

Navigating Mental Health and Developing Resilience Age 18 Summary

Why Navigating Mental Health and Developing Resilience?

Whether it's your teen feeling anxious about an upcoming test, overwhelmed by social dynamics, or dealing with low self-esteem, attending to mental health is essential..

STEP

1



GET INPUT

Get Your Teen Thinking by Getting Their Input

- “What emotions have been the hardest for you to manage recently?”
- “Can you describe times when you feel anxious or overwhelmed?”
- “What do you do when you’re feeling down or frustrated?”
- “What do you do when your emotions feel out of control?”

Trap: Avoid jumping to solutions or assuming their feelings reflect your own worries. Let them express their emotions in a non-judgmental space.

STEP

2



TEACH

Teach New Skills

- **Model self-awareness** by naming your emotions in daily life. “*I’m feeling stressed today, and I’m going to take a break to reset.*”
- **Teach grounding techniques**, such as deep breathing or mindfulness, to manage overwhelming emotions. Practice these together.
- **Help your teen gain perspective** by asking, “*What might be a more balanced way of looking at this situation?*”

STEP
3



Practice to Grow Skills and Develop Habits

- **Create a routine** for discussing mental health. You might ask each evening, *“How did you feel today?”*; *“What are things that came up that felt overwhelming?”*; *“What emotions came up for you today? How did you handle them?”*
- **Encourage reflection** on how emotions fluctuate. *“You felt really anxious about that presentation yesterday. How are you feeling about it now?”*
- **Reinforce skills** by acknowledging their efforts. *“I noticed you took a few deep breaths when you were getting frustrated. That was a great way to handle it.”*

STEP
4



Support Your Teen’s Development and Success

- **Offer reminders:** *“Remember, you can always take a break if you’re feeling overwhelmed.”*
- **Check-in regularly:** Ask, *“How are you feeling today? Do you need help with anything?”*
- **Problem-solve together:** If they’re struggling, ask, *“What’s another way you could handle this?”*

STEP
5



Recognize Efforts

- Recognize and call out when things are going well. It may seem obvious, but it’s easy not to notice when everything moves smoothly. Noticing and naming the behavior provides the necessary reinforcement that you see and value your teen’s choice. For example, *“I see you’ve been more open about your feelings lately. That’s really brave!”*
- Recognize small steps along the way. Don’t wait for significant accomplishments to recognize effort. Remember that your recognition can work as a tool to promote more positive behaviors. Find small ways your teen is making an effort and let them know you see them.
- Build celebrations into your routine. For example, create simple rewards for practicing mental health, like relaxing together or doing a favorite activity.

Trap: It can be easy to resort to bribes when recognition and occasional rewards are underutilized. If parents or those in a parenting role frequently resort to bribes, it is likely time to revisit the five-step process.

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