

**FREE**  
*your*  
**FEELS**<sup>TM</sup>

**BULLYING,  
NATIVE  
AMERICAN  
HERITAGE AND  
STRESS**

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**OCTOBER -  
DECEMBER 2022**



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# LETTER TO PARTNERS



As summer is turning to fall, our toolkits are undergoing a change too. Starting with this edition, we will release one per quarter.

This first quarterly kit will provide resources for October through December, tackling themes including bullying, Indigenous heritage, and holiday-related and exam stress. As always, we share resources for young people, for their families and caregivers, and for those who work with youth.

We hope you can apply some of our content to your lives and support the mental health of the young people around you.

To more frequently share updates and resources, we will continue to send our newsletter out every month. If you haven't subscribed already, you can do so [here](#). Our social media will also continue to be updated daily.

Thank you for your interest in Free Your Feels and for your support of youth mental health!

## TAKE ACTION

Follow us on Twitter,  
Instagram and  
Facebook  
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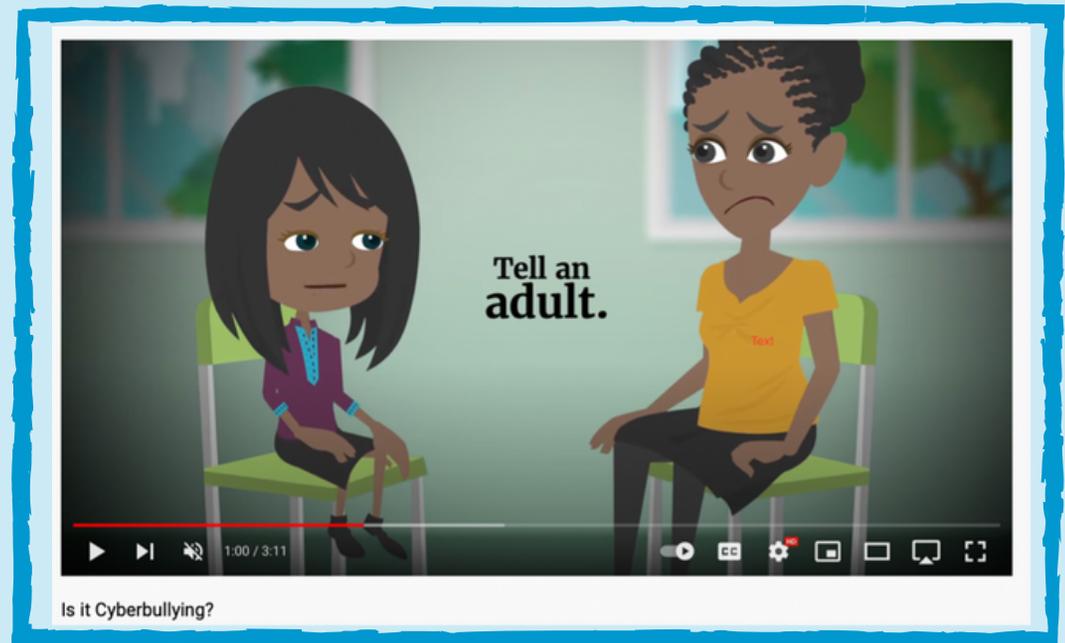
# FOR YOUTH

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With every new school year come worries that you might not fit in with other students. No one wants to feel like they don't belong. You probably already know that if you're being targeted or witness someone else being bullied, speak up and tell an adult you trust. If you're being bullied, remember it's never your fault. The same goes for cyberbullying: if someone sends or posts unkind, negative, false or humiliating content about you – take a screenshot and report it.

## TAKE ACTION

Learn how to deal with bullies and fight back – just in case.



FOR URGENT SUPPORT CALL OR DOWNLOAD GCAL: 1-800-715-4225



# FOR PARENTS / CAREGIVERS

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During a school year, between 20-30% of children may get bullied. Bullying can happen physically, verbally or socially, and can take place in school or online. If your child is ever involved in a bullying situation, don't panic – Strong4Life has put together a guide for what to do if your child is being bullied or is bullying others. Remember: behavior is communication, so what is really going on here?



## TAKE ACTION

Talk to your child about bullying, including cyberbullying, and discuss what behaviors are ok and which are not.



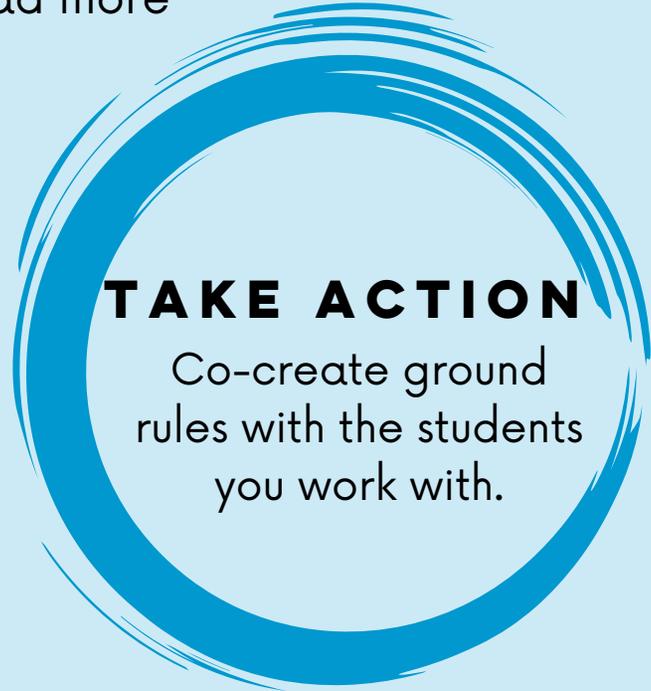
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# FOR TEACHERS / SCHOOL STAFF



Bullying often happens in schools. As adults in a school environment, you have unique opportunities to use your spaces to prevent bullying. One major step you can take is to define and communicate your expectations from day one. You can ask your students to help create a set of rules for your space – this often increases their compliance with the rules. One expectation you may all agree on is that all students and staff respect one another and treat each other kindly. Read more strategies to prevent bullying [here](#) and [here](#).



# FOR EVERYONE



There is a huge diversity of Native American peoples, cultures and histories. There are also similarities between different Indigenous cultures, such as connectedness to family, community and land and respecting traditional knowledge. Although these tend to be protective factors against poor mental health outcomes, many Native Americans are marginalized and discriminated against, which contributes to overall poor mental health outcomes. Almost 1 in 5 Native Americans report having a mental illness in the past year.



## TAKE ACTION

Learn about Native and Indigenous mental health [here](#). This [page](#) shares illustrations specifically for Native youth.



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# FOR EVERYONE



The most effective mental health treatment for anyone is culturally competent. This considers a person's social and cultural context and meets their needs through a personalized approach. Many people who are unable to access culturally competent mental health care may be left untreated. There are a variety of resources by and for Native American people that may better serve their communities.



## TAKE ACTION

Check out [We R Native](#) – a tool for Native youth to ask questions and their relatives to answer. Learn about [four innovative programs](#) preventing suicide in Native communities.



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# FOR YOUTH



Holidays are usually a happy time with family, food, and gifts. For some of us, big expectations can trigger feelings of sadness, isolation, or stress. You might be required to spend time with people you don't get along with, not have access to good food or not be able to afford gifts. Take care of yourself and prioritize your own wellness during this time. If you need space – draw boundaries. Talk to someone you trust or ask them to hang out for more support. Get inspired by teens' [self-care tips](#). In crisis situations, call 988!



## TAKE ACTION

#FreeYourFeels – be honest with yourself about your feelings and express them: sketch, sing, journal or talk to someone!



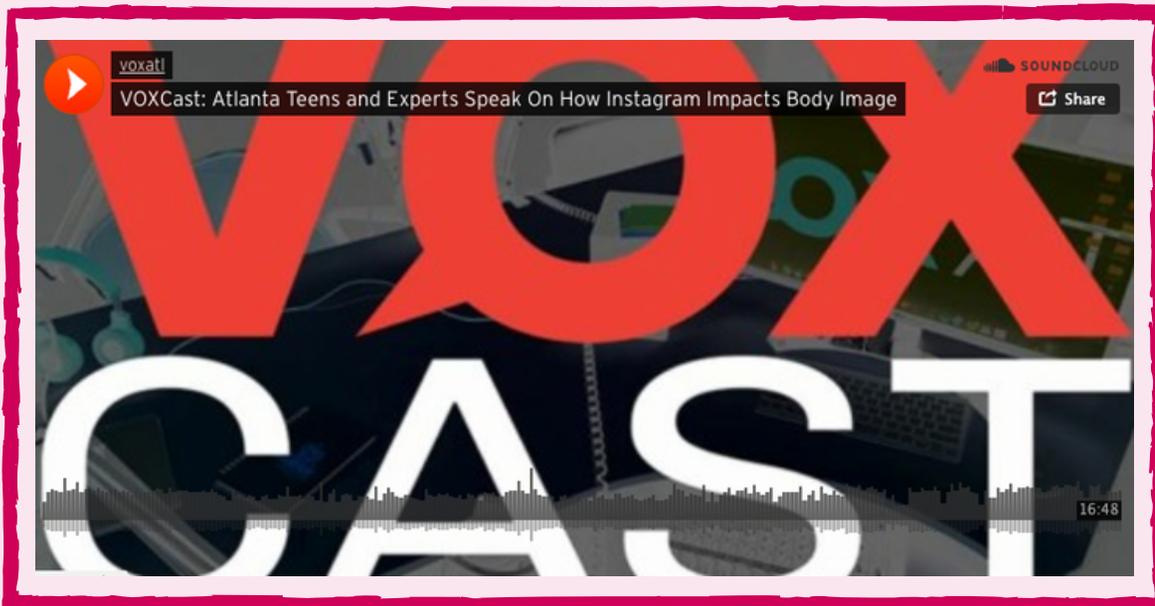
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# FOR YOUTH

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This time of year can bring up body image issues. [Instagram doesn't help either](#). Body image is how you see yourself, or what you think you look like. Our bodies tend to change a lot in our teenage years, so it's normal to not yet fully know your own body. It's also normal to not always feel great about your body. There is no single way your body should look or be. All our bodies are different, and the most important thing to do for yours is to keep it healthy. Your physical and mental health are related – if your body is healthy, your mind will likely be healthier too.



## TAKE ACTION

Think about 2-3 things you appreciate about your body.



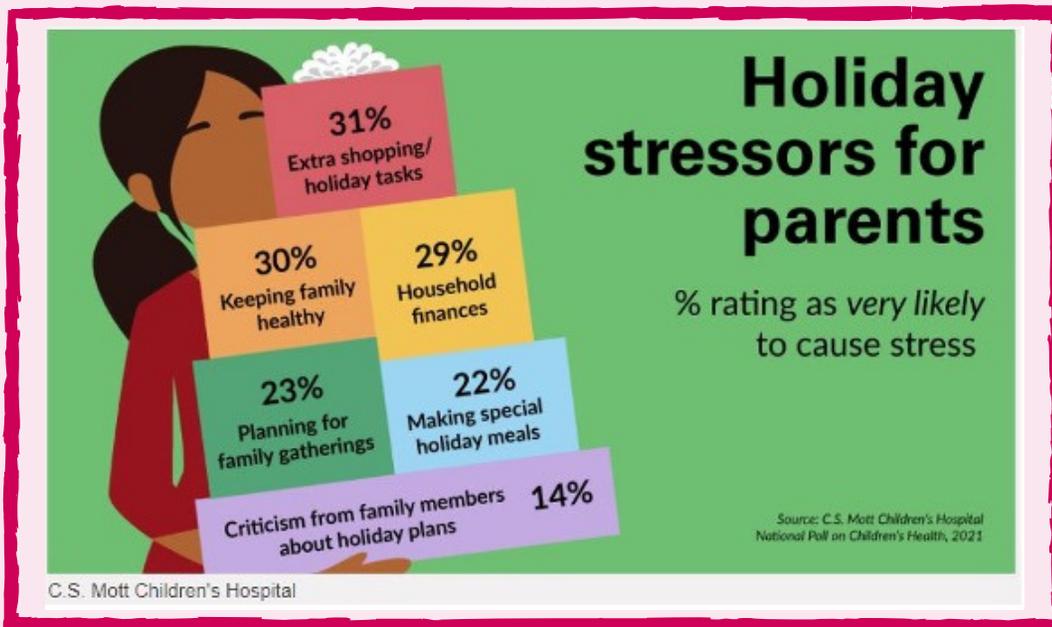
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# FOR PARENTS / CAREGIVERS

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Many parents or caregivers of children report feeling stressed during the holidays, with nearly twice as many mothers experiencing high stress than fathers. The holiday to-do lists and the break in routine contribute to stress, but so does trying to do everything alone and not taking time to refuel. Remember: you can assign other people tasks! Take some time for yourself to unwind as well, even if it's just a quiet cup of coffee in the morning or a solo karaoke session in the car.



## TAKE ACTION

Assign at least one task on your to-do list to someone else!



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# FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH YOUTH

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Working with kids and adolescents who are stressed out about holidays or exams or amped up about time off school can take its toll. Additionally, you likely have your own holiday stressors – cleaning, organizing, shopping, cooking, and entertaining. Take some “me time” this month! Georgia’s Department of Early Care and Learning has a great collection of [self-care resources](#) for YOU.

## Teachers

- [Self Care for Teachers](#)
- [4 Quick Self-Care Tips for Frazzled Teachers and Students](#)
- [Box Breathing](#)
- [Taking Care of Yourself](#)
- [Self- Care for Teachers](#)
- [Emergencies and National Disasters](#)
- [Helping Children and Families Cope](#)
- [Fostering Healthy Social & Emotional Development in Young Children - Tips for EARLY Childhood Teachers and Providers](#)
- [4 Ways Teachers Can Stay Grounded](#)
- [Using Emotional Language: How to Talk to Your Kids About Feelings](#)

## TAKE ACTION

Find a self-care tool that works for you. We like [Stop, Breathe & Think](#).



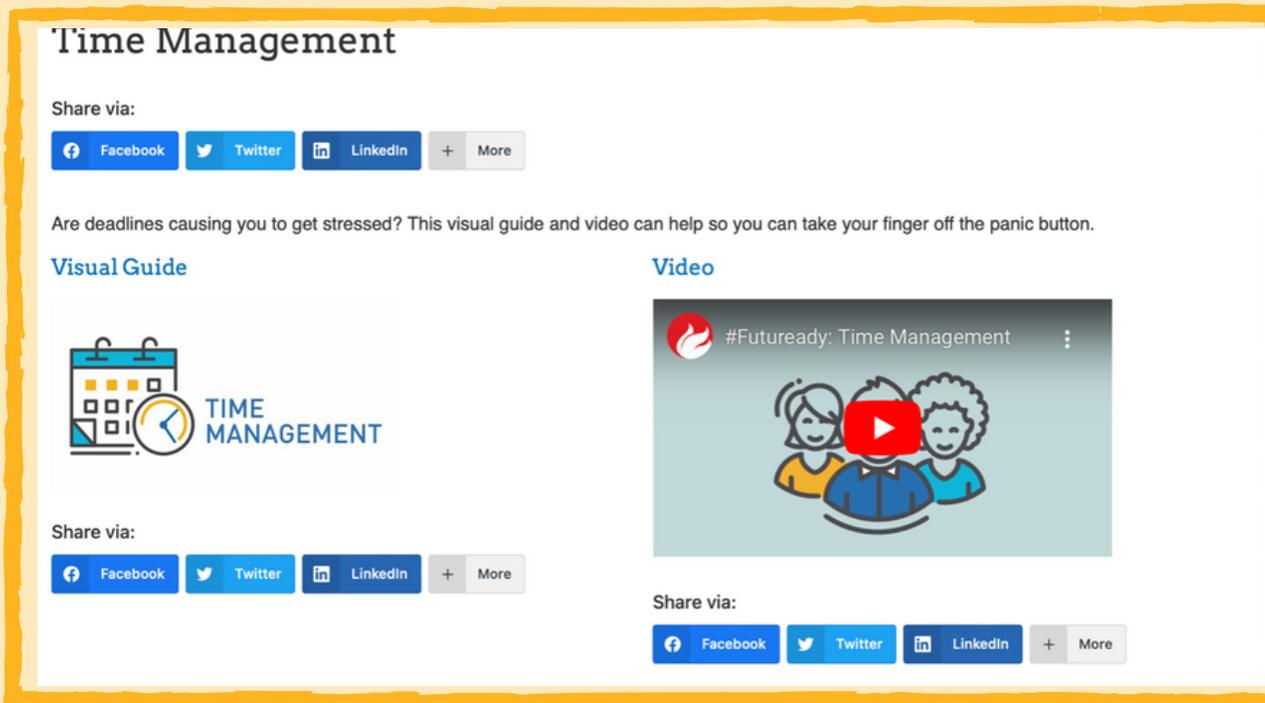
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# FOR YOUTH

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Do you have exams or other end-of-year projects coming up this time of year? It can feel like there is a ton of pressure to get good grades or even just to complete a bunch of projects, all due at the same time. To avoid feeling overwhelmed, getting organized early can help! Check out these [time management tools and tips](#).



The screenshot shows a social media post titled "Time Management". It includes a "Share via:" section with buttons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and a "More" option. The main text of the post asks, "Are deadlines causing you to get stressed? This visual guide and video can help so you can take your finger off the panic button." Below the text are two content items: a "Visual Guide" featuring a calendar icon and the text "TIME MANAGEMENT", and a "Video" thumbnail with a play button and the text "#FutureReady: Time Management". Both content items have their own "Share via:" sections with social media sharing options.

## TAKE ACTION

Use a calendar or a planner to write down your due-dates and other events you need to remember.



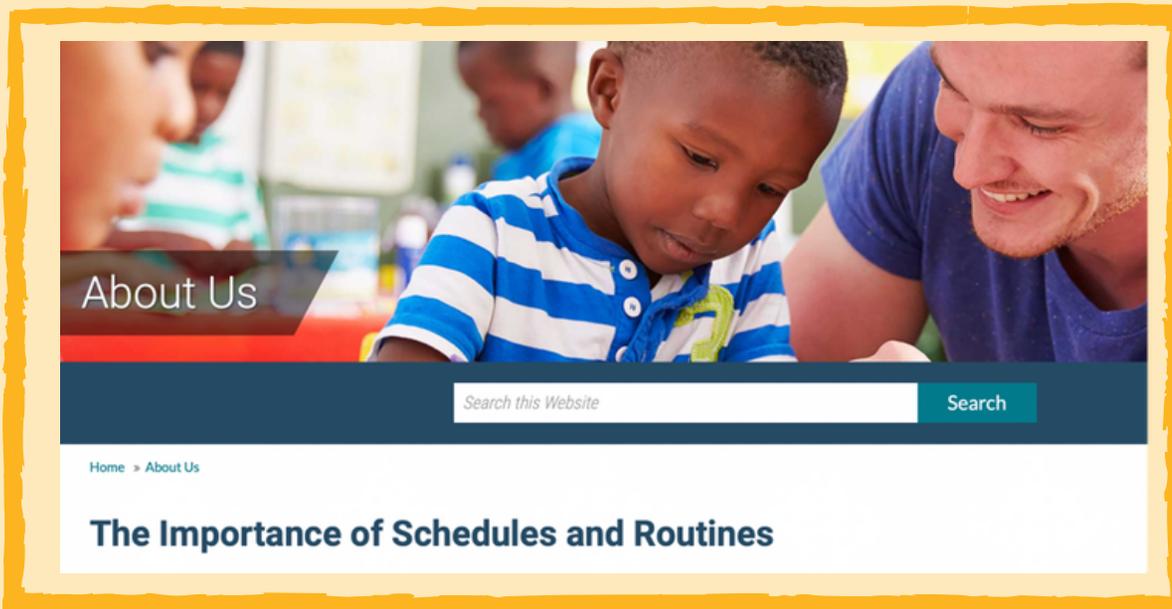
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# FOR PARENTS / CAREGIVERS



When your kids are experiencing higher levels of stress, it can take a toll on you too. Developing – and sticking to – healthy routines as a family can help all of you feel more in control. When we feel more in control, we generally also feel safer, as we know what is happening and what will happen next. We encourage you to look at what you already tend to do each day and ask your child(ren) what works for them and what doesn't.



## TAKE ACTION

Work with your kids to define a daily or weekly routine for your family.



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# FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH YOUTH



You probably already know about fixed mindsets vs growth mindsets. A fixed mindset is one where you believe that someone either has or doesn't have a skill or talent, whereas growth mindsets understand that skills can be learned. Having a growth mindset is associated with the belief that you are capable of success. This will help your students feel more confident during busier times of the school year.



# FOR EVERYONE

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The end of the year is a great time to PAUSE, REFLECT and SHARE. Take some time for yourself and think about how this year went. What were some challenges? What were some successes? Whom, or what, are you grateful for? What have you learned?



## TAKE ACTION

Tell the people you are grateful for in your life how you feel. Gratitude and connecting with others can improve your sense of wellbeing.



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## **QUESTIONS? CONTACT**

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