

# HAPPY SPRING TDSB!

This spring, the Hearts & Minds newsletter turns 4 years old! We started this newsletter in order to share our passion for neurodiversity, mental wellness, and the positive impact research and psychology can have on learning. We have aimed to provide useful and interesting information to our school communities since May 2020.

We hope our newsletter continues to inform and reach out to all the caregivers, families, students and staff that make TDSB a place to learn and grow.

## READ, ENJOY & SHARE!



**Want more tips?**  
Visit [TDSB Psychological Services website](https://www.tdsb.org/tdsb/Pages/psychological-services.aspx) for more!

## SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Providing unique learning and mental health services to school communities.



STRESS



Enhancing our Future -  
Canadian Students  
[cpa.ca/sections/educational](https://cpa.ca/sections/educational)

### **Psych Tip: Try This!**

If you have trouble remembering someone's name when you first meet them...try using **mnemonic strategies**

(pronounced 'nu-mon-ick')! One way is called the 'keyword method': Picture in your mind a visual image/keyword that reminds you of the person's first name. For example, when meeting 'Mike', picture him holding a microphone! **Mnemonics are evidence-based strategies** proven to help you learn new information more easily. Click these [video & article links](#) to learn more!



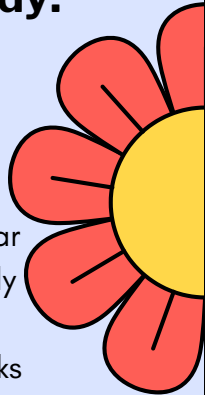
# STUDY TIPS

## TO PREPARE FOR HIGH SCHOOL EXAMS

By: Sumbel Malik, M.Psy.

### Have an Agenda Handy.

An agenda (either digital or physical) is helpful when it comes to organizing your tasks. Write down the names of classes you have each day, any extra-curricular activities you are involved in, family commitments, etc. You can incorporate study time in the blocks of time you see on your agenda.



### Study in Small 'Chunks'.

Studying too much information at once can be overwhelming. It is important to break down the material into chunks (small, manageable parts) so that your brain has more time to absorb the information. The 'pomodoro technique' is a widely used strategy that helps increase focus when studying. It involves breaking your study sessions down into timed, 25 minute chunks with a 5 minute break in between each session to stretch, check your phone, or grab a drink or snack.

### Don't Forget to Recharge.

It is important to give yourself breaks, time to relax, and time to recharge your brain. Keeping yourself motivated through praise, positive reinforcement, or even tangible rewards is a great idea.



### Take Meaningful Notes.

During class lessons, take detailed notes on important points. Try to review your notes before class so that the lessons can connect with new information you learn. Use highlighters for key points and use sticky notes to write down any questions you may have.

### Be Prepared.

It is helpful to read the material before class so that you can understand the material in an in-depth manner. This will be helpful especially during class lessons. When the teacher is teaching the same material, you will be able to make connections and learn in a comprehensive manner. When it comes time to studying, you will already have much of the information down in your head and that will help make studying easier.





# Emotional Intelligence

## A complement to the IQ



By: Afroze Anjum, Psy.D, C.Psych

Both the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) serve distinct yet crucial roles in an individual's success and overall well-being. While IQ can often be an important contributing factor to academic achievement, EI is the cornerstone of successful interpersonal relationships and personal contentment.

EI can be defined as how “smart” we are about feelings - The ability to understand our own and others' emotions, and the ability to be socially aware, regulate our emotions, and stay motivated amidst challenges. Individuals with a high degree of EI demonstrate enhanced focus, memory retention, decision-making capability, communication skills, teamwork, and improved ability to cope with stress, as outlined in this article on [Emotional Intelligence](#).



The good news about EI is that it isn't set - students can develop it over time! The journey toward high EI begins with teaching students to be aware of and acknowledge their own feelings. This can be a complex task in today's fast-paced world, yet ignoring our emotions can lead to avoidance and difficulty coping with stress or frustration.

How can we help our students grow their EI? One way is by developing a rich vocabulary that can be used to describe emotions. Label and discuss feeling words in real time, or when reading books or watching TV with your child. Teach students to differentiate between subtle feelings (rage vs. annoyed, grief vs. disappointed), which can promote clear communication and emotional awareness. Check out this [link](#) for more info!



Once students are aware of their emotions, expressing them in a helpful way is the next step. Constructive emotional expression can be learned through modelling, creating social narratives, co-regulating with trusted people, and practising often. For example, praise your child if they ask for help from dad when they are frustrated with homework. If your child instead rips up their homework in frustration, demonstrate more constructive expression or discuss some different strategies your child can use next time they are frustrated.

Remember, students learn best by watching the way trusted adults deal with feelings. If you model how to handle emotions in a constructive way, then students will follow!

It is also important to recognize that individuals may respond to the same event with different emotions. For example, an event may evoke sadness in John, anger in Ayesha, fear in Raheem, and caution in Sandra. This variation is due to the way each student explains the event to themselves. Witnessing and learning about different emotional experiences (“putting yourself in someone else's shoes”) can lead to embracing diversity and collaboration.

A key component of EI is validation, a skill that fosters empathy and pro-social skills. Validation is when we recognize the sharer's feelings and communicate understanding or support, via phrases such as: “I understand”, “I'm here for you”, “This must be really hard for you”, “You are so brave for doing that!”. This act of empathy facilitates problem-solving, guiding us to use emotions as indicators rather than dictators of our actions, because the sharer feels heard.

# TDSB COMMUNITY

# CORNER

## Virtual Drop-in Hours

OPEN TO ALL TDSB PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND CAREGIVERS!

Join our Virtual Drop-ins  
on Google Meet

Wednesdays\* 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

[www.tdsb.on.ca/virtualsupport](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/virtualsupport)

\*Check website for specific dates offered

Connect with Professional Support Staff to explore ideas related to your child's mental health & wellbeing, including students with Special Education & Complex Needs



**NEW**

## Mental Health & Well-Being Resources

**Addressing Inappropriate Social Media**



**Substance Use, Misuse & Abuse Resources**



**Anti-Sex Trafficking Resources**



**Affinity Wellness & Identity Affirming Resources**

