

Ways to support teens' mental health



A new school year brings a fresh start for students and families alike. There are new classes and new routines to get used to.

And in many cases, there is a need for mental health support.

Academic demands and social pressures can increase the levels of stress and anxiety in teens and young adults. Unfortunately, these are difficult times for young people in America.

According to the CDC's most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey students who reported feeling 'persistently sad or hopeless' in 2023:

53% of teen girls¹
compared to 36% in 2011

28% of teen boys¹
compared to 21% in 2011.

65% of LGBTQ+ teens.¹

Sadly, in 2023 suicide was the third-leading cause of death among people ages 15 to 19.²

There's hardly a high school in this country that has escaped being touched by this type of tragedy.

Start talking

If you have a teen in your life, it's important to remain connected. Encourage teens and young adults to reach out when they need support.

You can provide support by:

- ✓ Encouraging healthy sleep, nutrition and exercise habits. A healthy body leads to a healthy mind.
- ✓ Celebrating their hobbies and other positive social networks.
- ✓ Helping with time management and organization.
- ✓ Asking them to practice relaxation and mindfulness exercises with you.
- ✓ Setting realistic expectations about academic or sports-related performance.
- ✓ Educating them about excessive technology/social media use and its impact on mental health.

As adults, the more we talk about our feelings and mental health in general, the less of a stigma will be attached to it. We all experience emotions. There's no shame in telling your teens you feel sad or anxious and why. Being a good role model could open the door to their sharing.



Conversation starters³

I've been worried about you.
Can we talk about what you
are experiencing?

It seems like you are going
through a difficult time.
How can I help?

I'm concerned about your
safety. Have you thought about
harming yourself or others?



Help our teens

There is good news. As a society, we are taking steps to help our children and remove the stigma around asking for mental healthcare.

The presence of therapists and social workers in schools has shown a positive impact on teen mental health. Parents and educators are learning how to spot the signs of children who need help.

It's never easy for anyone to talk about feelings of depression, anxiety or any mental health issues. Recognizing symptoms is a step in the right direction toward getting help. Offering to help them can make a difference in both of your lives.

If you or someone you care about is considering suicide, call 988 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).

**Learn how Teladoc Health can help support you on your wellness journey.
To sign up or learn more, go to TeladocHealth.com/Smile/UOFAK.**

¹<https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/index.html>

²<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/adolescent-health.htm>

³<https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/what-is-mental-health/how-to-talk/friends-and-family>