

MENTAL FITNESS

WHAT IS MENTAL FITNESS?

MENTAL FITNESS is defined as a state of psychological well-being. It means having a positive sense of how we feel, think and act, which improves our ability to enjoy life.

Our mental fitness is improved when our needs for **competence, autonomy** and **relatedness** are met. When these needs are met, we are more likely to make healthy lifestyle choices that we can sustain over time.

These three basic psychological needs form one of the guiding principles of New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy. Creating environments that are supportive of these needs supports wellness for all individuals in all environments.

COMPETENCE

I have abilities, strengths and gifts that are recognized by myself and others. When I use them to meet goals and help others, I feel a sense of accomplishment and worth.

AUTONOMY

I have a voice and I am able to make decisions about things that are important to me and others. Others support me in my choices.

RELATEDNESS

I feel that I belong and have meaningful and caring relationships that support and encourage me. I also support and encourage others in spirit and action.

New Brunswick's
Wellness Strategy 2014-2021
www.gnb.ca/wellness

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP OTHERS IMPROVE THEIR MENTAL FITNESS?

- Ask others for help in solving problems; give them a voice in decision making
- Provide support
- Encourage expression of thoughts and feelings
- Show empathy
- Consider others' interests and preferences
- Give choices
- Be inclusive; get to know the people around you
- Teach new skills to others



MENTAL FITNESS

HOW DO YOU BUILD MENTAL FITNESS INTO A PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY?

A mental fitness approach can be used in your programs and activities as a guiding principle, like in New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy. It can be applied in the planning, development and delivery of your program or activity and will enhance participant engagement and increase the quality and success of your initiative.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS:

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

During the planning and development of the program or activity you can...

- Ask the following questions:
 - Does the program recognize the skills and strengths of participants? (C)
 - Does the program offer choice and a voice to participants? (A)
 - Does the program encourage positive relationships? (R)
- Consider the needs of the target audience (R)
- Demonstrate respect, acceptance and interest in the input of others (C,A,R)
- Invite the community and participants to share their skills and talents to strengthen and sustain the initiative (C)

PROGRAM/ACTIVITY DELIVERY

During the program or activity, the facilitator can...

- Plan activities with participants (C,A,R)
- Promote the development of new skills and knowledge and encourage the participants to practice and apply those skills outside the program (C)
- Provide opportunities for input or feedback (A)
- Consider the interests of the participants (A,R)
- Promote the success of the participants (C,R)
- Offer choices and the opportunity to make decisions (A)
- Acknowledge and celebrate skills and strengths (C,R)
- Encourage respect, inclusiveness and acceptance (R)

Three fundamental needs of mental fitness

C = Competence

A = Autonomy

R = Relatedness



MENTAL FITNESS PORTRAIT

PORTRAIT OF COMPETENCE

- I am able to use my strengths and talents constructively
- I have the feeling that I have accomplished something
- I feel efficient and capable
- I like challenges; they do not frighten me
- I am motivated and interested
- I persevere
- I make an effort when faced with a new task
- I am committed
- I feel like I am worth something
- I am optimistic
- I am proud of myself
- I believe in myself
- I have high self-esteem



PORTRAIT OF RELATEDNESS

- I like going to school/work; I feel like I belong there
- I have my place at school/work and in my community
- I have friends in my class/workplace/ community
- I am committed and get involved easily
- I like interacting with others
- I take part in a variety of activities (sports, art, etc.)
- I am enthusiastic
- I feel encouraged and supported by others
- I feel that I am liked and accepted
- I respect others
- I am respected
- I pay attention to others
- I help others
- I am authentic in my relationships with others



PORTRAIT OF AUTONOMY

- I am curious and interested in learning
- I agree to make an effort at work
- I put the necessary time into my learning
- I am motivated
- I feel free to make decisions
- I make choices that are important to me
- I accept responsibility for, and the consequences of, my choices
- I feel free to do, or not to do, certain things
- I can find solutions to certain problems
- I am responsible for my behaviour
- I respect myself
- I am respectful of others

