



Happy Holidays, Stigma-Free Community!

This season is one of celebration and connection with loved ones, but we at Stigma-Free recognize that it can also bring unique stressors and challenges. To support you during this time of year, we're sharing brand-new mental health tools and events for parents/guardians, caregivers, and rural residents. We invite you to take a moment to prioritize your well-being and make use of our accessible, no-cost resources. There is something for everyone!

Inside This Newsletter

- [New Resources for Caregivers](#): Building Resilience, Preventing Burnout, and Promoting Emotional Well-Being
- Stigma-Free Tips: [Navigating Mental Health During the Holidays](#)
- Event Recap: [Highlights from the 2024 Mental Health and Addictions Symposium](#) in Prince George
- Tune In to Our Insightful Conversations: [Dr. Shimi Kang](#), [Debby DeSpain](#), and [Maria Estrada](#)!



NEW!

**Resources for Caregivers
Now Available:
Get Instant Access at No Cost**

**STIGMA-FREE
MENTAL HEALTH**
AWARENESS UNDERSTANDING ACCEPTANCE

New Resources for Caregivers Now Available:

Get Instant Access at No Cost

We are thrilled to introduce the new caregiver resources available on our Student Mental Health Toolkit! At Stigma-Free Mental Health, we believe that supporting

caregivers is equally as important as supporting the youth they care for.

Caregivers, we recognize the sacrifices you make and the effort you put into helping others. We are here to help you succeed in this vital role while also maintaining your own well-being. Browse our no-cost resources, specifically designed for those who are caring for youth facing mental health challenges.

Featured Resources for Caregivers:

- [**Self-Evaluation: Caregiving Burnout**](#)

While caregiving can be a wonderful and rewarding experience, it may also feel exhausting at times. This interactive tool helps caregivers assess their emotional well-being, coping strategies, daily functioning, motivation, and other key aspects of caregiving. The self-evaluation is not a diagnostic tool, but a resource to assist caregivers in recognizing and addressing burnout.

- [**Promoting Emotional Well-Being for Both Caregivers and Youth**](#)

This downloadable resource offers practical strategies to foster resilience in both caregivers and children, from self-care activities to emotional regulation.

- [**Caring for Your Child's Mental Health: A Guide for Caregivers**](#)

This guide offers tips for caregivers to support their child's mental well-being, helping you feel better equipped and confident in your role.

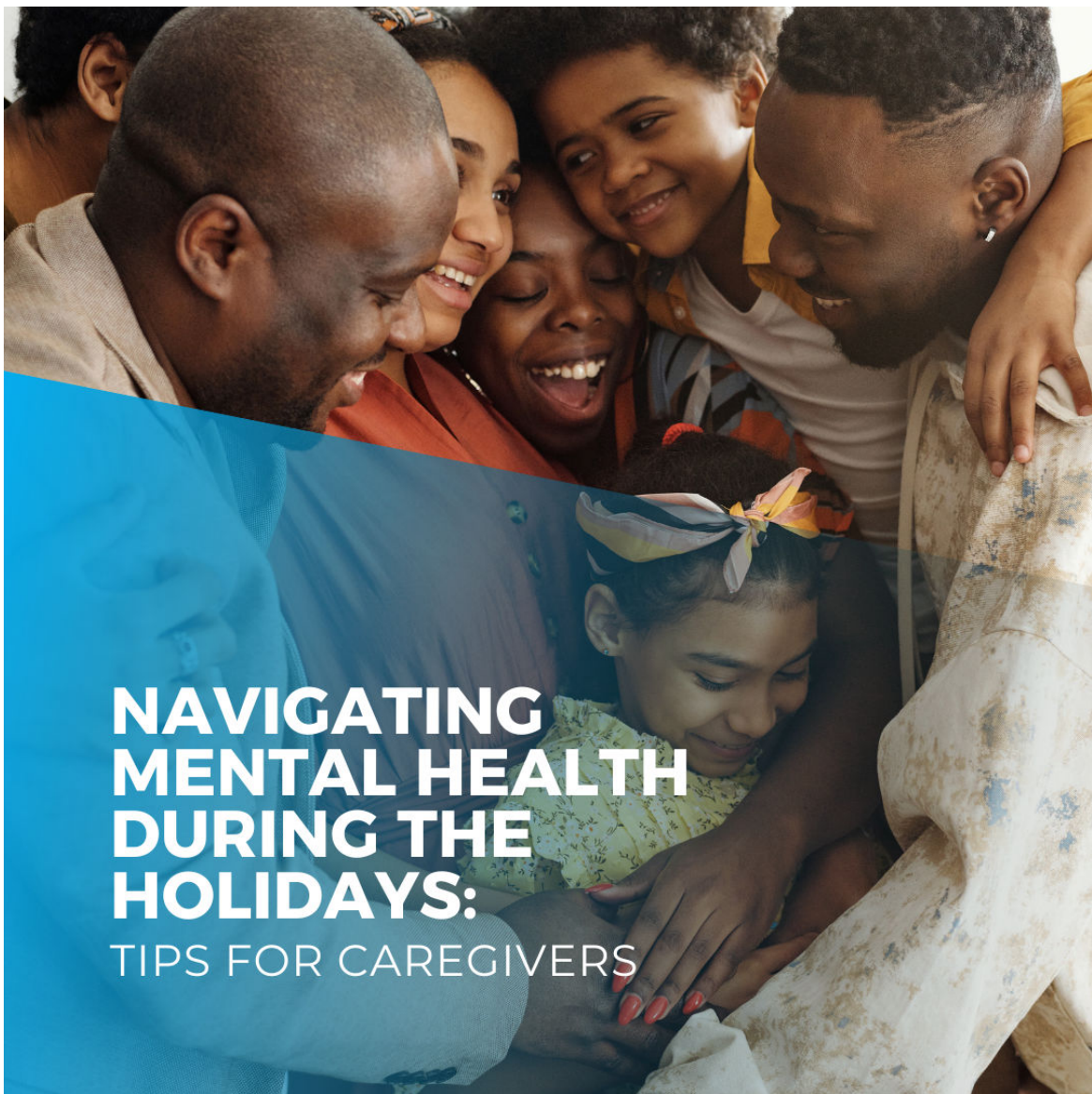
- [**Building Resilience and Avoiding Burnout**](#)

Learn how to manage stress, develop healthy coping mechanisms, prevent burnout, and build your personal resilience. This resource provides you with guidance on balancing caregiving with self-care to support your mental health.

Access these resources now and share them with the caregivers in your life:

[**Resources for Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers**](#)

*A special thank you to the [**Petro-Canada CareMakers Foundation**](#), whose generous support made these resources possible.*



NAVIGATING MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE HOLIDAYS: TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

The holidays can sometimes be difficult for caregivers who are supporting loved ones facing mental health challenges. If you're feeling overwhelmed right now, know that you're not alone. Our blog post [Navigating Mental Wellness During the Holidays](#) provides tips for staying grounded during this busy season:

- **Practice Self-Compassion.** Remind yourself that it's okay if you don't feel joyful during this time. Acknowledge your emotions and reach out for help if you need it.
- **Find Balance.** As a caregiver, it's natural to want to make the holidays special for your child or family, but it's important to prioritize your own mental health as well. Give yourself permission to pause and rest when needed.
- **Discuss Your Holiday Plans.** It may be helpful to talk about holiday plans with youth in your care and start a conversation about their comfort level and needs. This can help you maintain regular routines that support their mental health, identify stressors, and create a more enjoyable experience for everyone.

For more information, check out our no-cost resources on [Talking to Your Child About Mental Health](#). Plus, [read our blog](#) for more tips and suggested resources to support caregivers, rural residents, and school staff during the holiday season.



Last month, Andrea Paquette, President and Co-Founder of SFMHS and Mike Skrypnik, [Rural Minds Matter](#) Campaign Lead, spoke at the [NCLGA Mental Health and Addictions Symposium](#), B.C. They took the stage in front of over 200 people, including elected officials from across Northern B.C. and professionals in the mental health and addiction sectors.

Mike and Andrea also had the opportunity to discuss our charity's programs within community organizations, gathering valuable feedback, allies and champions to help extend the campaign's reach and inform our strategic approach moving forward. Attendees expressed a strong need for peer leadership and support group structures in their communities, which is a core focus of our [Rural Peer](#)

[Support Fundamentals Training](#). Our team deeply appreciated these conversations as they sparked fresh ideas to enhance our training.

The symposium facilitated new connections and reinforced the growing demand for our services. We are committed to addressing these needs and expanding our resources for those facing mental health challenges and addiction.

Thank you to our Rural Resilience Champions, The Prince George Airport Authority, Stantec, and Smith Fluid Systems as well as North Central Local Government Association, the Lheidli T'enneh, the City of Prince George and the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George for hosting this impactful event!



Over the past month, we've had the privilege of hosting some incredible live events featuring experts and thought leaders in mental health advocacy. If you missed these sessions, you can still watch the recordings below and take advantage of the valuable insights shared!

Dr. Shimi Kang: Parents and Youth Mental Health

Dr. Shimi Kang, Harvard-trained psychiatrist and award-winning author, joined Andrea on November 18th to share her insights into how caregivers can support youth mental health. She shared about caregiver self-care and offering strategies for caregivers to encourage healthy habits that serve and support children's emotional well-being. Dr. Kang also shared her tips for managing guilt as a parent, as well as the importance of play, social connection, and rest for youth.

Caregivers, join the conversation to learn about these topics and more!

[Watch the Full Event Here](#)

Mindfulness with Debby DeSpain, Co-Founder of the Mindful Key Organization

On November 26th, Debby DeSpain, Certified Mindfulness Meditation Facilitator, spoke to Andrea about mindfulness strategies for those living in rural and agricultural communities. Drawing from her own experiences on her family farm, Debby shared tips for incorporating mindfulness into daily life, even during high-stress times. She highlighted the power of simple practices, like taking a five-minute pause to reset, and discussed the connection between physical and mental health.

[Watch the Full Event Here](#)

Instagram Live: Supporting Caregivers with Maria Estrada

Maria Estrada, Youth Program Manager at [Unsinkable](#), collaborated with us for an Instagram Live on December 2nd. She shared about the role that Unsinkable plays in supporting mental wellness and the organization's focus on storytelling and peer support. Her and Andrea also had an important conversation about supporting caregivers of individuals living with mental illness. Learn more about Unsinkable's amazing programs and the role of storytelling in mental health advocacy:

[Watch the Instagram Live Replay](#)

Events like these are part of our commitment to mental health education and bringing diverse perspectives to our audience. We encourage you to watch, share, and continue the conversation within your community.

Stay tuned for future events!



Your donations make it happen

[Find out how your gift can make a difference today.](#)

Nothing is possible without your support. The no-cost [Virtual Stigma-Free Presentations](#), [Educator Professional Development Sessions](#), our renowned toolkits for both [schools](#) and [rural](#) and remote communities, and the upcoming expansion of our training and support initiatives for student and community peer leaders are all supported through donations, sponsorships and grants.

Donating to promote acceptance, raise awareness, and foster understanding of stigma and mental health is simple and creates immediate, tangible impact. Stigma-Free Mental Health Society is pleased to also announce that you can now donate a gift of securities.

[Find out how your gift can make a difference today.](#)



Thank you for being Stigma-Free

As 2024 comes to a close, we want to take a moment to thank you for being part of our mission to reduce stigma and increase mental health awareness. Your support fuels the work we do and helps connect people with the resources they need.

Questions about our programs? We'd love to hear from you! Reply to this email or fill out our [contact form](#).

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season,
Andrea Paquette, President, SFMHS and the Stigma-Free Team



Copyright © 2024 Stigma-Free Mental Health Society, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [unsubscribe from this list](#).