



5-Week

Mental Health

Practice Guide

Strategies for Self-Care

Central Minnesota Mental Health Center is honored to partner with the Full-Service Community School Program at St. Cloud School District ISD 742 to bring you this **Self-Care Toolkit**. Taking care of your mental and emotional well-being is just as important as taking care of your physical health. With this guide, we're sharing simple self-care practices that you can try in your daily life. These are just suggestions—everyone is different, so it's important to find what works best for you. Whether it's relaxing, staying active, or finding ways to express yourself, self-care is all about making choices that help you feel your best!



Healthier Mental Health

Week 1

Understanding Mental Health

Mental health is just as important as physical health, but it can sometimes be more challenging to talk about. It's about how we feel, think, and act, and it affects everything we do, from our relationships with friends and family to how we handle stress or challenges in life. Understanding our emotions and knowing when we need help is an important part of growing up. Everyone has ups and downs and taking care of our mental health is a way of showing ourselves kindness and strength. Let's talk about how we can better understand and care for our minds!

DAY 1

Identifying Emotions

It's normal to experience a wide spectrum of emotions. Name three emotions you experienced today.



DAY 2

Understanding Triggers

Situations and experiences can sometimes bring up difficult emotions. What are coping skills you have used to help with these triggers?

DAY 3

Normalize Mental Health Conversations

Make sure that your friends know that they can talk about their feelings with you beyond just saying "I'm fine."

DAY 4

Thoughts have power

Write down 3 thoughts you often have about yourself. Are they kind, judgmental, positive or negative? Rewrite the negative to a positive.

DAY 5

It's okay not to be okay

When you are feeling sad, stressed or overwhelmed, remind yourself, "I'm having a rough day today, and that's okay."



DAY 6

Be kind to your mind

Be kind to your mind by giving it the same care you give your body. Name three tools you can use to help give your mind a break when feeling stressed out.

DAY 7

Learn more about mental health

Set aside some time to research mental health and what it is. Check out a podcast, read a book, find a YouTube Video, whatever works best for you! Here's a link to help you get started.



Just like taking care of our mental health is important, the way we talk to ourselves plays a big role in how we feel and handle challenges. Our inner voice can either lift us up or bring us down, shaping our confidence and emotions every day. Next week, let's explore how positive self-talk can help us feel stronger, more capable, and ready to take on anything!

Week 2

The Power of Positive Self-Talk

The way we talk to ourselves can make a big difference in how we feel and what we can achieve. Positive self-talk is like being your own cheerleader, encouraging yourself with kind and confident words. Instead of saying, "I can't do this," or "I'm not good enough," try saying, "I'll give it my best shot," or "I'm learning and getting better every day." When you choose to think positively, you can boost your mood, feel more confident, and face challenges with a stronger mindset. The words you use with yourself are powerful—so why not make them kind and encouraging?

DAY 8

Practice Self Compassion

Being kind to yourself can be challenging, especially when negative thoughts take over. If you make a mistake today, think about what you learned from the experience.

DAY 9

Challenge Negative Thoughts

When you catch yourself thinking about something in a negative way today, change it to make it sound more positive.

DAY 10

Focus on the moment

Use grounding techniques to get back to where you are right now. Here is an example of one technique: 5-4-3-2-1



DAY 11

Identify your power statements

Once you figure out your strengths and accomplishments, you can create a statement that describes you. "I am proud of my unique talents," or "I am resilient."

DAY 12

Whose voice is it?

Often the voice or thoughts we hear may not even be our own. Where does your inner voice come from? Social media, friends, parents, coaches.

DAY 13

One Lego at a time

For every positive thought or action about yourself, place a Lego in your masterpiece. For every negative thought about yourself, remove a Lego. Little positive thoughts day after day can create masterpieces.



DAY 14

Celebrate Small Wins

Create a reward system for yourself to celebrate small accomplishments and elevate your mood. Reward yourself for getting your house chores done by watching your favorite TV show. Here are some reward possibilities:



Just like the way you talk to yourself can shape your mindset, the way you take care of your body can influence how you feel mentally. Your physical health and mental well-being are closely connected, and making positive choices for your body can lead to a more positive state of mind. Next week, let's focus on how physical activities like sleep, meditation, and playing outside can help you feel more confident, focused, and ready to take on challenges.

Week 3

Physical Activity & Your Mental Health

Taking care of your body can significantly impact how you feel mentally! When you stay active, eat healthy foods, and get enough sleep, it's not just good for your muscles and energy—it helps your mind, too. Exercise, for example, can boost your mood and help you feel less stressed or worried. Eating well and resting can help you think more clearly and stay focused. When you feel good physically, your mind can feel stronger and more positive, so looking after your body is essential to feeling your best mentally, too!

DAY 15

Quality Sleep

Sleep quality is vital to our mental health as it improves mood, memory, and emotional resilience. Even power naps can boost focus and refresh the brain. Prioritize sleeping schedules.

DAY 16

Yoga & Meditation

Recenter your mind on healthier mental health by practicing yoga or meditating. Try this video to check out if yoga is for you:



DAY 17

Stress reducing activities

Find enjoyable activities to help in times of stress like walking, low impact sports, stretching, watching a funny video, doodling, using fidget toys, etc. Here is a mindfulness exercise to check out:



DAY 18

Play

Play influences well-being by providing emotional release, stress relief, and social connection. This can include role-playing, tag, dancing, group games, exploring - anything that creates laughter and fun.

DAY 19

Relaxation

It helps the brain and body reset, reduce stress, and improve emotional well-being. It is not about doing nothing, but an active way to reset and maintain mental health. Listen to music, color or draw, read a book or comic, or play with a pet. Find what works for you!

DAY 20

Move in nature

Spend time outdoors and enjoy the benefits and beauty of nature. Whether it's walking at a park or hiking trail, or just hanging out in your backyard, nature has a calming effect.

DAY 21

Explore your sense of adventure and try something new.

Live curiously. Experiment. Shake up your routine. Take up a new hobby or learn a new skill. Get out of your comfort zone. Pick an activity you've never experienced and do it.

Just as taking care of your body can strengthen your mind, building strong connections with others can also have a powerful impact on how you feel. Having supportive friendships can boost your mood, reduce stress, and make challenges feel more manageable. Next week, let's practice how surrounding yourself with positive relationships helps create a sense of belonging and confidence, reminding you that you're not alone in whatever you're facing.

Week 4

Building Social Connectivity

Making new friends and building strong connections with others can have a big impact on how we feel. When we have other people that we trust and can talk to, it helps us feel supported, less lonely, and more confident. Friendships give us a chance to share our thoughts, have fun, and feel understood. Whether it's hanging out, playing games, or just chatting, connecting with others can lift your mood and help you feel happier. Remember, building friendships takes time, but the positive effect they have on our mental health is totally worth it!

DAY 22

Write a letter to a loved one

There is something powerful about receiving mail from a loved one. Who is someone you haven't talked to in a while that you could send mail to?

DAY 23

Practicing Meaningful Connections

Be mindful of your body language. Hold a conversation without distractions. Put the phone down.

DAY 24

Be vulnerable

Share personal experiences relating to stress, anxiety or ways to cope with others who are struggling.

DAY 25

Practice active listening

Make sure that others feel heard and understood. Always give your full attention, make eye contact and ask questions.

DAY 26

Join

Try an activity you have always wanted to do, attend school events, or join that sports team you've been interested in. Is there a community class that sounds fun? Check it out!

DAY 27

Volunteer

There are so many opportunities out there - you can find an activity you are interested in and give back to the community at the same time. It's a Win-Win!

DAY 28

Reach Out

Connect with someone around you that may be lonely or is having a difficult time. Sometimes all it takes is another person reaching out to make a difference.

Just like friendships can boost our happiness and sense of connection, adopting an attitude of gratitude can also have a powerful impact on our well-being. When we take time to appreciate the good things in our lives—whether it's the support of friends, a kind gesture, or a small moment of joy—we cultivate a more positive and hopeful mindset. Through our final week, let's practice gratitude and how it helps us focus on what we have, rather than what we lack, making it easier to feel content and fulfilled.

Week 5

Attitude of Gratitude, Practicing Healthier Mental Health

Adopting an attitude of gratitude means taking time to notice and appreciate the good things in your life, big or small. Focusing on the positive, like your friends, family, or even just a sunny day, can help you feel happier and more hopeful. Gratitude can shift your mindset from what's missing to what's already great around you. It's a simple way to boost your mood, feel more content, and improve your mental health. The more you practice gratitude, the easier it gets to see the bright side of life!

DAY 29

Reflect on and practice gratitude on a regular basis.

Write thank you notes to people you know, track appreciation in a journal, or write a poem. Be sure to reflect on the positive aspects of your life regularly. Today, write down or talk with someone about three things you are grateful for.

DAY 30

Maintain Positivity.

Start your day by repeating phrases that reinforce self-worth and positivity. Use phrases such as "I am enough," "I am a kind and caring friend," or "I am proud of who I am." Use them throughout your day as you experience negative thoughts.

DAY 31

Strengthen Resilience.

By practicing the skills you have learned over the past few weeks, you can bounce back from tough times and keep a positive mindset. Resilience takes practice. Every time you keep going, you're building a stronger, more confident version of yourself!

DAY 32

Look for the bright side.

At the start of your day, take a quiet moment to think of one good thing in your life and write it down. It could be something simple, like a warm blanket or seeing your friends. Reflect on this throughout the day because starting with gratitude sets a positive tone for the day.

DAY 33

Enjoy the little things.

It can be so easy to get distracted by events taking place around us. When you can, take a break today and noticing things around you like the sound of a bird or the smell of your favorite food. These moments matter.

DAY 34

Practice saying thank you.

Take time to tell someone you appreciate them today, even for something small. A kind "thank you" or compliment can make both of you feel happier and more connected.

DAY 35

Integrate Mental Health Everywhere!

Taking care of your mental health is a journey, and having a self-care toolkit filled with positive strategies can make all the difference. By understanding mental health, using positive self-talk, staying active, building strong social connections, and practicing gratitude, you create a foundation for a healthier and more balanced mindset. Remember, small daily actions add up, and prioritizing your well-being will help you feel stronger, happier, and more resilient in the long run.

Week 1:

Understanding Mental Health

Mental health is just as important as physical health, but it can sometimes be more challenging to talk about. It's about how we feel, think, and act, and it affects everything we do, from our relationships with friends and family to how we handle stress or challenges in life. Understanding our emotions and knowing when we need help is an important part of growing up. Everyone has ups and downs and taking care of our mental health is a way of showing ourselves kindness and strength. Let's talk about how we can better understand and care for our minds!

Day 1: _____

Day 2: _____

Day 3: _____

Day 4: _____

Day 5: _____

Day 6: _____

Day 7: _____

Week 2:

The Power of Positive Self-Talk

The way we talk to ourselves can make a big difference in how we feel and what we can achieve. Positive self-talk is like being your own cheerleader, encouraging yourself with kind and confident words. Instead of saying, "I can't do this," or "I'm not good enough," try saying, "I'll give it my best shot," or "I'm learning and getting better every day." When you choose to think positively, you can boost your mood, feel more confident, and face challenges with a stronger mindset. The words you use with yourself are powerful—so why not make them kind and encouraging?

Day 8: _____

Day 9: _____

Day 10: _____

Day 11: _____

Day 12: _____

Day 13: _____

Day 14: _____

Week 3:

Physical Activity & Your Mental Health

Taking care of your body can significantly impact how you feel mentally! When you stay active, eat healthy foods, and get enough sleep, it's not just good for your muscles and energy—it helps your mind, too. Exercise, for example, can boost your mood and help you feel less stressed or worried. Eating well and resting can help you think more clearly and stay focused. When you feel good physically, your mind can feel stronger and more positive, so looking after your body is essential to feeling your best mentally, too!

Day 15: _____

Day 16: _____

Day 17: _____

Day 18: _____

Day 19: _____

Day 20: _____

Day 21: _____

Week 4:

Building Social Connectivity

Making new friends and building strong connections with others can have a big impact on how we feel. When we have other people that we trust and can talk to, it helps us feel supported, less lonely, and more confident. Friendships give us a chance to share our thoughts, have fun, and feel understood. Whether it's hanging out, playing games, or just chatting, connecting with others can lift your mood and help you feel happier. Remember, building friendships takes time, but the positive effect they have on our mental health is totally worth it!

Day 22: _____

Day 23: _____

Day 24: _____

Day 25: _____

Day 26: _____

Day 27: _____

Day 28: _____

Week 5:

Attitude of Gratitude, Practicing Healthier Mental Health

Adopting an attitude of gratitude means taking time to notice and appreciate the good things in your life, big or small. Focusing on the positive, like your friends, family, or even just a sunny day, can help you feel happier and more hopeful. Gratitude can shift your mindset from what's missing to what's already great around you. It's a simple way to boost your mood, feel more content, and improve your mental health. The more you practice gratitude, the easier it gets to see the bright side of life!

Day 29: _____

Day 30: _____

Day 31: _____

Day 32: _____

Day 33: _____

Day 34: _____

Day 35: _____
