

4 Simple Ways to Promote Optimal Mental Health for Youth Ages 12 - 18

Nurture Relationship Building

- + Let them know that any subject or concern is safe to discuss.
- + Let them know you are thinking about them. A note on the bedroom door or a gift card – small acts go a long way!

Normalize Mental Health

- + Ask questions about your child's emotions: "You seem down, would you like to talk about it?"
- + Talk about your own mental health: "I am feeling nervous for my presentation, does that ever happen to you?"
- + Know it's okay to take breaks and revisit tough conversations later.
- + Model self-care: "I am going for a run to help with my stress."

Support Identity & Community Development

- + If your child comes out to you about being LGBTQIA+, recognize the courage it takes to share this. Thank them for telling you and ask how you can support!
- + Help connect them to organizations and activities they are passionate about and engage in volunteer opportunities together.

Communicate Boundaries and Limits

- + Have gentle but firm limits so your teen will know home is a safe refuge with predictable routines and expectations.
- + Be mindful of screen time and engage in a variety of activities like cooking, music and games. Ask for your child's ideas.