



The Regional Municipality of Durham Health Department

News Release

Health Department encourages residents to take care of their mental health this holiday season

Whitby, Ontario, Dec. 20, 2018 – Durham Region Health Department is encouraging residents to take care of their mental health throughout the holiday season by practicing positive and healthy strategies.

While the holiday season is often an exciting time filled with celebration, it can also be one of the busiest times of year which can lead to stress for many people. Individuals may also find that the shortened daylight hours during the winter months may cause changes in their mood and energy levels, which can affect an individual's mental health and well-being.

"It's important to recognize that regular maintenance of our mental health is just as important as looking after physical health," said Felix Chik, a public health nurse with the Health Department. "We encourage residents to take time during this busy season to practice techniques that support their mental health."

Some strategies to promote positive mental health include exercise, such as taking daily walks. For adults, exercising at least 30 minutes daily can help relieve stress as the body releases endorphins or "happy hormones" during exercise. Individuals are also encouraged to ensure they are getting enough sleep to allow their bodies and minds to rest and restore.

"Other techniques that people can use to help reduce stress include practicing mindfulness and spirituality through methods such as meditation, yoga or writing a gratitude journal." Mr. Chik explained. "These tools can help decrease stress and help to improve mental health during a hectic holiday schedule."

Residents should also take time to maintain a social support system by keeping in touch with family and friends to help strengthen a sense of community, which can provide support during challenging times. Other opportunities to connect with community can also include volunteering or attending local programs.

For more information on mental health, visit durham.ca/mentalhealth or call the Durham Health Connection Line at 905-666-6214 or 1-800-841-2729.

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If this information is required in an accessible format, please call 1-800-841-2729 ext. 3094