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## WAYS TO HELP YOUR TEEN DEAL WITH STRESS



### 1. UNDERSTAND WHAT STRESS IS

Stress is the body's reaction to any kind of external challenge. The challenge can be physical, like a threat to safety. It can be mental, like worrying about getting into college. It can be emotional, such as being bullied or teased.

### 2. KNOW "GOOD" STRESS FROM "BAD" STRESS

Not all stress is bad. The right amount of stress can help your teen be focused, motivated, and energized to do their best. The key is to make sure that the stress does not overwhelm them.

### 3. RECOGNIZE THE CAUSES

Each situation is unique, but common causes include: school, social and romantic relationships, uncertainty about their future, pressure to fit in, family or peer conflict, trauma, and financial insecurity.

### 4. LOOKOUT FOR THE SIGNS

If your teen starts to display the following symptoms, the stress might be getting too high and they may need help: headaches/stomach aches, withdrawing from friends and family, changes in sleeping or eating patterns, and drug or alcohol use.

### 5. ENGAGE YOUR TEEN

Having regular conversations about what is going on in their world not only gives you greater insight into whether or not stress is becoming an issue, it also lets your teen know that you are there for them, which can reduce their stress.

### 6. DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES

There are things you can encourage your teen to do to deal with stress, such as talking about problems with others, taking deep controlled breaths, time management, and breaking up big tasks into smaller, more manageable tasks.

### 7. MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOR

If your teen sees you handling stress well, they will understand that managing stress is possible and they will see the specific techniques that can work.

### 8. DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT IS AN ISSUE

Talking to your child about stress, and its causes and effects, can help them be in a better position to recognize when they are starting to feel stressed. It can also help them feel empowered to do something about it.

### 9. EMPHASIZE HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Helping your child stay focused on being physically active, maintaining proper nutrition, and getting good sleep can reduce the negative impact of stress.

### 10. HELP THEM KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

Because your teen has limited life experience, small challenges or setbacks, such as the end of a relationship, can be an outsized source of stress. Remind them of the love and support that they have and their ability to get through difficulties.



## A PARENT'S ROLE

As a parent, it is important to recognize that stress can be a major health issue. The challenge is that stress can be a difficult thing to recognize because the physical symptoms can be caused by other things. Serving as a resource that they can turn to during difficult times is the most important role that you can play. Fortunately, there are many resources you can take advantage of to help your child. Following the ways outlined here can be effective, but each situation is unique. If necessary, talk to a healthcare professional for further guidance.

**YOU'VE GOT THIS!!!**

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Medline

[magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/teens-and-stress-when-its-more-than-worry](https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/teens-and-stress-when-its-more-than-worry)

American Psychological Association

[www.apa.org/topics/children/stress](https://www.apa.org/topics/children/stress)