



Maintaining emotional wellbeing at home and at school during an election season.

Political change brings with it uncertainty about the present and the future, including fears of protests or unrest following the election results. It's not unlikely to experience any number of feelings including insecurity, loss of control, worry and anxiety, especially during a particularly heated political climate. However, there are ways you can help ease some of the difficult emotions and interactions during an unprecedented time such as an election period.

Prepare yourself first.

Manage your own expectations and emotions. Try to accept people for who they are and recognize that elections are a sensitive topic for many people. We all have different lives, challenges and life experiences. It's likely you're not going to change other people's feelings or views. But tolerance and empathy always make for better relations. Make an effort to accept and tolerate a diversity of beliefs, opinions and viewpoints amongst your friends, family and peers.

Be prepared for how you'll respond should sensitive issues or topics come up. Use strategies to keep your emotions in check that have worked well for you in other situations. You might take a few deep breaths before speaking, try changing the subject, not engage in an argumentative discussion or excuse yourself to get a drink or take a walk if the conversation is becoming heated.

Focus on your commonalities, not your differences. Focus on the things you have in common or that brings you together—your campus activities, sports and classwork. Once people feel seen and heard, the tension is likely to subside and you will have created a culture of safety, where people feel encouraged to share and connect.



You may be worried about the emotional wellbeing of your friends, family, peers and your own wellbeing as you enter a governmental election period.



Take the initiative. Reach out if you're upset or if someone else is. Resentment may fester if you don't try to clear the air promptly. A sincere and thoughtful conversation can help to clear the air after a misunderstanding. If a peer seems withdrawn or you realize you haven't talked in a while, invite them for a walk, a coffee or lunch.

Set boundaries. If certain topics always cause friction between you and loved ones or among peers, try setting a few limits on your conversations. You might agree that you won't talk about politics or another subject that tends to set somebody off.

Agree to disagree. Let anyone you disagree with know you value your relationship even if you don't always see eye-to-eye. Focus on the individuals in the room rather than the politicians in these conversations. It's easier to have empathy when faced with someone's lived experience, rather than their disdain for a politician.

Caring for yourself and supporting others' wellbeing.

Connect with supportive friends and family members. You'll probably find that other people are just as worried as you are about the same or similar things. Talking things over helps relieve stress.

Maintain healthy habits during difficult times to manage feelings of stress and anxiety. Make a point of eating well-balanced meals. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. Engage in regular physical activity, such as a going for a walk outside or stretching.

How campus leaders can help.

Encourage and enable voting. Being heard is essential to mental health.

Destigmatize mental health by speaking about mental health issues, clearly and often. Openly recognize that an election season, especially during a divisive political climate, can be difficult for many reasons and that many of us need support to get through it.

Strive for unity, compassion, and kindness. The more compassion and understanding you are able to exhibit toward others—including those who may not share your beliefs or vote the way you do—the less tension-filled the environment will be.

Promote resources to help people deal with overwhelming emotions.

Seek professional help. Seek out support in your community and contact TELUS Health Student Support through our app or website. Our network of providers is here to support you 24/7.