

Adolescents and Mental Health

Adolescence is a period of major social, hormonal and emotional change. It is common for teens to be concerned with self-image and to become sensitive to the slightest criticism. Some act out rebelliously against authority, including parents and teachers. Others experiment with risky behaviors, such as using illegal drugs and having unprotected sex. With all of these changes going on amid the increasing pressures of family, friends, school and a future career, some adolescents become seriously depressed and even suicidal. Learn how to help your teen develop the resiliency needed to get through these tough times.

Teach Positivity

Life is going to have its ups and downs no matter how old you are, but the tough times usually pass. Teach your teen to look at the bigger picture when they are faced with a difficult situation.

Encourage Laughter

Try not to take life so seriously. Teach your teen the value of laughter and how laughing at themselves, or a situation, can help them feel better and get through difficult times.

Promote Healthy Habits

Teach your teen the importance of getting enough sleep, staying physically active and eating healthy foods. Developing your physical and mental health can help teens combat challenging situations.

Build Your Child's Self-Confidence

If your child feels good about their personality, abilities, strengths and weaknesses, they are less likely to turn to alcohol and drugs to fill any void they may be feeling.

Allow Times for Relaxation

Teens' schedules are so busy these days with before-school, after-school and weekend activities that sometimes they do not have time to decompress and just be regular teens. Giving your teens the freedom to do nothing can help develop their creativity and coping skills.

Provide Structure

Contrary to what some believe, some teens crave structure. It can give them a sense of comfort. Providing a set routine and clearly defining expectations for their behavior can give them a sense of stability during a fairly tumultuous period of adolescence.

Encourage Friendships

When your teens do not have any friends to lean on, it can make the challenging times feel even more difficult. Encourage your teen to reach out to others, whether at school or around the neighborhood, and develop meaningful friendships.



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