A Close-Up on Teen Mental Health
Making Teen Mental Health A Priority

Mental Illness & Adolescents

More than 11% of our nation’s adolescents suffer from a serious mental illness that causes significant impairment.

Nearly 2 in 3 mentally ill youth are not identified by their primary care provider and do not receive any mental health care.

The onset of 50% of all lifetime mental illnesses is by age 4.

Only 1 in 5 adolescents receive treatment for a mental health disorder.

Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for 10-19 year olds in US.

What Parents Should Know

As you already know, teen years can be a tough transition from childhood into adulthood. And here are some warning signs that your child is having a problem:

- Agitated or restless behavior
- Weight loss or gain
- A drop in grades
- Trouble concentrating
- Ongoing feelings of sadness
- Not caring about people or things
- Lack of motivation
- Fatigue, loss of energy & lack of interest in activities
- Low self-esteem
- Trouble falling asleep
- Run-ins with the law

What Teens Should Know

As a teen, you face many different pressures - from friends, school, parents. It is normal to feel stressed at times. But ask for help if you:

- Often feel very angry or very worried
- Feel grief for a long time after a loss or death
- Think your mind is controlled or out of control
- Use alcohol or drugs
- Exercise, diet and/or binge-eat obsessively
- Hurt other people or destroy property
- Do reckless things that could harm you or others

It’s Okay to Ask for Help

Mental health problems can be treated. To find help:

Teens - Talk to your parents, school counselor or health care provider.

Parents - Here are some of the ways for you can prepare for your child’s teenage years:

- Provide a safe & loving home environment; Create an atmosphere of honesty, trust & respect. Allow age-appropriate independence & assertiveness; Develop a relationship that encourages your teen to talk to you when he or she is upset; Teach responsibility for your teen’s belongings & years; Teach basic responsibility for household chores; Teach the Importance of accepting limits.

Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Talk to your health care provider if you have concerns about your child's wellbeing.

To Learn More About TeenScreen®
National Center for Mental Health Checkups
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