



Top 10 Ways to Support Your Teen's Mental Health

Everyone feels down, anxious, or scared from time to time, including teens—and this is when they need their parents the most. Here are 10 ways you can boost your teen's mental health every day—and help them through the tough times.

1. Be open and aware

Encourage your teen to talk about how they feel, especially if something seems off. Remember, young people don't always come to their parents when there's a problem. This is why it's important to regularly check in with your teen to see how things are going.

2. Support healthy connections

When teens have strong connections with others, their mental health benefits greatly. Support and encourage the development of strong, healthy relationships.

3. Encourage rest and reflection

Encourage your teen to put their phone away, turn off the TV, and take some time every day to rest, relax, and reflect. You might suggest that your teen try writing their thoughts in a journal.

4. Talk about it

Talking about emotions is a great way to process them, and establishing open communication with your child will encourage them to come to you for help. Be a good listener, don't judge, and be there if your teen needs to vent or just talk.

5. Encourage healthy living

Encourage your teen to get enough sleep, eat healthy, and exercise often. Studies show there is a definite link between sleep, diet, and mood. Physical activity also releases mood-boosting chemicals that can help your teen feel good.

6. Set boundaries on technology use

When it comes to technology and social media use, your teen needs boundaries in order to protect their mental health. Define these boundaries clearly and do your best to enforce them.

7. Manage your expectations

Parental expectations can unintentionally lead to stress and anxiety in teens. Make sure your teen knows that your love for them is unconditional and independent of their performance in sports, school, and/or other activities.

8. Know the signs

A teen's actions and nonverbal cues can tell you a lot about the state of their mental health. Common signs that your teen may be struggling include changes in appetite and sleep patterns, severe mood swings, withdrawal from family and friends, lower grades, and trouble in school.

9. Teach calming techniques

When your teen feels stressed, angry, or anxious, it's important that they have a toolbox of calming techniques to help them relax. Watch and share this video on calming techniques with your teen.



10. Get professional help

Sometimes you can't help your teen manage their mental health on your own, and that's okay. Reach out to their doctor or school counselor and ask for a referral. Most importantly, remind your teen that seeking help is a sign of strength.