eMentalHealth.ca

Looking for a Mental Health App or Website?

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Summary: Problems with stress and mental health are unfortunately common in modern society. While many people could benefit from seeing a mental health professional, such as help is not always readily accessible. Fortunately, there is increasing evidence that e-MentalHealth interventions may be helpful for mental health, which includes apps and websites.

D’s Story

D. is a young adult having problems with stress and anxiety. Unfortunately, she lives in a rural area, and there is no easy access to a mental health professional. She does an internet search on online help, but is overwhelmed by the number of websites that pop up. She decides to see her family physician to asks what apps she might recommend...

Apps

There is a growing number of apps for mental health but it can be challenging to know which ones are reputable, safe and effective. Only a tiny percentage are associated with credible healthcare organizations. On one hand, there are good apps that may be helpful. On the other hand, there are some apps which may be a waste of time and money, and worse, perhaps even harmful.

Apps for Mental Health by Publicly Funded Organizations

Description	Issues Addressed	Age	Languages	Cost
Always There By Kids Help Phone Allows you to chat with or call Kids Help Phone. Android Store https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.speakfeel.khp_en&hl=en_CA iOS https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/always-there/id579718991	Mental Health	Children/youth	English French	Free
Be Safe By MindYourMind, a publicly funded service in Ontario. Allows you to create a digital safety plan; learn about mental health and addiction resources in Ontario; create a personal ‘get help script’ that helps you find the words to reach out and empower yourself. www.BeSafeApp.ca	Mental health	Youth and young adults	English French	Free

BoosterBuddy Mobile App By Island Health Authority, British Columbia BoosterBuddy is a free app designed to help teens and young adults improve their mental health. Manage your personal wellness journey and earn achievements as your sidekick guides you through a series of daily quests designed to establish and sustain positive habits. http://www.viha.ca/cyf_mental_health/boosterbuddy.html	Mental health and wellness in general	Youth/young adults	English	Free
Calm Harm App developed to help with teenage mental health using principles of dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT). Endorsed by the National Health Service (NHS) in their digital app library. https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/	Mental health and wellness in general	Youth	English	Free
HealthyMinds App By the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre Problem-solving tool to help youth and young adults deal with emotions and cope with the stresses you encounter both on and off campus. iOS, Android http://healthymindsapp.ca	Coping with stress for students	Youth/young adults	English French	Free
iSMART By the Centre for Studies on Human Stress (CSHS) at the University of Montreal. Digital tool for helping better understand how you respond to stress and learn how to prevent and cope with stress. iOS, Android https://centreaxel.com/en/projects/ismart-en/	Stress	Young adults and adults	English French	Free
MindShift By Anxiety Canada. For coping with anxiety -- breathing exercises, a symptom checker to help rate your current anxiety, and steps to get you through difficult episodes or situations. https://www.anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt/	Anxiety, sleep problems	Youth/ young adults	English French	Free
mood. (spelled "mood.") By MindYourMind Helps track daily mood and sleep patterns. https://mindyourmind.ca/tools/mood-mindyourmind	Mood, sleep	Child/Youth	English	Free
Moodie In partnership with the Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC). Tracks food intake, sleep, physical activity, and self-care; while motivating users to care about their mental and physical health. Designed to complement other mental health services -- users can give permission for professional to view their mental health tracking data. https://feelingmoodie.com	Mood tracking, mental health care, portal for professionals	Youth/Adults	English	Free
Daylio App Makes it easy to track moods and encourage healthy activities Chaudry, 2016 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5344152/	Mood tracking	Youth / Adults	English	Free
SAM (Self-Help Anxiety Management) By researchers at the University of West England. Helps users with multimedia activities and mini-games. It also includes peer social support. https://sam-app.org.uk/	Monitor and manage panic attacks and anxiety	Youth / Adults	English	Free

Apps for Addiction

Description	Issues Addressed	Age	Language	Cost
Saying When App By the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to cutting down or quitting alcohol. https://www.camh.ca/en/camh-ne...	Alcohol Use	Adults	English	Free

Breaking Free from Substance Use Online program along with companion app to help with substance use and recovery. https://www.breakingfreeonline...	Substance Use	Adults	English French	Free

Mental Health Apps by Commercial Companies

Description	Issues Addressed	Age	Language	Cost
Headspace Highly rated app that introduces the basics of mindfulness and meditation with the "Take 10 Free Trial". www.headspace.com	Mindfulness, anxiety, sleep	Youth / adults	English French	Free trial
Calm Awarded Apple's "App of the Year" in 2017. Designed to reduce anxiety, improve sleep, and help you to feel happier. Calm focuses on the four key areas of meditation, breathing, sleep, and relaxation, with the aim of bringing joy, clarity, and peace to your daily life. www.calm.com	Anxiety, sleep	Youth / adults	English French	Free
Sanvello Formerly known as Pacifica, Sanvello helps with anxiety and stress through various techniques, along with a supportive community. https://www.sanvello.com/	Anxiety, stress	Youth / adults	English French	Free and premium versions
Happify Happify is a space to overcome negative thoughts and stress and build resilience. Whether you are feeling stressed, anxious, or sad, Happify helps you to regain control of your thoughts and feelings. https://happify.com/	Stressed, anxious or sad	Youth / adults	English French	

eTherapy Websites

These are websites that provide (self-guided) eTherapy.

Mood Problems (e.g. Depression), Anxiety, Stress, PTSD

Description	Issues	Age	Language	Cost
MoodGym Online CBT for persons 16 years and older Developer: Australian National University https://moodgym.com.au/	Mild to moderate anxiety disorders or depression.	Age 16+	English	$39 AUD / year (as of Jan 2019) (Previously free)
eCouch e-couch is a self-help interactive program. Evidence-based information and teaches strategies drawn from cognitive, behavioural and interpersonal therapies as well as relaxation and physical activity. Developer: Australian National University https://ecouch.anu.edu.au/welcome	Depression, generalised anxiety and worry, social anxiety, relationship breakdown, loss, grief.	Age 16+	English	Free
Cope 2 Thrive Online CBT for youth http://www.cope2thrive.com/		Youth	English	Yes

Depression Center Online therapy for depression; you can complete a depression quiz and you will be able to print the results to show your doctor. http://www.depressioncenter.net/	Depression	Adults	English	Free
OnTrack Depression Online therapy for depression, which aims to help you recover from depression. You will be able to write down your moods and thoughts in a diary and graphs will show you how you are doing over time. http://www.ontrack.org.au	Depression	Adults	English	Free
The Journal Online programme that can teach you skills to manage depression. Online modules based on cognitive behavioural therapy will teach you how to make behavioural and lifestyle changes to help manage your depression. www.Depression.org.nz	Depression	Adults	English	Free
Moodkit Over 200 mood improving activities and thought modulation strategies Healthline Best Apps for Depression 2017 www.thriveport.com/products/moodkit	Mood problems	Adults	English	International
PTSD Coach Canada Veterans Affairs Canada with education plus CBT techniques www.veterans.gc.ca/	PTSD	Adults	English French	International
MindMaster from CHEO English/French -- For adults (parents or professionals) to use with their children aged 4-9 year olds to master emotional regulation through relaxation, positive thinking and mindfulness. Consists of a guidebook for adults, videos and audio tracks to do with the child. https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/iecmh.aspx#Mindmasters-2	Stress, mild problems with anxiety and sadness	Children,youth,caregivers	English French	International Free to download
Pain Squad By Hospital for Sick Children to help children with cancer pain www.sickkids.ca	Cancer pain	Children	English	International

Apps for Sleep Problems (Publicly-funded)

Description	Age	Cost
CBT-i Coach By the US Department of Veterans Affairs. For people who are engaged in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia with a health provider, or who have experienced symptoms of insomnia and would like to improve their sleep habits. The app will guide users through the process of learning about sleep, developing positive sleep routines, and improving their sleep environments. It provides a structured program that teaches strategies proven to improve sleep and help alleviate symptoms of insomnia. https://mobile.va.gov/app/cbt-i-coach	Adults	Free
Doze By the Sleep and Depression Laboratory at the Toronto Metropolitan University (previously Ryerson University), with funding from the CIHR. Doze aims to give young people effective tools to sleep better and feel better during the day. https://www.dozeapp.ca/	Young People	Free
Better Nights Better Days By a team at Dalhousie University, funded by a CIHR grant. Online program from Dalhousie University to help children who are having sleep problems, offered as part of a clinical trial. Families can sign up and see if they qualify for treatment under the program. http://betternightsbetterdays.ca/about-program	Children up to aged 10	Free

Website for Eating Disorders

Description	Age	Cost
CanPed By the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) For parents of children/youth (aged 9-18) who may be suffering from an eating disorder http://www.canped.ca	Age 9-18	Free

Looking for More Apps? App Review Websites

To learn about apps for mental health, consider the following websites which have reputable reviews of apps:

- Practical Apps, a website of the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN). Apps are reviewed by a team of experts.
  https://practicalapps.ca/
- iMedicalApps.com, an online publication with a team including physician editors that provides reviews of mobile and health care apps.
  https://www.imedicalapps.com
- Psyberguide, a non-profit website dedicated to consumers seeking to make responsible and informed decisions about computer and device-assisted therapies for mental illnesses. A project of One Mind Institute.
  http://psyberguide.org/
- The National Health Service in the UK has a library of recommended apps for mental health
  https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/filter/?categories=Mental%20health

References

David Gratzer and Faiza Khalid-Khan, Internet-delivered cognitive behavioural therapy in the treatment of psychiatric illness. CMAJ March 01, 2016 188 (4) 263-272; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.150007
http://www.cmaj.ca/content/188/4/263

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Disclaimer

Information in this article are offered ‘as is' and is meant only to provide general information that supplements, but does not replace the information from your health provider. Always contact a qualified health professional for further information in your specific situation or circumstance.

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