

Health Hints

Healthy Minds



Mental well-being is the ability to: enjoy life, deal with challenges, and feel connected to other people. People with good mental health, have a sense of belonging, and feel optimistic and self-confident. Positive mental health is truly at the heart of one's overall wellness. Parents can help teens develop and maintain positive mental health in the following ways:

Plan time together – Get together at certain times during the week to catch up with each other. Family meals are a great way to do this; if dinner doesn't work, how about breakfast? Other activities could include a weekly games night or going for family walks or hikes. Whatever you choose, make it a routine and stick to it.

Laugh with them - Laughing reduces the effects of stress, and boosts the chemicals in our brain that relieve pain and sadness. It can be a fun and effective way to release the same tensions and negative feelings that sometimes make us want to cry.

Be positive – Seeing things in a positive way—being optimistic—is an important part of mental well-being. Some people are naturally more optimistic than others; however, parents can support their teens and encourage them to think more positively by planning for a positive result, accepting both successes and failures, and supporting their confidence to try again.

Listen – Don't do all the talking. Try not to offer solutions or advice to every problem (even if you think you have a good one). Instead, repeat back what you are hearing and ask questions about how they are feeling when challenges arise or exciting things are happening in their lives.

Support their independence – Learn to compromise with your teen while maintaining fair rules. Consistency is important; however, be flexible enough to bend a rule occasionally. Of course, some rules are non-negotiable, and it helps to determine those ahead of time.

Involve other adults - It is also important to your teen's mental well-being to feel that they have caring adults in their life that they can talk to and depend on. Spending time with a grandparent, relative, family friend, teacher or other responsible adult can help build those close relationships and provide the opportunity to explore different interests.

For more information see:

Healthy Living for Families

<http://www.healthyschoolsbc.ca/media/22219/hlf-parent-english-final.pdf>

Healthy Living for Teens

<http://www.healthyschoolsbc.ca/media/22221/hlf-teens-english-final.pdf>



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