



CMHA Mental Health Week - Key Messages

- 1. The Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) annual Mental Health Week is May 4-10, 2020.**
 - Every May, people in Canadian communities, schools, workplaces and legislatures rally around CMHA Mental Health Week.
 - First marked by CMHA in 1951, 2020 marks the 69th annual Mental Health Week.
 - Mental Health Week helps to shift societal beliefs and perceptions about mental health. It helps promote behaviours and attitudes that foster well-being, support good mental health and create a culture of understanding and acceptance.
 - Mental Health Week is widely recognized on social media and in the news media and with local events like open houses and speakers' series. To respect physical distancing measures, these events will be celebrated virtually this year.
- 2. The theme of this year's Mental Health Week is social connection. Connecting with other people and our communities doesn't just feel good. It's good for our mental health.**
 - Research shows that social connection and social support are factors that protect and promote good mental health.
 - Feeling socially connected means you *feel* close and connected to others, and you don't have to be in physical proximity to nurture a sense of closeness and connection.
 - Social isolation and loneliness are bad for everyone's mental health.
- 3. It's common in our society to ask people how they are. Unfortunately, it's also common not to provide—or expect—a truthful answer.**
 - It's common in Canada to say we're fine, even when we don't really mean it.
 - Every time we just go through the motions, we miss a chance to connect with others in a meaningful way.
- 4. As we face the COVID-19 global pandemic, we need each other now more than ever. It's time to #GetReal about how we feel and lean on others for support.**
 - This Mental Health Week, let's say more than just "I'm fine." Let's have real conversations with our friends, neighbours and coworkers about how we're all really doing. We're in this together.
 - In these days of social distancing (more accurately called *physical* distancing), we are learning that we don't have to *be* close to *feel* close. We are together, even when we're apart.
 - Everyone needs emotional support at the best of times.

- It is precisely the time, during and in recovery from the pandemic, to lean on each other. Even if we can't be close physically with one another, we need to stay close emotionally.
- Phone calls, video calls and other digital technologies offer excellent opportunities for connecting face-to-face, even when we can't be in the same room.

5. **Get involved**

- Visit www.mentalhealthweek.ca for info and tools about CMHA Mental Health Week.
- Connect with us on social media using the hashtags #GetReal and #MentalHealthWeek.