



## Riding the Feelings Wave FACT SHEET

It is important to help children and teenagers explore different ways of coping with distressing emotions.

You can encourage your child to use some of these coping strategies when feelings are strong.

- > **There are many types of feelings.**
- > **All types of feelings are OK.**
- > **Some feelings can be difficult or unpleasant such as anger, anxiety, guilt, sadness and disappointment.**
- > **There are a lot of useful ways to respond to these feelings.**

### young kids

- > Breathing, slowly and deeply.
- > Snuggling a toy or a pet.
- > Having a back rub.
- > Getting a drink of cool water.
- > Imagining a beautiful place where they feel calm and relaxed.
- > Encouraging conversation: create a feelings journal, where they draw or cut out pictures to explain how they are feeling.

### older kids

- > Playing a sport or other physical activity.
- > Journalling/blogging.
- > Drawing, playing music, painting or some other creative outlet.
- > Telling someone how they feel – parents, friends, another trusted adult.
- > Having a nice, relaxing shower or bath.
- > Listening to music: create a playlist that helps them to relax.

### mindful activity

**Here's a mindful activity that may also help.**

- > Sit quietly in your chair or alternative position. Put your hands in your lap and keep them still. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath through your nose, hold it for a moment and breathe out through your mouth. Relax your jaw and continue to breathe in and out through your nose.
- > Imagine you are a dolphin swimming in the river. The water is crystal clear and you can see for miles. There are fish swimming near you, and you can see them darting in and out of the coral reef close to where you are swimming.
- > Be aware of your feet, and imagine them strapped together and guiding you through the water like a dolphin's tail. Feel the water move past your feet and wiggle your toes to change direction as you swim in and out of the gaps in the reef.
- > Now come to a stop and float in the water. Listen to any sounds around you. Stay in this position for a few moments, listening to the sounds of the river. Feel the water all around your skin, holding you steady and safe.