cisgender employee over a transgender employee whose performance is stronger
- a racialized youth being monitored without cause while shopping in a store
- a health-care provider refusing to treat/diagnose a patient who is part of a particular racial/ethnic group

### **What are the negative effects of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination on mental health?**

People may experience mental ill-health and other challenges as a result of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. People who are the targets of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination may:

- have low self-esteem
- experience mental disorders such as anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- begin to believe negative stereotypes about themselves
- experience intergenerational trauma
- feel like they lack control of their own life
- experience issues at school and/or work (e.g. bullying, harassment, etc.)
- start to lose hope in the future
- experience loneliness and isolation
- feel like they're unable to trust others
- experience physical effects (e.g. trouble sleeping, etc.)



### **What can I do about stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination?**

You can help reduce stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. Here are some ways you can take a stand:

- reflect on your own ideas and actions to see if you have prejudiced attitudes or act in discriminatory ways (either on purpose or unintentionally).
- don't laugh at jokes that are based on stereotypes.
- refuse to watch movies, read books, play video games or participate in activities promoting negative attitudes toward certain groups of people.
- challenge peers/family who express prejudiced beliefs, if it's safe to do so (you could share this article with them as a starting point).
- support organizations that help address the root causes and effects of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination.

**Need more information or support? You can contact Kids Help Phone 24/7. Kids Help Phone is always there for you. No matter what you want to talk about, we're here to listen. No judgment, totally private, 24/7. 1-800-668-6868 (call or text).**

Source: [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**"No act of kindness, no matter how small is ever wasted."**

Aesop

## Ways to improve your Mental Health

There are lots of ways that people can improve their mental health. It's helpful to think about the supportive people in your life that you can talk to, the things you like to do, and things that you like about yourself. You could even make lists to help yourself remember when you are having a tough time. Writing your lists on a good day can be really helpful when things aren't going well. Your lists might look something like these...

### People I can talk to:

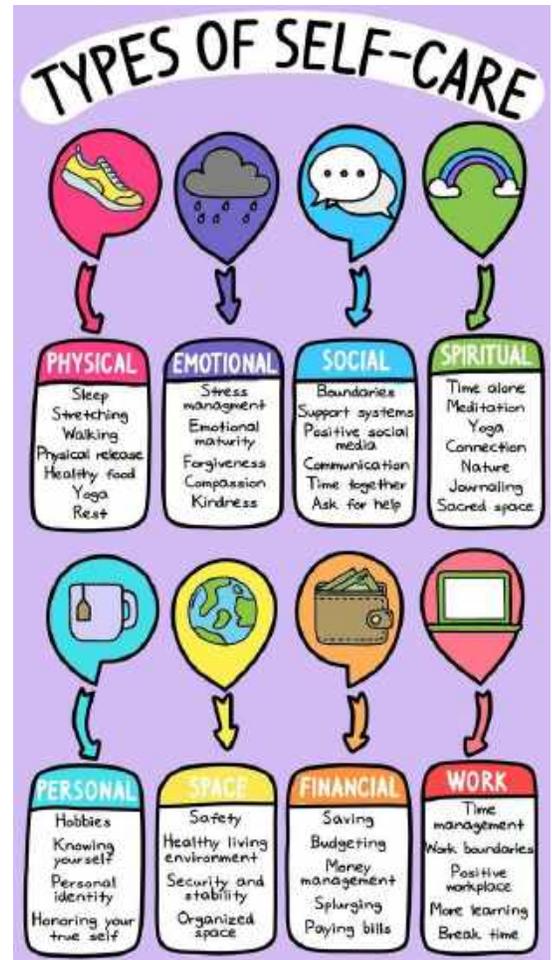
- A trusted friend or family member
- A trusted guidance counsellor or teacher
- My family doctor
- A counsellor at a community centre
- Kids Help phone. They are non-judgmental, youth-friendly and won't force you to talk about something if you don't want to!

### Things I like to do:

- Hang-out with friends
- Talk to people
- Cry/laugh/hug
- Write, draw, play music
- Play sports
- Dance
- Go for a walk
- Read
- Watch TV/Movies
- Go shopping
- Make something

### Things I like about myself:

- Funny / have a good sense of humor
- Good at helping people
- Good at drawing, painting, writing, etc.
- Good at sports or dancing or walking your dog
- Good at cheering people up / yourself up
- A good friend
- Being kind
- Being smart
- Good at cooking
- Good at music
- ...And so on and on!



It isn't arrogant or conceited to like things about yourself, everyone has skills and talents, and there's nothing wrong with feeling proud, showing them, or acknowledging them!

Everyone needs healthy coping skills, especially when they're not feeling great. Depending on someone's circumstances, it might be more difficult for someone to get through a hard time than it is for others, but that doesn't make it impossible, and there are some things on these lists that anyone can do!

**"Every situation in life is temporary. So, when life is good make sure you enjoy and receive it fully. And when life is not so good, remember that it will not last forever and better days are on the way."**

Author Unknown

## Children's Pages

### Make a Jellyfish

**What you need:** small paper bowl, tissue paper (variety of colours), self-adhesive curly gift bow, googly eyes, white string (to hang it), school glue, packaging tape and scissors.



#### Directions:

- Cut up your tissue paper into square pieces.
- Turn your paper bowl upside down and add glue all over the bottom of it and the sides. Put your tissue paper squares all over your bowl, covering the bottom and sides completely. Let it dry.
- Have an adult use your scissors to poke a small hole in the center of your paper bowl. Push your white string through the hole, tie a knot in the end and tape it down inside the bowl.
- Remove the adhesive backing from your curly gift bow and attach it to the inside of the bowl. You'll want to position it so it hangs down from the center of the bowl.
- Finish your cute and colourful jellyfish craft by gluing on googly eyes. Isn't it adorable?

### Riddles

- Q. What is brown, hairy and wears sunglasses? **A.** Coconut on vacation.  
Q. Why did the teddy bear say no to dessert? **A.** Because she was stuffed.  
Q. What has ears but cannot hear? **A.** cornfield.

### Summer Activities Word Scramble!



NGIDGNARE

WMNMGISI

INGIKH

IKNGIB

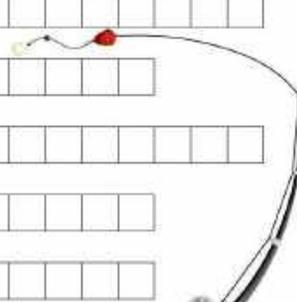
KNICCGIINP

LPGINAY

SRGTAANIGZ

KWGLIAN

NSHFIGI



- Homemade Ice Cream
- Picnic at the Park
- Beach
- Water Park
- Drive-in Movie
- Water Balloon Fight
- Pool Day
- Splash Park
- Make Popsicles
- Go Stargazing
- Go on a Hike
- Watch Fireworks
- Family Movie Night
- Go Bowling
- Feed Ducks

- Fly a Kite
- Go Camping
- Roast S'mores
- Backyard BBQ
- Do a Science Experiment
- Go to the Zoo
- Play Mini Golf
- Visit the Library
- Go to a Museum
- Lemonade Stand
- Movie in the Park
- Scavenger Hunt
- Go to a Local Festival
- Build Sandcastles
- Do a Craft

**Would you like to win a prize? Color this page to enter our Summer Coloring Contest. Four prizes will be awarded. Send your picture to Suite 211, 90 O'Leary Avenue, St. John's, NL, A1B 2C7 before August 31, 2020. Copy the page and share it with a friend!**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Educational Section

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### Things to Do With Teens During COVID-19

So you're at home with your teenagers during the COVID-19 pandemic. We know it can be hard to think of things to keep everyone motivated on a good day, let alone during this time. Whether you're socially distancing or self-isolating, here are some suggestions for things to do with your teens. Remember, we're all in this together: reach out digitally for support, you're not alone, we will get through this. Repost this with your own ideas! Stay up to date here.

**Be Their Student:** Give them the chance to be a teacher. Ask them to teach you their favourite video game or to teach a lesson on their favourite book or how to understand their favourite sport. Whatever they're passionate about, keep it alive by learning about it and letting them teach you what they know.

**Netflix Party:** Let your teen have a Netflix Party at home. Have a Netflix party online without having something like this to look forward to can help with motivation. Have your teen pick a movie a day or two beforehand so you can get excited about it. Make it over the top with a treat buffet, a big introduction to the movie, and a discussion about the plot, themes, and characters afterward. Or your teen can plan a party with friends!

**National Film Board:** If you want to see quality films, educational content online for free, visit the National Film Board of Canada's website.

**Free Online Courses:** There are lots of places for free online classes. If you want something specific, learn how to code or music/painting basics or take a quick google to find something your teens are specifically interested in! For a limited time, Nikon is teaching photography classes for free.

**Virtual Museum Tours:** Most museums are closed to help contain the virus, but you can still check them out from the comfort of your home! Check out the Louvre, The British Museum, or The Smithsonian. The Google Arts and Culture site is full of amazing artworks, artists, and history to discover.

**Learn Cooking Basics:** Teach your teen some basic cooking skills before they're off to college. Maybe this is something you already know, or you'll be learning together. Start with some easy baking essentials like cookies or cupcakes. For something practical, learn how to properly boil pasta, make a basic homemade sauce, and some meatballs. Already past that? There are always more complex and interesting things to learn in the kitchen. Check this link for some inspiration.

**Foster a Pet:** This is a super fun way to teach some responsibility without the lifetime commitment. You'll all be home anyways, so may as well take the time to learn how to take care of a furry friend. Check out any local shelter near you and they'll be sure to help you get set up.

**Watch Amazing Theatre Performances:** With Covid-19 pandemic forcing theaters to shut their doors, many performing art centers have taken to being open virtually. Pride and Prejudice, Treasure Island, Flowers for Mrs Harris, Mozart's Cosi fan tutte, Romeo & Juliet are among the many shows that can now be watched online.

**Watch Live Music Concerts:** Plenty of free concerts are being streamed free every day.

**Volunteer to Run Errands:** If you are not in quarantine and are healthy, put signs up around your building/neighbourhood offering to get groceries for people who can't leave their homes. This could be elderly people, quarantined people, immunocompromised people, or someone with COVID-19. Take the proper precautions. Keep it contactless, sanitary, and follow all health warnings from the Canadian Government. They might need medications, toilet paper, food, or other things.

**Learn Budgeting and Other Adulting Skills:** This is an awesome time to sit down and teach your kids about the importance of a budget and how to balance accounts. While you're at it, look into some of the current economic issues and discuss them with your teen. It can be scary, but understanding why it's all happening can help people come to terms with the issues our country and the world are dealing with.

**Board Game Night:** Back to basics: no videos, no controllers, just good old fashioned board games. Try one that might take a few tries to get the hang of, and make a tally board in your house to keep track of who's got the most wins. Dust off the old Monopoly set, pull out Risk, or order something new off Amazon.



**Learn a New Instrument:** Have a dusty old guitar you said you'd learn to play but never did? Still, have that sax from your high school days? Maybe there's some DJ software on your computer? If not, you can still shop online for instruments! This is a great time to set aside just a half-hour of practice a day and watch as the skill sets grow and expand their minds.

**Start a Gratitude Journal:** Something that has been said again and again is that a practice of gratitude, especially in trying times, can lead to a happier and calmer day-to-day life. Start every day, or end every day, by writing 3 things you're grateful for, and then write about how you're feeling. Learning how to deal with emotions through writing can make things much clearer and easier to manage.

**Write Cards to Loved Ones:** While you've got your pens out, why not write some letters to loved ones? It will be a nice surprise for people to get in the mail while they're at home, especially people who live alone. Who knows, maybe they'll get a pen pal! Make it a craft night by designing your own cards by drawing, painting, or creating something digitally.

**Paint Party:** Check out online paint nights! They have a link to order everything you'll need and live stream instructors to take you to step by step, just like the original Paint Nite.

**Leave Them Alone:** When tempers start to flare and the house starts to feel small, give them some alone time. Teenagers need space and time to adjust to the new way of living that we're all going through. Remember, their brains are still developing, so they likely won't respond to this the way an adult would and may not fully grasp it. Or, they could be grasping it all too well and might just need some time to take a deep breath and come to terms on their own.

**Nature Walks:** Go outside! If you're socially distancing, you can still go on walks and hikes. It's recommended to keep 3-6 feet between people, but there's plenty of room out there. Go bird watching, and enjoy this spring weather. If you're self-isolating, enjoy some time on the patio or in your backyard if you have one.

Source: [www.todocanada.ca](http://www.todocanada.ca)

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**“Eventually all things fall into place. Until then, laugh at the confusion, live for the moments, and know everything happens for a reason.”** – Albert Schweitzer

**“Each day of our lives we make deposits in the memory banks of our children.”**  
– Charles R. Swindoll,

**“For fast-acting relief, try slowing down.”** – Lily Tomlin

## Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma

Children who have experienced traumatic events need to feel safe and loved. All parents want to provide this kind of nurturing home for their children. However, when parents do not have an understanding of the effects of trauma, they may misinterpret their child's behavior and end up feeling frustrated or resentful. Their attempts to address troubling behavior may be ineffective or, in some cases, even harmful. By increasing your understanding of trauma, you can help support your child's healing, your relationship with them, and your family as a whole.

### What Is Trauma?

Trauma is an emotional response to an intense event that threatens or causes harm. The harm can be physical or emotional, real or perceived, and it can threaten the child or someone close to him or her. Trauma can be the result of a single event, or it can result from exposure to multiple events over time.

Potentially traumatic events may include:

- Abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional)
- Neglect
- Effects of poverty (such as homelessness or not having enough to eat)
- Being separated from loved ones
- Bullying
- Witnessing harm to a loved one or pet (e.g., domestic or community violence)
- Natural disasters or accidents
- Unpredictable parental behavior due to addiction or mental illness

For many children, being in the child welfare system becomes another traumatic event. This is true of the child's first separation from his or her home and family, as well as any additional placements.

### The Impact of Untreated Trauma

Children are resilient. Some stress in their lives (e.g., leaving caregivers for a day at school, riding a bike for the first time, feeling nervous before a game or performance) helps their brains to grow and new skills to develop. However, by definition, trauma occurs when a stressful experience (such as being abused, neglected, or bullied) overwhelms the child's natural ability to cope.

These events cause a "fight, flight, or freeze" response, resulting in changes in the body—such as faster heart rate and higher blood pressure—as well as changes in how the brain perceives and responds to the world. In many cases, a child's body and brain recover quickly from a potentially traumatic experience with no lasting harm. However, for other children, trauma interferes with normal development and can have long-lasting effects.

Factors that determine the impact of traumatic events include the following:

**Age.** Younger children are more vulnerable. Even infants and toddlers who are too young to talk about what happened retain lasting "sense memories" of traumatic events that can affect their well-being into adulthood.

**Frequency.** Experiencing the same type of traumatic event multiple times, or multiple types of traumatic events, is more harmful than a single event.

**Relationships.** Children with positive relationships with healthy caregivers are more likely to recover.

**Coping skills.** Intelligence, physical health, and self esteem help children cope.

**Perception.** How much danger the child thinks he or she is in, or the amount of fear the child feels at the time, is a significant factor.

**Sensitivity.** Every child is different—some are naturally more sensitive than others.

The effects of trauma vary depending on the child and type of traumatic events experienced. Table 1 shows some of the ways that trauma can affect children. This list of potential consequences shows why it is so important for parents to understand trauma. The right kind of help can reduce or even eliminate many of these negative consequences.

Table 1. Effects of Trauma on Children

Trauma may affect children’s ...	In the following ways
Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to control physical responses to stress</li> <li>• Chronic illness, even into adulthood (heart disease, obesity)</li> </ul>
Brains (thinking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty thinking, learning, and concentrating</li> <li>• Impaired memory</li> <li>• Difficulty switching from one thought or activity to another</li> </ul>
Emotions (feeling)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> <li>• Feeling unsafe</li> <li>• Inability to regulate emotions</li> <li>• Difficulty forming attachments to caregivers</li> <li>• Trouble with friendships</li> <li>• Trust issues</li> <li>• Depression, anxiety</li> </ul>
Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of impulse control</li> <li>• Fighting, aggression, running away</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Suicide</li> </ul>

### Understanding Your Child’s Behavior



When children have experienced trauma, particularly multiple traumatic events over an extended period of time, their bodies, brains, and nervous systems adapt in an effort to protect them. This might result in behaviors such as increased aggression, distrusting or disobeying adults, or even dissociation (feeling disconnected from reality). When children are in danger, these behaviors may be important for their survival. However, once children are moved to a safer environment, their brains and bodies may not recognize that the danger has passed. These protective behaviors, or habits, have grown strong from frequent use (just as a muscle that is used regularly grows bigger and stronger). It takes time and retraining to help those “survival muscles” learn that they are not needed in their new situation (your home), and that they can relax.

It might be helpful to remember that your child’s troublesome behavior may be a learned response to stress—it may even be what kept your child alive in a very unsafe situation. It will take time and patience for your child’s body

and brain to learn to respond in ways that are more appropriate for his or her current, safe environment. Parenting a traumatized child may require a shift from seeing a “bad kid” to seeing a kid who has had bad things happen.

### Trauma Triggers

When your child is behaving in a way that is unexpected and seems irrational or extreme, he or she may be experiencing a trauma trigger. A trigger is some aspect of a traumatic event that occurs in a completely different situation but reminds the child of the original event. Examples may be sounds, smells, feelings, places, postures, tones of voice, or even emotions.

Youth who have experienced traumatic events may reenact past patterns when they feel unsafe or encounter a trigger. Depending on whether the child has a “fight,” “flight,” or “freeze” response, the child may appear to be throwing a tantrum, willfully not listening, or defying you. However, responses to triggers are best thought of as reflexes—they are not deliberate or planned. When children’s bodies and brains are overwhelmed by a traumatic memory, they are not able to consider the consequences of their behavior or its effect on others.

### Symptoms by Age

Table 2 shows symptoms and behaviors that children who have experienced trauma might exhibit at different stages of development. The age ranges are merely guidelines. For many children who have experienced trauma, their development lags behind their age in calendar years. It may be normal for your child to exhibit behaviors that are more common in younger children.

**Table 2. Signs of Trauma in Children of Different Ages**

Young Children (Ages 0–5)	School-Age Children (Ages 6–12)	Teens (Ages 13–18)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritability, “fussiness”</li> <li>• Startling easily or being difficult to calm</li> <li>• Frequent tantrums</li> <li>• Clinginess, reluctance to explore the world</li> <li>• Activity levels that are much higher or lower than peers</li> <li>• Repeating traumatic events over and over in dramatic play or conversation</li> <li>• Delays in reaching physical, language, or other milestones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty paying attention</li> <li>• Being quiet or withdrawn</li> <li>• Frequent tears or sadness</li> <li>• Talking often about scary feelings and ideas</li> <li>• Difficulty transitioning from one activity to the next</li> <li>• Fighting with peers or adults</li> <li>• Changes in school performance</li> <li>• Wanting to be left alone</li> <li>• Eating much more or less than peers</li> <li>• Getting into trouble at home or school</li> <li>• Frequent headaches or stomach aches with no apparent cause</li> <li>• Behaviors common to younger children (thumb sucking, bed wetting, fear of the dark)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about the trauma constantly, or denying that it happened</li> <li>• Refusal to follow rules, or talking back frequently</li> <li>• Being tired all the time, sleeping much more (or less) than peers, nightmares</li> <li>• Risky behaviors</li> <li>• Fighting</li> <li>• Not wanting to spend time with friends</li> <li>• Using drugs or alcohol, running away from home, or getting into trouble with the law</li> </ul>

These signs alone do not necessarily indicate that your child has experienced trauma. However, if symptoms are more severe or longer lasting than is typical for children the same age, or if they interfere with your child’s ability to succeed at home or in school, it is important to seek help.

## Trauma and Mental Health

Trauma symptoms that are more severe or disruptive to a child's ability to function at home or at school may overlap with specific mental health diagnoses..

- Children who have difficulty concentrating may be diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder).
- Children who appear anxious or easily overwhelmed by emotions may be diagnosed with anxiety or depression.
- Children who have trouble with the unexpected may respond by trying to control every situation or by showing extreme reactions to change. In some cases, these behaviors may be labeled ODD (oppositional defiant disorder) or intermittent explosive disorder(IED).
- Dissociation in response to a trauma trigger may be viewed as defiance of authority, or it may be diagnosed as depression, ADHD (inattentive type), or even a developmental delay.



It may be necessary to treat these diagnoses with traditional mental health approaches (including the use of medications, where indicated) in the short term. However, treating the underlying cause by addressing the child's experience of trauma will be more effective in the long run.

### Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

About one in four children and youth in foster care will experience a specific set of symptoms known as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It includes four types of symptoms:

- Re-experiencing/remembering (flashbacks or nightmares)
- Avoidance (distressing memories and reminders about the event)
- Negative cognitions and mood (feeling alienated, persistent negative beliefs)
- Alterations in arousal (reckless behavior, persistent sleep disturbance)

It is important to realize that if your child does not exhibit all of the symptoms of PTSD, it does not mean that he or she has not been affected by trauma.

### Helping Your Child

Although childhood trauma can have serious, lasting effects, there is hope. With the help of supportive, caring adults, children can and do recover. Consider the following tips:

- Identify trauma triggers. Something you are doing or saying, or something harmless in your home, may be triggering your child without either of you realizing it. It is important to watch for patterns of behavior and reactions that do not seem to "fit" the situation. What distracts your child, makes him or her anxious, or results in a tantrum or outburst? Help your child avoid situations that trigger traumatic memories, at least until more healing has occurred.
- Be emotionally and physically available. Some traumatized children act in ways that keep adults at a distance (whether they mean to or not). Provide attention, comfort, and encouragement in ways your child will accept. Younger children may want extra hugs or cuddling; for older youth, this might just mean spending time together as a family. Follow their lead and be patient if children seem needy.
- Respond, don't react. Your reactions may trigger a child or youth who is already feeling overwhelmed.

(Some children are even uncomfortable being looked at directly for too long.) When your child is upset, do what you can to keep calm: Lower your voice, acknowledge your child's feelings, and be reassuring and honest.

- Set reasonable and consistent limits and expectations and use praise for desirable behaviors.
- Don't take behavior personally. Allow the child to feel his or her feelings without judgment. Help him or her find words and other acceptable ways of expressing feelings, and offer praise when these are used.
- Listen. Don't avoid difficult topics or uncomfortable conversations. (But don't force children to talk before they are ready.) Let children know that it's normal to have many feelings after a traumatic experience. Take their reactions seriously, correct any misinformation about the traumatic event, and reassure them that what happened was not their fault.
- Help your child learn to relax. Encourage your child to practice slow breathing, listen to calming music, or say positive things ("I am safe now.").
- Be consistent and predictable. Develop a regular routine for meals, play time, and bedtime. Prepare your child in advance for changes or new experiences.
- Be patient. Everyone heals differently from trauma, and trust does not develop overnight. Respecting each child's own course of recovery is important.
- Allow some control. Reasonable, age-appropriate choices encourage a child or youth's sense of having control of his or her own life.
- Encourage self-esteem. Positive experiences can help children recover from trauma and increase resilience. Examples include mastering a new skill; feeling a sense of belonging to a community, group, or cause; setting and achieving goals; and being of service to others.

## Seeking Treatment

If your child's symptoms last more than a few weeks, or if they are getting worse rather than better, it is time to ask for help. Mental health counselling or therapy by a professional trained to recognize and treat trauma in children can help address the root cause of your child's behavior and promote healing. A therapist or behavioural specialist might be able to help you understand your child and respond more effectively. At times, medications may be necessary to control symptoms and improve your child's ability to learn new skills. Begin by asking your caseworker or agency whether your child has been screened for trauma. If you know that your child experienced trauma, ask whether he or she has had a formal mental health assessment by a professional who is aware of trauma's effects.

Timely, effective mental and behavioural health interventions may help in the following ways:

- Increase your child's feelings of safety
- Teach your child how to manage emotions, particularly when faced with trauma triggers
- Help your child develop a positive view of themselves
- Give your child a greater sense of control over his/her own life
- Improve your child's relationships—with family members and others



## Helping Yourself and Your Family



Parenting a child or youth who has experienced trauma can be difficult. Families can sometimes feel isolated, as if no one else understands what they are going through. This can put a strain not only on your relationship with your child, but with other family members, as well (including your spouse or partner).

Learning about what your child experienced may even act as a trigger for you, if you have your own trauma history that is not fully healed. Being affected by someone else's trauma is sometimes called "secondary trauma." Table 3 lists signs that you may be experiencing secondary trauma.

**Table 3. Signs of Secondary Trauma**

Physical Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headaches</li><li>• Stomach problems</li><li>• Sleep problems</li><li>• Weight gain or loss</li><li>• Lack of energy</li></ul>
Behavioural Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased drinking or smoking</li><li>• Feeling overly critical</li><li>• Avoiding other people</li></ul>
Emotional Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Frequent crying</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• Loneliness</li><li>• Depression</li></ul>
Cognitive symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inability to concentrate</li><li>• Forgetfulness</li><li>• Loss of humor/fun</li><li>• Inability to make decisions</li></ul>

The best cure for secondary trauma is prevention. In order to take good care of your child, you must take good care of yourself. Here are some things you can do:

- Be honest about your expectations for your child and your relationship. Having realistic expectations about parenting a child with a history of trauma increases the chances for a healthy relationship.
- Celebrate small victories. Take note of the improvements your child has made.
- Don't take your child's difficulties personally. Your child's struggles are a result of the trauma he or she experienced; they are not a sign of your failure as a parent.
- Make time for things you enjoy that support your physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

- Focus on your own healing. If you have experienced trauma, it will be important for you to pursue your own healing, separate from your child.
- Seek support. Your circle of support may include friends, family, and professional support if needed. Don't be afraid to ask about resources available from the child welfare system, such as a caseworker or support groups. In order to take good care of your child, you must take good care of yourself.

## Conclusion

Trauma can affect children's behavior in ways that may be confusing or distressing for caregivers. It can impact the long-term health and well-being of the child and his or her family members. However, with understanding, care, and proper treatment (when necessary), all members of the family can heal and thrive.

Source: Child Welfare Information Gateway. [www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/child-trauma](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/child-trauma)

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## Comic Relief: Toddler Meltdowns

**When it comes to a full-blown meltdown, there are always two sides to every story.**

Sunsets are so beautiful. I wanted to share the experience with my family- you know, have a special moment. But my mom told me there was no sunset. Come on. I wasn't born yesterday, Mom. – **Emmerson, 2.**

It was 4:30 in the afternoon. – **Jen, mom of Emmerson.**

I am so confused! Do I sleep? Do I stay awake? I feel so lost! – **Cooper, 3.**

The sun and the moon were both visible in the sky. Cooper's life fell apart. – **Heather, mom of Cooper.**

There is another baby in my house trapped in a cage. No one will let him out. I am his only hope. – **Ethan, 1.**

Ethan could see his reflection in the oven window and thought it was another child. – **Julie, mom of Ethan.**

I don't know if my mom was trying to embarrass me by not dressing me properly, but I looked ridiculous. I kept reminding her, "Arms! Arms!" and she did nothing to help. – **Grace, 1.**

Ponchos don't have armholes. This concept is lost on toddlers. – **Melanie, mom of Grace.**

When a stranger stole my mom's bag, I will admit that I lost my temper. I screamed: "That's Mommy's bag!" I'm very protective of my mother. – **Jaxen, 2.**

My bag was being checked as we went through airport security. – **Sydney, mom of Jaxen**

Today I tried something new with my hair and I nailed it. I showed my mom how pretty I was, but she disagreed and ruined my hair. I think she was jealous. – **Kaydence, 2.**

No. I am not jealous of a child who styles her hair by rubbing yogurt through it. She lost her mind when I washed it out. – **Amanda, mom of Kaydence**

Source: Originally published in ParentsCanada magazine, Winter 2017.

## Parents' Ultimate Guide to TikTok

TikTok is a free social media app that lets you watch, create, and share videos -- often to a soundtrack of the top hits in music -- right from your phone. It was originally available as musical.ly in the U.S. but was rebranded when the two apps merged in August 2018. With more than 100 million users, Tik Tok is incredibly popular, owing in part to its slick mash-up of features from other kid favorites. As with the lip-synching app Dubsplash, users can watch and record videos of themselves lip-synching to popular music and sound bites. As they did on the now-defunct Vine, kids can create short, shareable videos ranging from funny to serious. And just like YouTube, Tik Tok is an interactive world of videos that lets you connect with friends and admirers through likes, comments, and even duets.



# Tik Tok

TikTok even spawns its own celebrities. Back before TikTok acquired musical.ly, overnight sensations like Baby Ariel and Jacob Sartorius gained internet fame on the app, especially with kids and teens. Since then, even more stars have joined the list.

But with so much information out there, it can be a challenge for parents to know if it's really safe. While TikTok videos are mostly harmless, creative fun, there are real concerns about kids using the app. As with any social network, you have to use privacy settings to limit how much information you and your kids are sharing. Kids can post stuff without reviewing or editing it first. And other issues have dogged the app: reports of online predators using the app to target younger users; an FTC suit for violating children's privacy law; and serious software glitches--including one that could have allowed the company to collect user data.

**What is TikTok?** TikTok is a social network for sharing user-generated videos, mostly of people lip-synching to popular songs. It was originally called musical.ly (pronounced MU-zik-lee). Users can create and upload their own videos where they lip-synch, sing, dance, or just talk. You can also browse and interact with other users' content, which covers a wide range of topics, songs, and styles. These videos can be grouped by hashtags, which often correspond to challenges or memes.

**How safe is TikTok?** Using any social network can be risky, but it's possible for kids to safely use the app with adult supervision (and a private account). When you sign up for TikTok, your account is public by default, meaning anyone can see your videos, send you direct messages, and use your location information. Parents should make sure to turn on all privacy settings for accounts kids are using, so only people you know can interact with your videos or message you on the app. That means either opting for a private account or changing the settings for comments, duets, reactions, and messages to "Friends" instead of "Everyone." You can also turn those features off completely.

**How does it work?** Tik Tok users sign up with a phone number, an email address, or a third-party account such as Facebook and Instagram. Once logged in, you can search popular creators, categories (comedy, animals, sports), and hashtags to find videos. Or you can use your phone contacts or social media followers to find friends already on the app. Many kids on Tik Tok like to create videos, but plenty of people don't post themselves -- they just use the app to find and follow content creators.

**Is it appropriate for kids?** Because of TikTok's emphasis on popular music, many videos include swearing and sexual lyrics, so it may not be age-appropriate for kids to use on their own. It's also easy to find people wearing revealing clothing and dancing suggestively, although TikTok won't let you search for objectionable content such as "sex" or "porn." If you supervise your kids and stick to songs you already know from the radio, TikTok can be a kid-friendly experience. Users can also earn TikTok Reward points by inviting friends to download the app, and then they can redeem those points for coupons from brands like Sephora and Uber. It's also possible to spend real money by adding virtual coins to your Wallet.

**What age is TikTok recommended for?** Common Sense recommends the app for age 15+ mainly due to the privacy issues and mature content. TikTok requires that users be at least 13 years old to use the full TikTok experience, although there is a way for younger kids to access the app. Anyone under the age of 18 must have approval of a parent or guardian -- but there are plenty of young tween users.

**How can you make your account private?** To make your TikTok account private, go to your profile page and select the three-dot icon in the top-right corner. Select Privacy and Safety. There, toggle the switch for "Private Account." You can also select who can send you comments and direct messages, and who can do a duet with you. Using the "Friends" setting or turning those features off completely limits contact with strangers.

**How do I delete a TikTok video?** To delete a TikTok video that you have posted to your account, select the video you want to delete from your profile. From there, tap the "..." icon in the bottom-right corner and select Delete or the trash can icon. You will be asked if you are sure you want to delete the video. Then it will be removed from your profile.

**How can I delete an account?** To delete a TikTok account, go to your profile, then select the "..." icon in the top-right corner. Select Manage My Account. From there, you must add a phone number if you haven't already. This must be a working number, as they will text you a code to verify the number and later to verify deleting the account. Once you've added a phone number, an option at the bottom of the Manage My Account menu will appear that says, "Delete my account." Tap the phrase, which will lead you to a new page prompting you to enter a verification code. Choose "Send Code" to receive a text message with the verification code. Enter the number, then select Continue. You will be given information on what is entailed in deleting the account. Choose Continue once again for a final confirmation that you want to delete your account, then tap Delete Account.

**How can I use TikTok with my kids?** You can provide a buffer between kids and iffy content by watching with your kids and making videos together. Offer to hold the camera or turn it around to do a selfie duet. You can post it or save it as "private" so only you can see. The app also lets you share videos by email, text, or other social media where you can better control who sees it, so kids can perform for friends and relatives instead of a wider network of people.

**How do you do a duet?** TikTok has a feature that allows two users who aren't in the same place to perform a duet. Both users must follow each other to make it work. One user creates and posts a video, and then a mutual follower can tap the "..." icon at the bottom right of the video and select "start duet now!" The second user can then lip-synch along with the first person, either swapping back and forth or in a split screen.

**What are TikTok Challenges?** Challenges are any idea that goes viral. They can be songs, activities, or dances that start trending and then get copied by users on the platform. Sometimes they're spontaneous, but sometimes they're planned out by brands, musical artists, or influencers for marketing purposes. Most popular challenges, such as the intricately choreographed dance number Renegade and pranks such as the backwards hoodie fridge mixup are harmless. But some, such as the skull-breaker, are really dangerous. Learn more about viral internet challenges and how to talk to your kid about them.

**Does it have parental controls?** TikTok allows parents to set time limits, filter mature content, and disable direct messaging for kids' accounts. You can enable time limits and the content filter on your kid's phone and protect the settings with a passcode, but to disable direct messaging you need to use the app's Family Pairing feature. (Family Pairing also gives you access to time limits and content filter settings.) You'll need your kid's phone to sync the settings.

Here's how to enable screen limits and filter content: Go to your kid's account and tap the three dots at the top right of the user profile. Then select "Digital Wellbeing" next to the icon of an umbrella. From there, select the features you want to enable:

**Screen Time Management.** This setting limits users to a maximum of two hours on the app per day, but you can limit it to 40 minutes. If you're only enabling this on your kid's phone, choose a passcode to lock the setting.

**Restricted Mode.** This blocks mature content, but even with the filter on, kids using the app on their own might come across age-inappropriate videos. Lock the setting with a passcode.

To set up Family Pairing so you can manage the above settings plus disable direct messaging, first download TikTok onto your phone and create an account. Then, make sure you have your kid's phone and their TikTok log-in handy. **Family Pairing.** On both phones, tap the three dots next to the user profile; tap Family Pairing and sync your account to your kid's via the QR code.

Keep in mind kids can always re-download TikTok and create a new account using a different phone number or email address, so any controls you enable aren't foolproof.

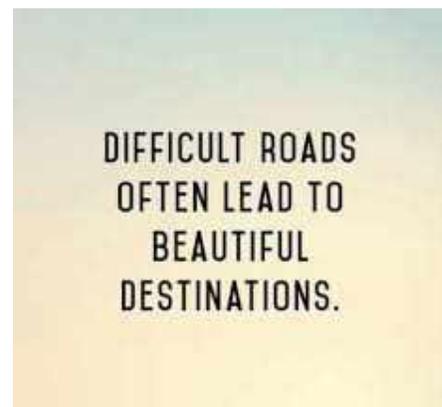
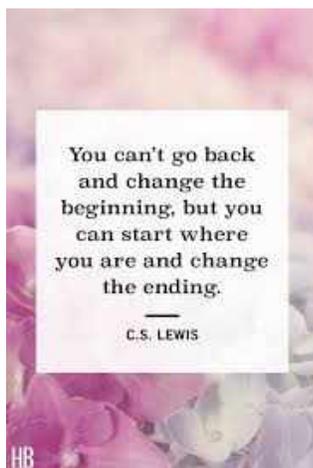
**How can I monitor my child's activity on TikTok?** Other than Restricted Mode, there's no way to filter out content on TikTok, so parents are encouraged to share an account with kids under the age of 13. This will let you keep an eye on what your kid is viewing and posting. Parents of older kids who are more resistant to monitoring can ask about their favorite video creators and get to know their videos (with or without your kid). Also, take the time to regularly look at the most popular songs, videos, memes, and challenges.

**What if my kid wants to get famous on TikTok?** While the safest way to use TikTok is with a private account, the social nature of the app and the rapid success of its stars might have your kids begging to set it to public. There's huge enticement to get famous, which could encourage kids to do things they wouldn't normally do to get a larger audience. They may also become obsessed with "likes" and virtual approval. Encourage and model safe behavior, and make sure to set limits on the type of information your child shares.

**Should I be concerned about TikTok's security?** Many people and organizations—including the U.S. government and companies like Wells Fargo—are worried that TikTok's parent company ByteDance (based in China) is using the app to spy on users in other countries. Investigations of TikTok found that the app's privacy policy and data collection practices aren't actually any worse than other social media apps, and that the concerns about spying are probably overblown. (However, the company does surveil users of the app in China.)

That said, TikTok doesn't necessarily have a perfect record when it comes to privacy and security. For example, they only recently fixed a bug that allowed the app to access users' clipboards (where things you copy and paste are stored) every three seconds, even when they weren't using the app. They also illegally stored minors' data.

Source [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)



## How You can help Teens with FASD Make Decisions

Good decision making is a life-long challenge for a person with FASD. They will need the aid of someone who can be trusted to help them make good decisions. But how do you help your teen to be more independent?

Teens with FASD are like most teens: they want to feel good about themselves, have friends and be independent. But, because of the way their brains work, they are likely to act first and think later. They are often more impulsive than their peers and, quick decisions can lead to trouble. Here are some tips on how you can guide and teach your teen to make good decisions.

1. Youth and adults with FASD need a long time to learn some things. You can help by being patient and explaining some things over and over again.
2. A person with FASD may need a lot of time to make good decisions. Try to give them plenty of time to make up their mind. You can also explain how the decisions we make effect how our life turns out. For example, you can explain how a bus pass really works. Even though a bus pass seems to cost more money than bus tickets, it can sometimes be cheaper. Explain how a bus pass will let them use the bus as many times a day as they want and, on any day of the week. It's less hassle finding the right change too. Help them consider the pros and cons.
3. Try to have fewer things to distract them when they have to make a decision. For example, before the family orders food in a restaurant, talk about what meals are on the menu and help them decide what they want to eat and drink. Then let them order food first from the waitress or waiter. If you go to the same restaurant every time they may feel more relaxed and less confused. (Foods that have food colouring or additives and preservatives can effect behaviour in negative ways.)
4. Help them understand that everyone makes mistakes. And, that it's good to stay calm when you've made a mistake. Teach them to look around and see if there is someone they know who they can ask for help. If they don't know anyone, teach them that it is okay to ask for help from a mom or a grandmother. Help them understand that getting angry or rude will make things more confusing for them.
5. You need to show them why it is best to think things over before they do something they are not sure of. Good decisions often aren't easy to make. Life is complicated. But, good decisions sure are easier to live with. Make sure you point out when they make good decisions. Talk about different situations and how what they decide to do could be a good choice or a poor choice. For example, what would you do if you missed the bus? Would you stay in the bus shelter and wait for the next bus? Or, would you walk to work even if it's really cold out?
6. Point out how everyone has responsibilities to ourselves and to others. For example, it is our job to keep our bodies clean and to wear clean clothes. And, it is our job to try to keep our homes clean and tidy. Talk together about the important life skills people need to live well with others and with them self.
7. Talk and show them about what it means to be a grown-up. Explain that it takes time to learn to be a mature adult. In life, everyone needs help from a family member or trusted friend. Tell them how you, or friends or Elders have learned to manage adult life. Try to make your examples short and clear.
8. Take time to explain what can happen when money is spent on the wrong things or when a job is not done right. For example, if all the money is spent on new clothes, how will the rent be paid and food bought?
9. Life skills, Life Skills. Life Skills. Make their chores and responsibilities habits in their lives. If they have good habits and clear routines they will have less decisions to make every day.

## Executive Members of the Regional Local Associations

Avalon Region	Central Region	Eastern Region
<b>St. John's/CBS</b>	<b>Kittiwake</b>	<b>Bay Roberts/Hr. Grace</b>
Daphne Richards Nicole Pittman Ruby Hearn Roxanne Seymour	Laurie Wicks Doug Evelley Dennis Wicks	Kim Newman Ann Marie Tilley
	<b>Exploits Central</b>	<b>Bonavista</b>
	Coralee Roberts	Jim Miller Melvina Elliott Cindy Hayward
		<b>Burin Peninsula</b>
		Pauline White Yvonne Bonnell Evelyn Walsh
Grenfell Region	Labrador Region	Western Region
<b>Pride and Joy</b>	<b>Hopedale</b>	<b>Corner Brook-Bay of Islands</b>
Paula Clements Brenda Kearney Debbie Hopkins Tena Reardon	Mary Flowers	Stephanie Lowe Melinda Murrin Linda Corbett
	<b>Labrador West</b>	<b>Deer Lake-Pasadena</b>
	Eunice Earle Lisa Burton	Lana Brennan Della Pearce
		<b>Stephenville</b>
		Sandra Jesso Debbie Brake Patten

