



Prevention *for parents*

Mental Health First Aid for Young People

May brings us into Mental Health Awareness Month, which is a great time to brush up on your mental health knowledge.

Did you know there is a first aid course for mental health? Mental Health First Aid offers courses for Adult Mental Health and Youth Mental Health.

The youth course is a great tool for parents, because it teaches you how to recognize mental health issues, as well as what to do when a young person is experiencing a mental health

issue or crisis.

Similar to the ABC's of CPR training, there is an action plan for Youth Mental Health First Aid. It looks like this:



Unlike the ABC's of CPR, the mental health first aid action plan is not always linear. In general, it starts with "A" and continues through the ALGEE steps, but often times you do each step more than once or out of order.

If you are interested in taking a Youth Mental Health First Aid Course to learn more about how to recognize mental health issues in your child and use this action plan, check the Parent Resource section on the second page to find a course!

Screen Time: How Much is *Too Much*?

While many kids are back in the classroom, our young people are still required to use devices for school on top



of all the other activities they do on their screens. It can be hard to know ex-

actly what to do as a parent when it comes to putting limits on screen time.

There is not a one-size-fits-all answer, but a good approach is to make sure they are getting other positive behaviors in their day rather than stressing over the amount of time plugged in.

- Is my child sleeping enough and eating a somewhat bal-

anced diet?

- Are they getting some form of exercise every day?
- Are they spending some quality time with family?
- Do they use some screen time to keep in touch with friends?
- Are they invested in school and keeping up with homework?

Family Bonding

Family bonding is different for every family as we come from different cultures, perspectives, and backgrounds. Scheduling some family time can strengthen the relationships and ease frustrations than can occur. Some activities to consider with your family:

- Family hike
- Reading together to foster a literacy rich environment
- Movie nights
- Game night with board games, puzzles, or other games
- Create art together, could be drawing, painting, coloring, photography
- Volunteer for community service together
- Supporting each other's interests
- Doing chores together

Whatever you choose, the key is to find things to do together that everyone can enjoy. Research has shown this can help with the self-esteem of children, encourage healthy behaviors, improve academics, and strengthen communication between parents and their children.

What Would You Like To See In The Next Issue?

Contact Colleen Chan with any suggestions, comments, or questions.

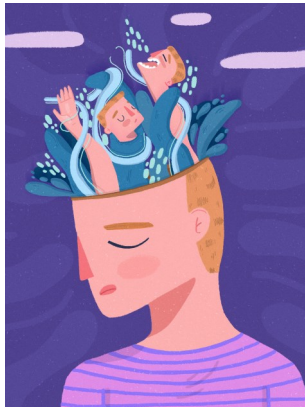
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Crucial Conversations Challenge: *Mental Health Inventory*

This month's challenge is to have a conversation with your child about the state of their mental health, and/or yours, too!

It's a good practice to slow down and take some time to reflect on how you are doing and what adjustments are needed to maintain mental wellness or address unwellness.



Here are some questions to get the conversation going:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you doing this week? How does that compare to how you usually feel?
- What is going well for you right now?
- What is challenging you/what's your biggest struggle right now?
- What sort of things have you been doing to take care of yourself?
- Tell me what's it's like to be you right now.

It can be uncomfortable to start the conversation if it is not a norm in your family, but your child will benefit from the connection, even if they seem uncomfortable at first, too.

Parent Resources

[Youth Mental Health First Aid](#) — Mental Health First Aid

[Screen Time During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)—Child Mind Institute

[4 Parent-Tested Systems You Can Use to Limit Screen Time](#)—
Today's Parent

[Mental Health Parent Test](#)—Mental Health America

[Mental Health Resources in South Whidbey](#)— Readiness to Learn

[7 Cups Free Emotional Support](#) —7cups.com

[Mental Health Month](#)— Mental Health America

[Teen Health: Mental Health](#)—Penn State