

## NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

# Alberta Blue Cross® reminds parents to keep kids' mental health top-of-mind, launches *MoreGoodDays* program to support youth mental health

As Alberta students prepare to return to school classrooms for the final month of the school year after learning from home for the past few weeks due to the pandemic, Alberta Blue Cross is reminding parents to keep their children's mental health top-of-mind.

"COVID-19 has taken a toll on our collective mental health with the increased stress and anxiety that have accompanied the pandemic," says Brian Geislinger, Alberta Blue Cross Corporate Relations, vice-president. "And it has had a real impact on our kids who often lack the coping mechanisms to understand what they are feeling and why."

To support youth through COVID-19, Alberta Blue Cross has just partnered with the Mental Health Foundation and Kickstand—the Alberta Integrated Youth Services Initiative—to launch *MoreGoodDays*, a program that provides daily text messages delivering advice, support and inspiration to young people's phones. An adaptation of the Text4Hope program, *MoreGoodDays* is tailored especially for youth with message content and tone designed to be youth-friendly. Messages were vetted by 26 young Albertans and are designed to connect, encourage and empower.

"Young people have been significantly impacted during the pandemic by the loss of socialization, routine and extracurricular activities, but reaching out for support can be challenging," says Geislinger. "Even if your child doesn't appear to be struggling because of the pandemic, if they have a cell phone you may want to consider connecting them with *MoreGoodDays*."

The Alberta Blue Cross sponsorship of *MoreGoodDays* is funded through its community foundation. Since the pandemic began, Alberta Blue Cross has directed more than \$500,000 in funding from its community foundation to address priority community needs across the province—particularly among vulnerable and at-risk populations—through COVID-19.

To participate in the free program, simply text 'MoreGoodDays' to 393939 to start receiving daily text messages. Learn more at [mykickstand.ca](https://mykickstand.ca).

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