

2024 [Rady's Mental Health Webinar Series](#) Facilitator Guide for Parents/Caregivers

Reflection Questions and Answers

February 7, 2024

[Mental Health 101: Everything Parents Need to Know to Support Youth at Home](#)

Willough Jenkins, MD

Short description of webinar: *Creating a secure environment for youth fosters a sense of belonging, positively influencing their lives. Join Willough Jenkins, MD, as she discusses the current state of youth mental health and provides insights into how caregivers can support, communicate with, and stay connected to today's teenagers.*

Pre-Webinar Activity:

1. Think of situations where parents do their best to help their youth and still need additional support. Write them down.

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Post Webinar:

1. **Thinking back on those situations you identified before the webinar, what supportive strategies might be helpful in the future? Make a list of three things you can start with.**

Possible answers:

- Explore your own beliefs and your family beliefs about mental illness
- Educate yourself on the mental health challenges your youth is experiencing
- Know how to access resources and who to contact for information
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2. **Consider the practice of self-care. What can you do to take care of yourself on a regular basis?**

Possible answers:

- Time away
- Access professional support for yourself
- Reach out to friends and family
- Participate in parent support groups

3. **What would make your home environment safer?**

Possible answers:

- Providing a level of supervision that supports wellbeing
- Actively manage medication (e.g. lock medication, use timers for doses, blister packs, track side effects)
- Remove any guns
- Remove sharps from accessible locations
- Provide sensory and coping tools
- Create a safety plan

4. **How can you most effectively navigate professional support?**

Possible answers:

- Be the child's advocate in an age-appropriate manner
- Ask the questions of the professional to ensure the plan is understood
- Receive information on the type of therapy with updates on progress
- Communicate observations and concerns to the provider

5. **What can you do to help your youth with mental health concerns?**

Possible answers:

- Talk openly about mental health
- Reserve judgement
- Express love and commitment to actively helping them

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- Remind teens of desire to support and availability to them
- Choose a time and place to talk comfortably
- Listen versus lecture
- Consider using a journal to communicate back and forth

6. When talking with your child about their diagnosis, what approaches might be helpful?

Possible answers:

- Be open about the diagnosis
- Find an age-appropriate way to introduce and education them about the diagnosis
- Be open about the treatment plan and what is being done to help them
- Acknowledge own mistakes and own need to keep learning and getting help
- Choose a time and place to talk comfortably
- Listen versus lecture
- Consider using a journal to communicate back and forth
- Talk about the “hard things”
- Involve the whole family in conversations
- Establish healthy patterns for sleep, exercise, eating, and electronics use
Talk about things that are NOT focused on the diagnosis (e.g. fun and favorite things)