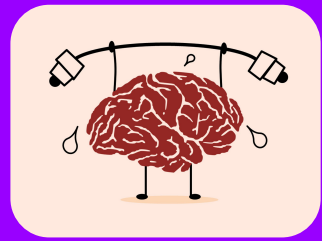


Supporting Today's Teens

March 13, 2025





- **Challenges Teens Face**
- **How to Support**
- **Resources**
- **Q&A**

Self Discovery

LIFELONG JOURNEY

“Stuck” between childhood and adulthood
Sense of self
Beliefs and values
Search for belonging

HORMONES/PUBERTY

Physical changes
Intense emotions/mood swings
Acne, hair, body odor, etc.

DEVELOPING BRAIN

Rapid changes
Pleasure/reward develop faster than problem solving/decision-making
Impulsive/reckless



Academics and the Future



<https://mentalhealthcenterkids.com/blogs/articles/academic-pressure>

PRESSURE

family
teachers
self

VOCATIONAL SKILLS

organization
time management
critical thinking
self-advocacy

BALANCE

school/work
relaxation
social life

POSTSECONDARY

career plans
applications
scholarships

Relationship

S



drama
peer pressure
bullying



pressure
Independence
conflict



Questions
Self-Doubt
Heartbreak

Mental

National

- 16% youth report 1+ depressive episode per year
- 56.1% youth with major depression not receiving treatment
- 8.95% youth report substance abuse
- 13.16% youth report serious thoughts of suicide
- 65% youth with major depression reported therapy/counseling helped
- 23% adults experience mental health struggles

Tennessee

- 20.5% report 1+ depressive episode per year
- 62.4% youth with major depression not receiving treatment
- 9.47% youth reported substance abuse
- 14.16% youth report serious thoughts of suicide
- 68.1% youth with major depression reported therapy/counseling helped
- 25.47% adults experience mental health struggles

<https://mhanational.org/issues/2024/ranking-states>



- Rapid changes in weight, sleep, eating, or other daily habits
- Spending significantly less time with friends/family or doing favorite activities
- Sudden, unusual decline in school performance
- Chronic worrying
- Shift in friend groups
- Shutting down/refusing to talk
- Substance/alcohol abuse
- Evidence of self-harm/trying to hide injuries

The World We Live In

69% of parents and 44% of teens say it's harder to be a teen in today's world.

TECHNOLOGY

- internet, phones, social media
- cyberbullying
- increased exposure to negative influences
- easier to get away with things, things spread more quickly
- increased isolation
- not “cool” if not up to date

POLITICAL ISSUES

- fear for rights
- tension/pressure

DRUGS/VIOLENCE

- accessibility



What Can We Do?



Relationships & Communication



OPEN CONVERSATIONS

- Be available
- Create a safe space
- Avoid judgment
- Eliminate the stigma
- Consider their perspective
- Validate feelings
- Listen more, talk less
- Provide time and space

SHOW RESPECT

- Comment on appearance/changes
- Praise the good
- Follow through

QUALITY TIME

- Eat dinner together
- Find activities you both enjoy
- Be involved in and support their interests
- Continue to show affection

<https://www.handinhandparenting.org/2013/08/supporting-teenagers/?srsltid=AfmBOopFvF5xTwJXXfaSGHtesl-sHKhnm4MmUR7flbyQcoXgm1WgJoxm>

Encourage and Motivate

GROWTH MINDSET

- process vs outcome
- autonomy/independence
- intrinsic motivation
- goal setting
- the why

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

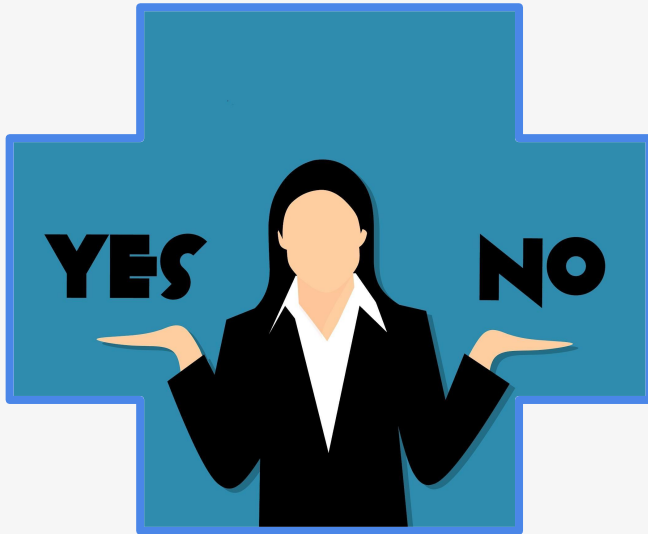
- effort
- accomplishments
- resiliency

POSITIVITY

- affirmations
- redirections
- tone



Healthy Boundaries



Balance freedom/supervision

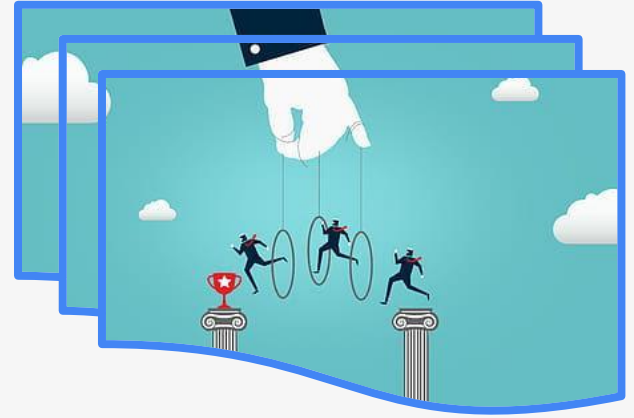
High yet attainable expectations

Develop rules as a team - gives ownership, increases accountability, does not mean letting them choose

Mode I



Mode I



Mode I

References

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