

MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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POLITICS AND MENTAL HEALTH

In recent years, political conversation has become particularly contentious. While teens can't always grasp the nuance of political topics they are being affected by the conversation.

The future holds so much unknown, which can induce a lot of anxiety in teens. When we consider the uncertainty around our country's political future and the emotionally charged rhetoric promoted by most media sources, teens can become overwhelmed by the prospect of what will come.

Reassure your teen by explaining to them that political contention is normal, especially in an election year. Remind them to unplug when they are getting overwhelmed. Your own anxiety may influence your teen, so remember to take care of yourself and find a healthy way to quell your own fears.

TIPS FOR TALKING ABOUT POLITICS WITH KIDS

Encourage critical-thinking Help your child find non-bias sources to learn about hot topics for themselves.

Model respectful dialogue Your child hears how you talk about topics and individuals involved in politics. How you speak about these things is likely how your child will learn to speak their opinions.

Limit over-exposure to opinion-based political media It may seem impossible, but it is especially important for younger children who may struggle with critical thinking to avoid opinion based media.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What do you hear about politics on social media?
- Do the things you hear about politics make you anxious or afraid? Why?
- Are you aware of the basic tenets/values of our two main political parties?
- What topics are important to you? Why?

Keep the conversation light-hearted. If your child has different political views than you, approach the conversation with curiosity. Learn about why they feel the way they do.