



David Thompson Secondary | Spring/June 2022 Newsletter

www.dtcounselling.ca

Summer Is Almost Here!

The school year is coming to an end and the days are getting longer and warmer! Before the break, it is important we recognize how we successfully adapted to the many changes brought on by the pandemic. We successfully resumed face-to-face learning and the DT community received all the benefits of being together again. We did a great job adjusting to the semester system (each semester was five months long) where students were in four courses every day each semester. Students used FIT (Flexible Instructional Time) well. FIT occurs every Tuesday morning and Thursday afternoon, for about an hour, and gave students the chance to take responsibility for their learning and seek help from the teachers they needed to see. It was a year full of changes, but the DT community rose to the challenge; we showed our flexibility, dedication, humour, and resilience. We are looking forward to celebrating the grads of 2022 and the accomplishments of all the students at DT. ***A reminder for families that the last day of formal classes is June 27th. June 28th – 29th are Incomplete Days for students to make up missed work/tests. Report cards will be posted on June 28th on My Ed BC.***



Summer School

Summer School (summer.vsb.bc.ca) is a great way for students to do a variety of classes outside of the regular school year.

Students and families rely on summer school for a variety of reasons: taking Review/Remedial courses in order to pass classes they were not successful in during the regular school year; taking Preview classes to see what is to come at the next grade level; taking Completion courses to advance in subject areas. Summer learning is compressed (a few hours per day for 4 to 5 weeks); it is an intense way of learning that requires a lot of responsibility and accountability. Expect a few hours of homework per day per class.



Summer Activities

- Hikes
- Exploring new/different neighborhoods
- Take public transit to visit attractions
- Be a tourist in your own city

Summer Learning

- Go to a public library and take out a book, commit to reading 20-30 minutes everyday
- Try a new sport/hobby and see how it feels
- Meet new people by volunteering, finding a job

Summer Goals

- What is something that is important to you to work on for yourself?
- Reflect on your past school year - what went well, what did not go well, what can you change?

SCREEN TIME REGULATION/RESOURCES:



The 4 M's: Minimize, Mitigate, Be Mindful, Model

- 1. Minimize Screen Time** – at the adolescent age where so much of a teen's life surrounds a screen such as homework, tutorial videos and socialization, simply minimizing screen time may not be possible. However, a family can be involved in balancing screen time with other healthy activities such as exercising, outdoor time, in person gatherings with family and friends, chores, and having quality family time together
- 2. Mitigate the Potential Negative Effects of Screen Time**
 - Prioritize educational and age-appropriate online activities
 - Be curious with your teens and ask them what they are watching. If possible, use screens in the presence of a family member and limit private use of screen time in their room as this can lead to unknown internet uses
- 3. Be Mindful of all Screen Use in the Home**
 - Turn off screens when they are not being used, avoid the TV on as "background noise"
 - Too much screen time can lead to lost opportunities for teaching and learning
 - Eating meals together without technology at the table
- 4. Model positive habits**
 - Be aware of how adults are using screens as this can
 - Consider developing a family media plan (<https://caringforkids.cps.ca/>)
 - Watching family programming together to increase time together and encourage conversation

[How to Help Youth with Video Game Addiction Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute \(ctrinstitute.com\)](https://ctrinstitute.com)

PARENTS' CORNER

What To Say to Kids (and Teens) When Nothing Seems to Work – FAMILY SMART

A series of videos, featuring Dr. Ashley Miller, is available for you to watch with your child. The purpose of the videos is to provide you with effective strategies to help your child and you weather difficult moments in a way that strengthens resilience and relationships.

Dr. Ashley Miller is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Family Therapist and Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of British Columbia. The videos will be followed by a discussion facilitated by a FamilySmart Parent Peer Support Worker.

Sessions will be held:

Wednesday June 1 at 6:30 PM

Tuesday June 7 at 5:00 PM

Thursday June 9 at 12:00 PM

Monday June 13 at 6:30 PM

Thursday June 16 at 5:00 PM

[Register for free](#)

[Monthly Events - FamilySmart.ca/monthly-events/](https://familysmart.ca/monthly-events/)

One on One Support

Parent Peer Support Workers are available for 1-to-1 parent peer support for families who have a child struggling with their mental health or substance use. Simply email them. Service providers can also, with a family's consent, [refer to us with this link](#).

MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS :



Mental health is something that should not be taken lightly. It is crucial to identify declining mental health and to know what to do if it is. The summer is approaching, and this is when a teen's mental health can be impacted the most due to change in routine and unsupervised time. During the summer months, while many students will be busy with summer jobs, activities, camps, social time with friends and family, many students may also have a lot of unfilled-time on their hands, and this can be depressing if they do not have anything to busy themselves with.

Some signs of a declining mental health can be feeling irritated, having difficulties falling asleep, feeling guilty, disconnected, or isolated from other people. More signs are lack of communication with other people, noticeable changes in weight and appetite, and problems focusing. Causes of mental health problems can originate from the following: child abuse or trauma, neglect, isolation from human interactions, feelings of loneliness (as well as being alone a lot), and lack of connection. This can also mean usually not being able to communicate with others due to the lack of social skills from being lonely for a prolonged period of time.

There are various signs of a declining mental health but some signs that are more noticeable to the human body that you would notice yourself would be: feeling excessively sad and down for a reason or no reason. Other signs may be an extreme change in mood and withdrawal from human interactions and feeling very tired and exhausted (no matter how much sleep you got, truly little to more than enough) and little to no motivation in previously enjoyed activities.

If you experience or notice any of these signs or have gone through the causes of declining mental health, please do not hesitate to seek help. The Kids Help Phone is available 24 hours a day @ +1 800-668-6868. The Kids Help Phone also has a website that is open to everyone, and you can call and chat anonymously and talk to a certified counsellor. They also have online resources and touch on more about mental health. You can find their website by searching: kidshelpphone.ca

When your mental health is declining you can contact online websites that are available to chat 24 hours a day, the Kids Help Phone is a great resource! You can also talk to a trusted adult, family member, or friend. If you prefer not to talk about your problems about your mental health, try to come to terms with how your mental health is being affected and take a break and give yourself some space. Try doing things you enjoy and coming to terms with what is bothering you and what you can do to make yourself feel better. Some examples of self-care would be going for a walk, being involved in the outdoors more, playing more sports, talking to other people in the community, reading books, volunteer work, or helping other people out around you.

Some resources you can turn to:

<https://kidshelpphone.ca/> <— Available to assist you whenever you need to talk to a counsellor

<https://foundrybc.ca/> <— Offers help for young people of the ages of 12-24. They provide health and wellness resources, services, and support. They can be contacted online, and they have service centres you can visit

<https://qmunity.ca/> <— Provides personal support for queer, trans, and two-spirit people (of all ages)

<https://www.betterhelp.com/> <— Talk to Licensed Professional Counsellors that are available anytime, wherever you are

We are here for you!

Theresa Lopetrone – tlopetrone@vsb.bc.ca

[Grade 12's and 8's last name A-H](#)

Raymond Moy – rmoy@vsb.bc.ca

[Grade 11's and 8's last name I-M](#)

Stephanie Tsui – satsui@vsb.bc.ca

[Grade 10's and 8's last name U-Z](#)

Rupy Dhaliwal – rdhaliwal@vsb.bc.ca

[Grade 9's and 8's last name N-T](#)