



# Take a Day Time Break to Support Your Child's Mental Wellness

## DEAR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS,

When a child has a physical illness, we know what to do. But navigating mental health concerns can be more challenging. Unlike most physical illnesses, there are no blood tests, imaging scans, or other objective measures to detect most mental illnesses. Sometimes warning signs can even be mistaken for typical developmental changes.

To help you and your child become more informed about mental health, the **On Our Sleeves**® movement to transform children's mental health has teamed with the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired to create an in-school mental health wellness program called *Take a Day Time Break*. The program aims to correct misunderstandings about mental health conditions, and provides students with some practical strategies to build empathy and improve self-care.

Backed by the experts at **Nationwide Children's Hospital**, *On Our Sleeves* aims to break the silence and stigma surrounding children's mental health. We know that one in five children is living with a mental health condition that interferes with everyday life, and that half of all lifetime mental health conditions start by age 14. Kids don't wear their thoughts on their sleeves, but when they are struggling, they need support. Therefore, it's important that parents and caregivers build awareness about mental health.

## Conversation Starters

Helping children talk about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences can provide a safe opportunity for them to work through things they are having a hard time handling or that are upsetting them. Below are some "convo starters" the *On Our Sleeves* team has created to help you discuss everyday thoughts and feelings with your child. Try out a few. You might be surprised by your child's willingness to open up when they know they're supported!

- ▶ When you feel sad, what do you think about to help yourself feel happy again?
- ▶ Tell me three words to describe yourself.
- ▶ What makes you angry? What helps you to feel less angry?
- ▶ How has someone been kind to you today? How were you kind to someone else?
- ▶ What do you do when someone makes fun of other kids at school?

For more conversation starters, visit [OnOurSleeves.org/find-help/tools-for-you/convo-starters](https://OnOurSleeves.org/find-help/tools-for-you/convo-starters).

The *On Our Sleeves* "Take a Day Time Break" mental wellness program is an ongoing mission of Christina and Ryan Day, strong advocates for *On Our Sleeves* to help start conversations around children's mental health. The Day Family's commitment extends their social mission to one of the most significant issues facing children and young adults by increasing education, advocacy, and fundraising.

To learn more, please visit [OnOurSleeves.org/DayFamilyFund](https://OnOurSleeves.org/DayFamilyFund).



## Take a Day Time Break

At school, your child has learned that taking a "Day Time Break" for mental wellness can help reduce stress and promote empathy. Spend a few minutes a day taking a break as a family with activities such as giving a compliment to each family member, doing an errand or chore for a neighbor, taking a walk outdoors, or turning the refrigerator door into a gratitude wall with sticky notes. Generate your own *Day Time Break* ideas together!

For more ideas, go to: [OnOurSleeves.org/about/day-family-fund/request-day-time-resources](https://OnOurSleeves.org/about/day-family-fund/request-day-time-resources).

## Additional Resources

- ▶ Understand Mental Health Conditions: [OnOurSleeves.org/find-help/conditions](https://OnOurSleeves.org/find-help/conditions)
- ▶ Mental Health Resources: [OnOurSleeves.org/find-help](https://OnOurSleeves.org/find-help)
- ▶ Videos with behavioral health expert Gina McDowell: [OnOurSleeves.org/find-help/tools-for-you/video-resources](https://OnOurSleeves.org/find-help/tools-for-you/video-resources)

For example:

- \* *Questions to Ask at the Dinner Table*
- \* *How to Get Mentally Fit*
- \* *Stress and Self-Care*

**If you or your child need immediate help due to having suicidal thoughts, go to your local emergency room immediately. Or you can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at**

**1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text "START" to 741-741.**

