



# How The Kids Mental Health Foundation Can Support Pediatric Primary Care Clinicians

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# Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Discuss factors that impact mental health
3. Highlight common mental health concerns and disorders in children
4. Showcase primary care specific resources
5. Share tools/strategies for building mental wellness in patients and families



**The Kids Mental Health  
Foundation**

# About Us

## Mission

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*Give free expert-created resources to all U.S. communities so everyone can understand and promote mental health for children.*

## Vision

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*The Kids Mental Health Foundation is leading the movement for children's mental health, to build a world where mental health is a vital part of the upbringing of every child.*



**The Kids Mental Health  
Foundation**

**We know there's a crisis.**



# Treatment alone will not solve the crisis.



**We must think about kids' mental health in a new way: we must equip adults with resources to confidently support children's mental well-being before there is a concern.**





**The Kids Mental Health  
Foundation™**

**We are taking a different approach. Because we know early action can be life changing.**

**Proactive resources and solutions are essential to raising healthy and resilient kids.**

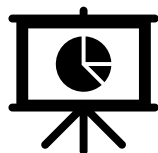
# We develop evidence-informed resources...



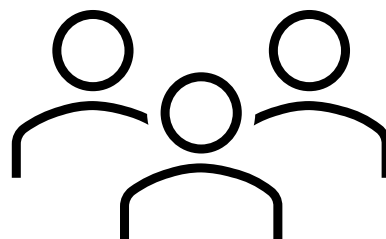
Trending Conversations



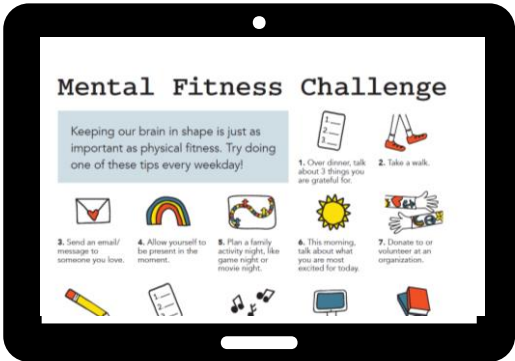
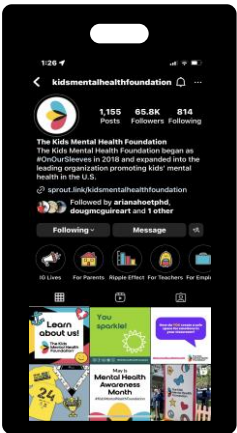
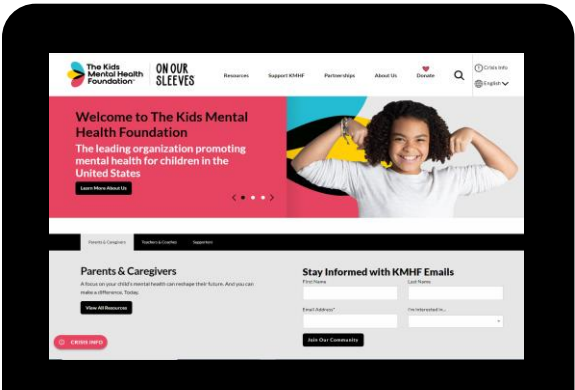
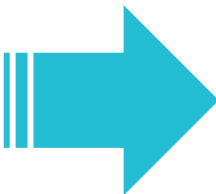
Global Research & Literature



Our Insights & Data



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S  
HOSPITAL and HEALTH CARE  
PARTNER  
BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH EXPERTS



Kids Mental Health Foundation Resources & Programs



The Kids Mental Health  
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# The Kids Mental Health Foundation creates and distributes evidence-informed resources for free to **every community** in the U.S.



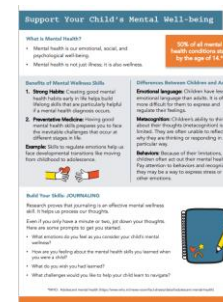
Parents,  
Caregivers &  
Mentors



Teachers &  
Schools



Youth-Serving  
Organizations &  
Coaches



Employers



Primary Care  
Providers



Entertainment  
Industry

With the goal to:

Break  
Stigmas



Breaking the stigma is crucial to building a supportive and empowering environment for kids and families.

Increase  
Literacy



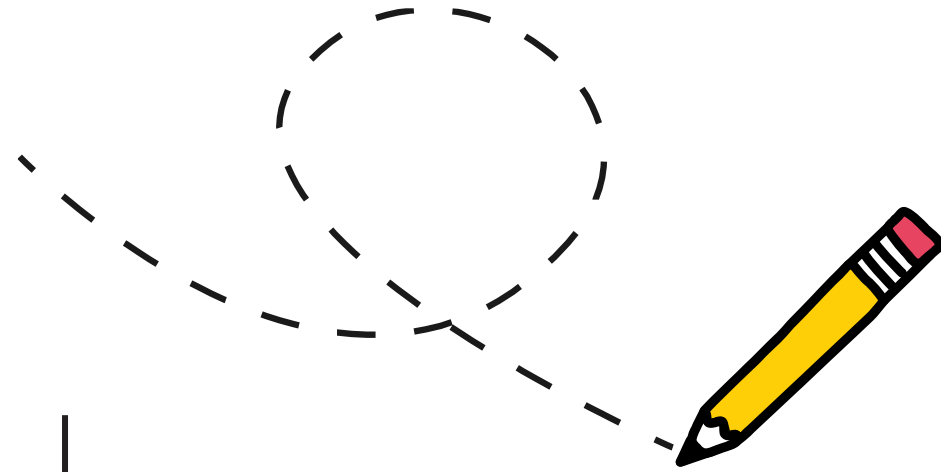
Build an understanding of mental health and how to talk about it, know how to express feelings, recognize signs of concerns, and how to seek help when necessary.

Teach  
Skills



Just like we know a child should eat their veggies and move their body to be physically healthy, we teach what they need for their mental health. KMHF tools show adults how to model the habits and skills we want children to emulate.

Resources and curricula  
in **ALL 50 STATES**



**MORE THAN 24  
MILLION**

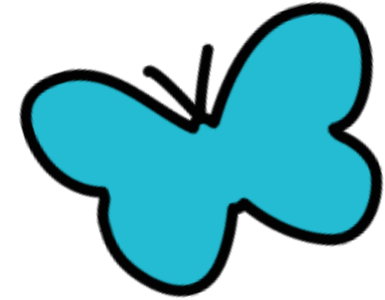
people have interacted with our  
content.



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Please go to:

[PolleEv.com/whitneyraglinbignall921](https://PolleEv.com/whitneyraglinbignall921)



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# What shapes children's mental health?



# Factors That Can Shape the Mental Health of Children

## Depiction of Biobehavioral Theory

Adapted from the U.S. Surgeon General's 2021 Report on Protecting Youth Mental Health



**Society:** Culture, laws and policies

**Environment:** Access to resources such as food and housing

**Community:** Extended family, friends, teachers, coaches, faith groups

**Family:** Parents/caregivers, siblings and others in the home

**Child:** Genetics, personality, stage of development, race/ethnicity

*This is not a comprehensive list.*

[Link to full report: Protecting Youth Mental Health](#)

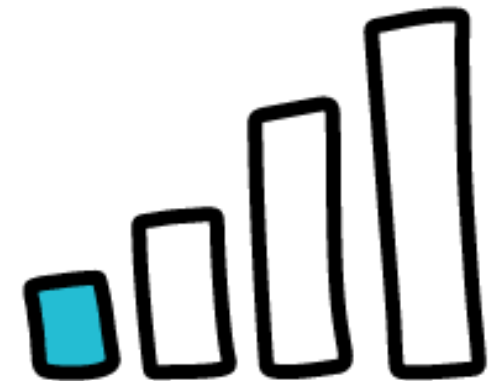


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# Factors That Shape Mental Health

Beyond the difficulties of growing up and finding your identity and place in the world, kids face:

- Bullying
- Pressures of performing well
- Current events: climate concerns, wars, polarized perspectives, safety concerns
- Social media
  - Decrease of other activities
  - Social comparisons
  - Inappropriate sharing, bullying
  - Access to information 24/7
- Chronic Stress



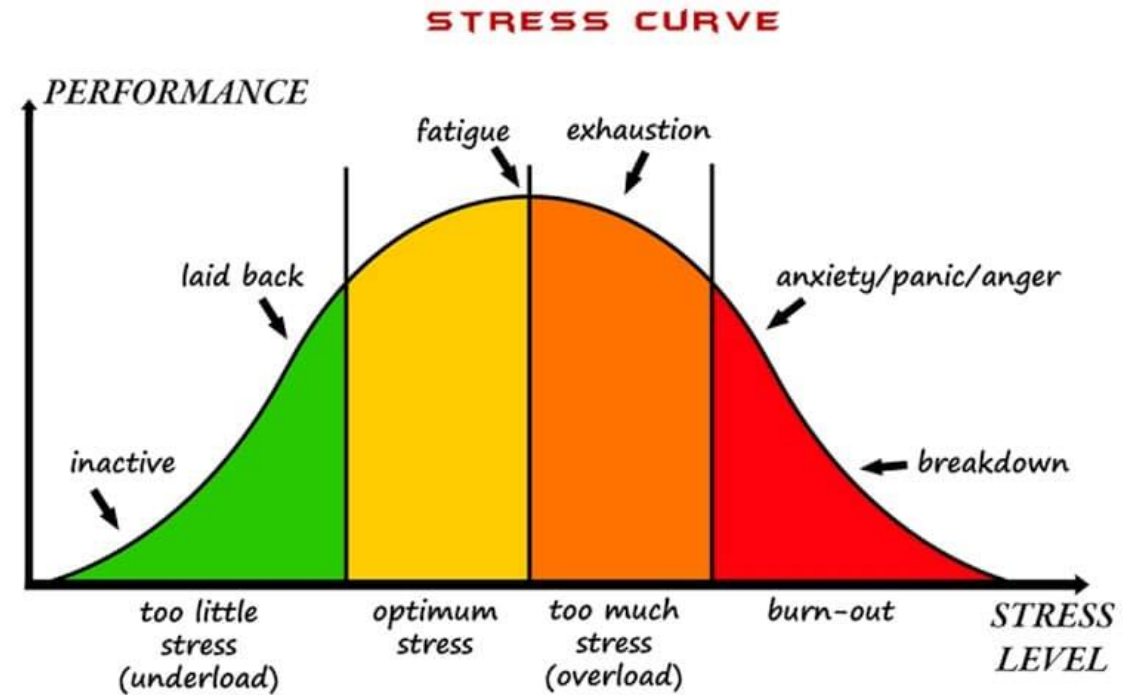
# Chronic Stress

## Stress day after day

- Abuse or neglect
- Violence
- Economic hardships
- Systemic racism/discrimination

## A social determinant of health

- Increases risk of disease
- Disrupts development
  - Our thinking brain is underdeveloped when our emotional and survival brain are constantly on
  - Problems in learning, memory
- Increase in mental health concerns
  - Behavior
  - Mood disorders



<https://stock.adobe.com/search?k=stress+performance+curve>



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# Signs of mental health challenges



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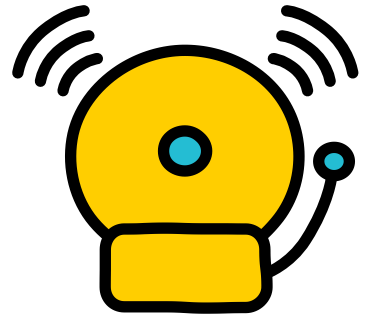
# Undesired Behaviors

Our brains are **not** fully developed until **25 years old!**

- Children cannot think, process, and understand difficult interactions and emotions like adults
- They also do not have the language to express themselves

This means **behavior** is often their way of trying to communicate:

- Not listening or breaking rules
- Talking back
- Leaving the classroom
- Aggression
- Tantrums



# Physical Symptoms

- The mind and the body are connected!
- Children may express headaches, belly aches, insomnia, nausea
  - This can indicate anxiety, trauma, or experiences of bullying.



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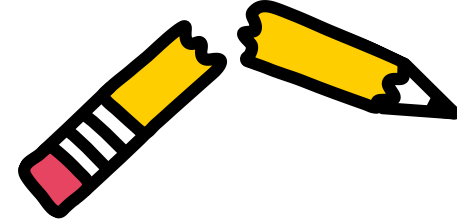
# Withdrawal



- Isolation and withdrawal are often symptoms and indicators of a mental health concern, such as depression or anxiety.
- Withdrawal can also indicate current bullying.



# Learning Difficulties



When a child is having a hard time with their mental health, they can show:

- Difficulty focusing
- Decreased motivation
- Obstacles to speaking up in class or cope with mistakes
- Trouble with organization
- Absenteeism
- Truancy



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# Common Mental Health Disorders in Children:

- Anxiety
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Mood disorders
- Autism
- Disruptive behavior disorders
- Eating disorders
- Traumatic stress disorders



# Anxiety



- Avoidance
- Excessive worry
- Difficulty controlling worry
- Physical manifestations
  - Restlessness, feeling keyed up or on edge
  - Fatigued
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Irritability
  - Muscle tension
  - Sleep disturbances (difficulty falling or staying asleep; or restless, unsatisfying sleep)





# Depression

- Sadness, irritability
- Hopelessness, guilt, worthlessness
- Decreased interest in preferred activities
- Increased/Decreased appetite
- Increased/Decreased sleep
- Increased/Decreased motor movement
- Fatigue/Loss of energy
- Decreased concentration, hyperfocus on situations
- Suicidality



# ADHD



- Having a lot of energy
- Struggling to sit still
- Fidgeting all the time
- Often running and climbing on things
- Constantly talking or interrupting others
- Being very impatient
- Loud
- Being easily distracted
- Making careless mistakes
- Having a hard time following instructions
- Often forgetting or losing things
- Having trouble staying organized
- Appearing not to listen
- Avoiding things that are hard





## Disruptive Behavior Disorders

- Being unusually angry and irritable
- Frequently losing their temper
- Being easily annoyed
- Arguing with authority figures
- Refusing to follow rules
- Deliberately annoying people
- Blaming others for mistakes
- Being vindictive

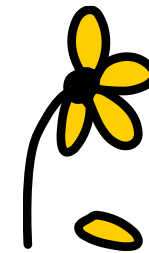
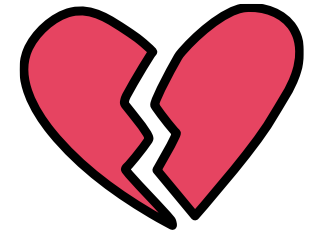


# Trauma



- Obsession with death or safety
- Issues with sleeping, eating, attention and regulating emotions
- May start to avoid school, especially if their trauma happened at school





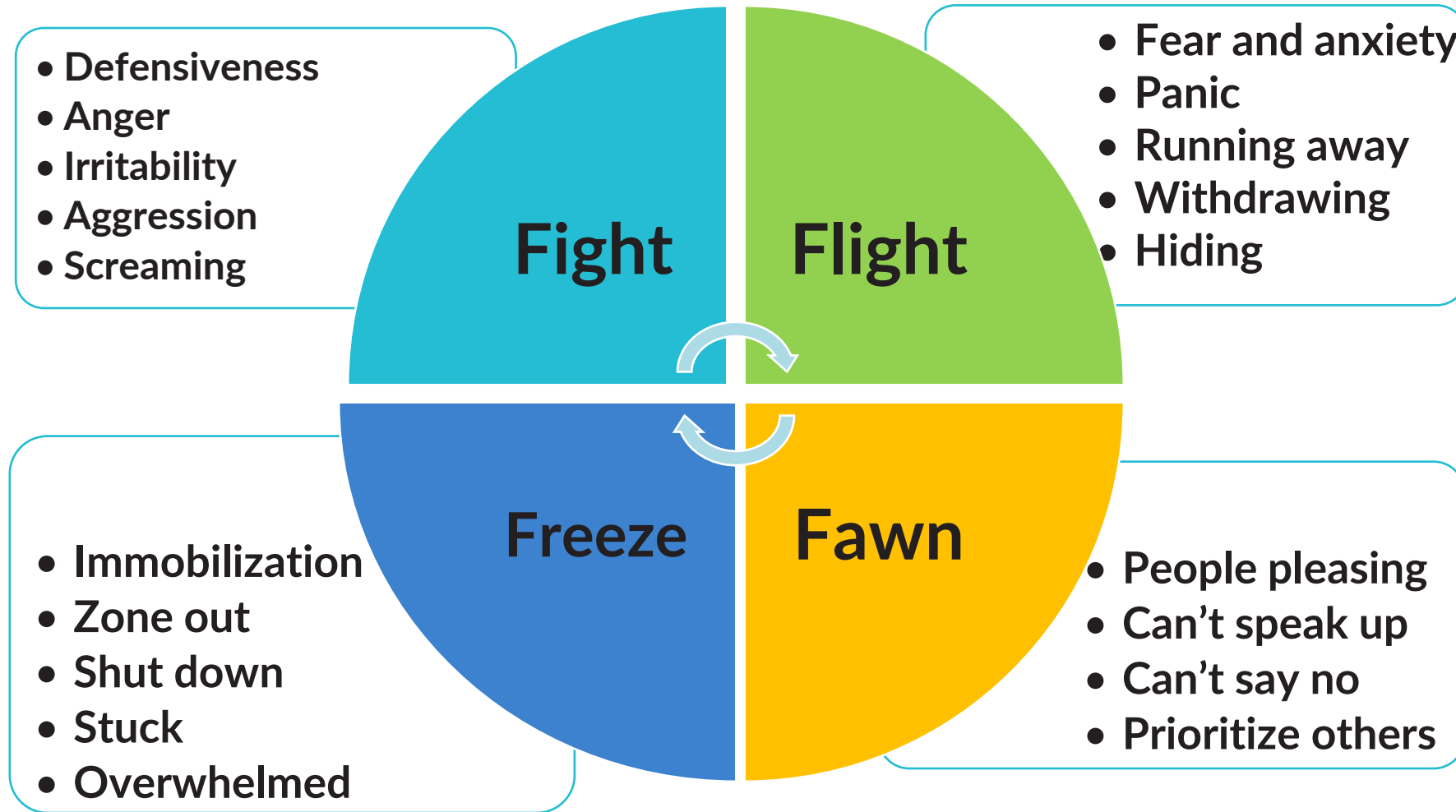
*“Trauma is not just an event that took place sometimes in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on the mind, brain and body... It not only changes how we think and what we think about, but also our very capacity to think.”*

Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*



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# Trauma Response: Behaviors We May See



# *Primary Care Clinician Resources*

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# Primary Care Resources

*Three* guides to help PCCs provide **psychoeducation** and introduce **strategies** to patients and families

- **Anxiety** is the most common mental health disorder in children.
- **Depression** is one of the top 10 reasons patients see their PCC.
- **ADHD** is most commonly diagnosed in pediatric primary care offices.



# Primary Care Resources



This guide teaches **exposure** for gradually facing anxiety triggers, along with practical tools to manage symptoms such as thought-challenging and managing panic.



This guide teaches **behavior activation** by encouraging kids to engage in activities to break the depression cycle. Behavioral activation has been shown to be as effective as cognitive behavioral therapy in reducing depression



This guide introduces ADHD and the **evidence-based treatments** – behavior therapy, medication and school supports. It also includes helpful a link to additional evidence-based resources.

# Dealing with Anxiety



Need more resources on anxious feelings and anxiety disorders? Scan the QR code to visit our website.



## What Is Anxiety?

- Anxiety is your body's alarm system — it alerts you to danger.
- Some people's alarm system is more sensitive and goes off even when there is little to no danger.
- Anxiety becomes an anxiety disorder when it stops you from doing the things you want and need to do.



### Myth

We should avoid things that make us anxious.



### Truth

Avoiding things that make us anxious can make the anxiety worse.

## How Does Anxiety Affect our Lives?

Anxiety can be really bossy and get in the way. What parts of your life are affected by anxiety? Circle those that apply to you.

Family	Friends	Eating
Activities	Sleeping	Other
Mental Health	School	

## How Does Anxiety Make You Feel?

When anxious, you might feel the following things in your body:



Numbness or tingling



Feeling of choking



Trembling or shaking



Shortness of breath



Fear of dying



Chest pain/ Fast heartbeat



Feeling dizzy, unsteady, lightheaded or faint



Headaches



Stomach Upset

## Getting Through The Panic

Sometimes anxiety can feel overwhelming but it will not cause you physical harm. **It is temporary and will go away.** Here are some ideas to help you stay present and get through the moment.

**Feel:** Notice and identify how you're feeling.

**Think:**

- "I know this is anxiety"
- "This won't last forever"
- "I can get through this."

**Do:** Take some deep breaths and 'Take 5' to notice things around you:

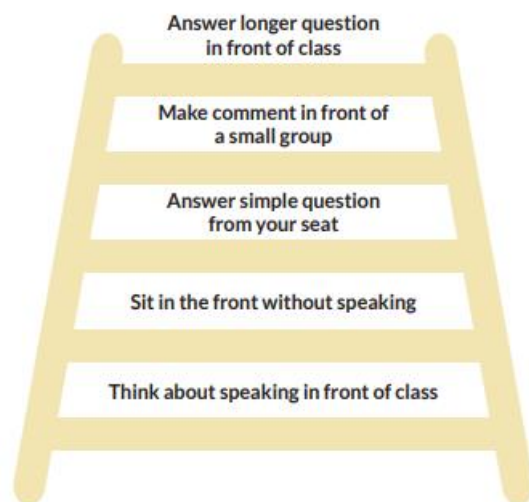
- 5 things you see
- 4 things you feel
- 3 things you hear
- 2 things you smell
- 1 thing you taste

## Facing Our Fears

Avoiding anxiety makes it stronger. Safely facing our fears makes anxiety weaker. While our anxiety might not go away, doing things afraid is the most effective way to live with anxiety.

You can do this by taking small steps towards the thing that makes you nervous. Use the fear ladder example below on helping someone overcome their fear of speaking in front of their class. Small steps start at the bottom and work their way up.

### Facing Fears Ladder



**Goal: Speaking in front of the class**

Thinking about your own anxiety, what are small steps you can take to "face your fears"?

## Noticing and Talking Back to Anxiety

Noticing when your anxiety is talking and knowing how to respond can help. There are three steps to managing worries:

- 1. Catch it:** Notice your worries.
- 2. Name it:** Label it as a worry.
- 3. Talk back:** Challenge your worry.

### Examples

Catch it	Name it	Talk back
"Everyone is going to laugh at me"	"My anxiety is telling me I'm going to mess up and people will laugh at me"	"I've seen others make mistakes and they were OK"
Track your own thoughts in the rows below.		

## Helping Your Child Live Confidently with Anxiety

- Trying to convince a kid that "everything will be OK" often makes anxiety worse.
- Instead, help your child notice and talk back to their anxiety when it is being a bully.
- If anxiety stops your child from doing something, break down the activity into smaller steps to help them face their fears.
- Reserve a specific time to talk about worries with your child. Try to limit discussion of worries outside of that time.
- If symptoms are getting in the way of daily life, seek treatment. There are two types of treatment options for anxiety: therapy or medication.

### Make a Plan

- This tool is to help you get started but does not replace following up with your doctor.
- Talk with your medical professional to about the best next steps.

#### Do you want to?

- ☐ Work on facing fears on your own at home
- ☐ Get more information about therapy
- ☐ Get information about medicine

For more resources on children's mental health, visit:  
**KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org**

# Dealing With Depression



Get more resources for helping children with sadness or depression on our website.

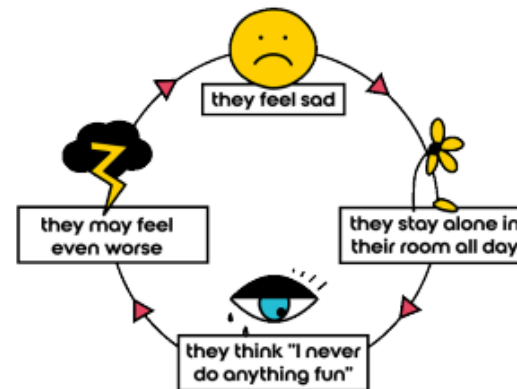


If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, go to the nearest emergency room or call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988.

## What is Depression?

- Depression changes the way you think and what you do.
- Depression makes activities and things that you used to enjoy feel less fun and meaningful, makes you feel less motivated, and have a hard time focusing.

That can lead to getting stuck in a negative cycle.



### Myth

You need a reason to be depressed.



### Truth

Depression can happen for many reasons, not just life circumstances or events.

## How Does Depression Make You Feel?

### How does depression make you feel?

- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Bored
- ☐ Tired

### How does depression make you think?

- ☐ Only noticing the negative
- ☐ Saying mean things about yourself
- ☐ Telling you nothing matters
- ☐ Thinking you are a failure
- ☐ Nothing will ever get better

### How does depression affect what you do?

- ☐ Spending less time with others
- ☐ Not doing fun things
- ☐ Not getting any work or chores done
- ☐ Not doing the things I used to enjoy
- ☐ Sleeping too much or too little





## Steps to Improve Your Mood

We know that doing things will help you feel better. Start small and build up over time. That can help break the negative cycle to lift your mood.

Pick one area from the 4 below to get started.

**Think of one small step you might take in this area. It could be something like:**

- 1. Connection:** Spend quality time with someone you like. For example, share something funny with a friend.
- 2. Health:** Care for your body by doing physical activity or eating and sleeping well. For example, do something active for 5 minutes after school.
- 3. Success:** Make a goal and plan to make progress toward it. For example, create a list of upcoming assignments and due dates.
- 4. Creativity:** Express yourself through creative activities. For example, draw, write or color for 5-10 minutes every day.

**What is the one small step you are going to try this week?**

**When will I do this?**

**Where will I do this?**

**Who will help me?**

Make it a habit! Keep coming back to the goal you chose.

## Noticing and Talking Back to Depression

Sometimes thoughts get in the way of taking steps to improve your mood. Noticing when your depression is talking and knowing how to respond is can help. There are three steps to managing depressive thoughts.

- 1. Catch it:** Notice your negative thought.
- 2. Name it:** Label it as a negative thought.
- 3. Talk back:** Challenge your negative thought.

### Examples

Catch it	Name it	Talk back
"Nothing is going to get better"	"My depression is telling me nothing is going to get better"	"There are things I can do to help me feel better."
Track your own thoughts in the row below.		

For more resources on children's mental health, visit:  
**KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org**

## Helping Your Child Deal with Depression

Depression can be driven by a negative cycle. When your child feels down or angry, their thoughts focus on how bad they feel. Then, those feelings try to talk them out of doing things they care about. They end up doing less and feeling worse.

### But they don't have to stay stuck!

- Find the balance between acknowledging your child's very real struggles with depression and taking action to get them unstuck.
- The more they do, the more energy they will have.
- To break the cycle of depression, you have to take action.
- Start planning small activities to increase motivation.
- It will take ongoing effort over time. If symptoms are getting in the way of daily life, seek treatment. There are two types of treatment options for depression, therapy or medication.

### Make a Plan

- This tool is to help you get started but does not replace following up with your doctor.
- Talk with your medical professional to about the best next steps.

#### Do you want to?

- ☐ Take steps to boost your mood on your own
- ☐ Get more information about therapy
- ☐ Get more information about medicine

# Supporting Your Child with ADHD



Need more resources on ADHD?  
Scan the QR code to visit our website.



## What is ADHD? How Does it Impact Your Child?

ADHD is a disorder caused by **brain differences**. It can affect behavior, emotions, memory, planning, and thinking.

- **Inattentive:** Easily distracted, trouble paying attention, staying organized
- **Hyperactive:** impulsive; fidgety, cannot sit still and often interrupts or acts before thinking
- **Combined:** Both inattentive and hyperactive symptoms

ADHD doesn't usually go away but will change over time. Younger kids may be more energetic and disruptive. Older kids may struggle more with managing their time or relationships.

### Check what you have noticed in your child:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quickly forgetting      | <input type="checkbox"/> Losing things               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low motivation          | <input type="checkbox"/> Struggles with big emotions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rushing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble sitting still       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acting without thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Immature                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble listening       | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty fitting in       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Can't finish things     |  |

## ADHD Can Be Managed

Kids do best when they have a combination of behavior therapy, medicine and school support. Without this, kids with ADHD may be at risk of:

- Getting in trouble (suspended/drop out of school)
- Risky behaviors (e.g., reckless driving, substance use)
- Rejection by peers/classmates
- Difficulty getting and keeping jobs, making less money

## Behavior Therapy

Behavior therapy can help children, parents and teachers manage symptoms, teach skills, and change habits to reduce the impact of ADHD at home, in school, and with friends.

Research shows behavior therapy is the best place to start for most children with ADHD. It is strongly recommended before starting medications for children under 6 years of age.

### Here are 3 things you can start doing now!

1. Praise the behaviors you want to see more; ignore behaviors you want to see less of
2. Develop clear and consistent routines
3. Break down tasks into smaller parts; help them finish each task



### You may already be doing some of these things!

Children with ADHD often require these parenting skills to be used creatively and consistently.

## Medicine for Brain Differences

Medicine can help reduce hyperactivity, impulsivity and inattentiveness. Talk to your primary care provider about the best option for your child.

Without medication symptoms could get worse



- Think about ADHD treatment like wearing glasses. Glasses don't fix your eyes, but they only help you see if you wear them!
- Your prescription for your glasses may also change over time, so you want to keep visiting your eye doctor to make sure you have the right glasses!
- Medicine only works when you take it. ADHD medicine typically wears off in 4-10 hours.

### Things you should know about starting medication:

- It doesn't increase a child's risk for long-term addiction and may reduce risk of substance use.
- Your provider will work to find the right medicine to help manage your child's symptoms.

Combining both behavioral therapy and medicine has shown the best results.

Medicine helps lower symptoms and behavioral therapy helps kids function at home and school.

## Helping Kids with ADHD at School

Children with ADHD sometimes need extra support to do well in school. Thirty to 50% of kids with ADHD have trouble learning. Letting the school know about the diagnosis can help your child get the support they need.



**TIP!** Check in with your school to see if they are already giving extra support.

Schools can give extra support in two ways:

- A **504** provides accommodations. It can include changes to the kid's environment to promote success such as where they sit, what their day looks like and getting help staying organized.
- An **Individual Educational plan (IEP)** can include special education services. This happens after formal school testing.

### Managing your child's behavior in the classroom is essential.

One core strategy is: a **daily behavioral report card (DRC)**.

- A daily behavioral report card is a way for teachers to communicate with caregivers about the positive and negative behaviors they are seeing from your child each day in the classroom.

## What's Next? Making a Plan

You can have a child who is thriving with ADHD, but it does take a lot of work.

### What steps are you ready to take?

#### I Want To...

BEHAVIOR

- ☐ Learn more about behavioral strategies that help with ADHD
- ☐ Interested in starting behavioral therapy
- ☐ Not interested at this time

MEDICINE

- ☐ Learn more about medications that help with ADHD
- ☐ Interested in starting medication
- ☐ Not interested at this time

SCHOOL

- ☐ Inform school of diagnosis and discuss current help
- ☐ Determine if my child needs additional supports (504, IEPs)
- ☐ Learn more about Daily Report Cards (discuss establishing DRC with teacher)

For more resources on children's mental health, visit:  
**KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org**

# Who are these materials for?

- **Anxiety and Depression**
  - Can be used widely, including with patients who have anxiety or depression concerns or new/existing diagnosis.
  - Geared toward patients and their families
- **ADHD**
  - Created *specifically* for patients with a new ADHD diagnosis, families who need an education refresher, or those who have questions
  - Geared more toward parents/caregivers

## Recommended Age Ranges

- **Anxiety:** 6 years and up
- **Depression:** 12 years and up
- **ADHD:** Age upon diagnosis

Can be used with kids of all ages. However, some of the strategies may work better or need to be modified depending on the child's developmental needs.





# When needing a higher level of service

Finding Help  
Resources

# Signs to Seek Therapy

We all feel all emotions  
Stress is normal...

**T**wo weeks or more

**A**s many days as not

**G**etting in the way of usual Activities



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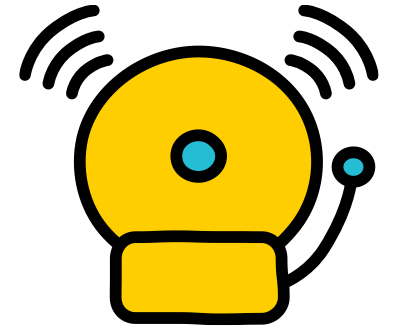
# Signs to Seek Therapy

- Grades decreasing
- Not wanting to participate in activities they used to enjoy
- Not spending time with friends or family
- Getting in trouble, oppositional behaviors
- Conflict with friends or family
- Decline in their daily activities (taking care of their hygiene, cleanliness)
- Changes in mood (e.g., crying or anger)
- Regression in behaviors for younger kids



# When to seek immediate help

- Self-injury
- Suicidal thoughts
- Significant impairment
- Increased distress or difficulty coping



Suicide & Crisis Lineline: Call or Text 988 or your local crisis number.

[Link to article: "When to Worry About Your Child's Mental Health"](#)



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# Treatment Takes Time



- Treatment can take a few weeks before a child feels improvement.
  - A therapist needs a few sessions to get to know the child and set goals.
  - Stick with it!
- BUT- relationship with therapist matters. Don't be afraid to ask for a new therapist!
- Symptoms will get better with the proper care and attention over time, so even though the depressed person might feel very bad at times, it is important to remember that things can get better.




# Types of Mental Health Professionals

- Psychologists (PhD, PsyD)
- Social worker (LCSW, LISW)
- Counselor (LPC)
- Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)
- Psychiatrists
- Nurse Practitioners



# What to Look For

## How to Find a Culturally Informed Therapist

 Ariana Hoet, PhD

[En Español](#)

[Copy Link](#)

### Article Summary



Search for local allies.

Do your research.

Seek diverse providers.

Ask questions.

Give the relationship a chance.



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# Building Mental Wellness:

Supercharging Your  
Anticipatory Guidance





# A Role at Every Level



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# Primary Care Providers' Role

Parents and caregivers are looking to their medical providers for answers.

- Trust you
- Identifies you as a key resource

**Tools to maximize your anticipatory guidance to build mental wellness**



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# 7 Ways to Build Mental Wellness for all Ages

**S**trong relationships

**T**ime management: Routines and schedules

**R**ules and clear expectations: Behavior management

**E**mootional regulation and coping

**N**avigating technology

**G**ood sleep

**T**ackle stress: Problem solve and self-care

**H**ealthy habits

[Link to resources for mental wellness](#)

# Strong Relationships



Parenting is a protective factor

- Good social and emotional interactions can offset impact of stressors of poverty on mental health

Community belonging and connection, social support, and trust in others linked to positive mental health

Network size is a protective factor

- Especially for minoritized groups



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# Strong Relationships: Connection

Encourage families to spend 1:1 time with their children, starting in infancy.

- Narrate what is happening
- Talk about feelings
- Participate

### Quality Time Builders

Need some inspiration for what to do during intentional child time? When possible, let your child pick what they'd like to do. Pick things that won't cause conflict or stress.

#### Younger Children

1. Go to a playground.
2. Try pretend play, such as playing house or super heroes.
3. Have a dance party.
4. Play with blocks or building materials.
5. Make a sensory bin.
6. Play in the sink or let them help with small chores.
7. Give your kid a bath (bubbles or toys welcome).
8. Play I-Spy while you're driving.
9. Color together or do a craft.
10. Read a book.
11. Kick or throw a ball back and forth.
12. Play with a toy you haven't used in a while.
13. (Fill in) \_\_\_\_\_
14. (Fill in) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Older Children

1. Play a board game.
2. Cook or bake something fun.
3. Build models or design your own city.
4. Solve a puzzle.
5. Go on a walk or hike.
6. Play catch or soccer at a park.
7. Watch or make a video together.
8. Let your child teach you a dance move.
9. Listen to a song your child likes in the car.
10. Make a craft together.
11. Try an activity they liked when they were younger.
12. (Fill in) \_\_\_\_\_
13. (Fill in) \_\_\_\_\_

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### Family Belonging Builders

Set aside time for family rituals like cooking a meal together or storytime.

Create space for one-on-one parent-child time.

Develop a sense of shared meaning by telling family stories together.

Select activities together.

Schedule regular family check-in times.

Start a fun tradition with roles for every family member.

Find things in common.

Work on family projects together.

Ask for a hug or high-five.

Share observations about what gifts each family member has.

Hang up photos of family members.

Visit [KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org](https://www.KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org) for more resources!

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# Strong Relationships: Other Resources



## Friendship Builders



Make eye contact with your friend.



Be kind.



If you feel frustrated, take a deep breath.



Listen to what they tell you.



Take turns talking.



Think about how they might be feeling.



Work on a puzzle, game or activity together.



Apologize if you've hurt a friend's feelings.



If you've messed something up, ask how you can fix it.



Spend time in nature together.



Read a book together.



Volunteer together.

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## Connecting with School: Parent's Guide



Did you know that when a child feels connected to their school, it helps their mental health? You can help this connection by knowing who to contact and activities they can be involved in. Consider using this to guide your conversations with the school.

1) What are the names of my child's teachers:

---

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How often should I be checking in with them? (weekly / monthly / each quarter)

How do I contact them if I have concerns? (email / call school / text teacher / send in a note with child)

Contact Information:

Teacher #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher #3: \_\_\_\_\_

2) What is the school guidance counselor's name:

---

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In what ways can a school counselor help?

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Contact Information:

---

---

---

3) Are there other staff member(s) important for my child (i.e., nurse or education specialist)?

---

---

---

Contact Information:

---

---

---

4) Are there important events and meetings at school for me to attend? When are they?

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

5) What are some important dates for my child (this could include testing, safety drills, days off, field trips, school dances)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

6) What are some clubs, sports, or activities that my child can participate in? How do I sign my child up if we're interested?

---

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---

## Conversation Starters About Friendship (all ages)

### Conversation Starters

What character from a movie/book/show do you feel would be a great friend?

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### Conversation Starters

What kinds of things do you look for in friends?

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### Conversation Starters

How do you make friends?

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### Conversation Starters

What kind of things do you think are important to your friends?

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### Conversation Starters

Who is your best friend right now? What do you like about them?

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### Conversation Starters

What do you do when you and a friend disagree?

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# Time Management

## Schedules/Routines

- Notice how children watch the same movie over and over? Kids love repetition!
- Routines help children know what to expect and feel safe
- Decreases power struggles
- Added perk: more independence!

## Family Routines

- Morning routines
- Family dinners
- Daily conversations

[Link to article: "How Routines Help Kids' Mental Health"](#)

[Link to article: "Getting Back into Routines"](#)



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# Rules/Expectations: Behavior Management

Focus on the positive and the desired behaviors.

**Catch them being good.** Kids respond to frequent reinforcement—midmorning or the end of the day—rather than at the end of the week or month.

**Give them choices**

- *“Do you want to brush your teeth or put your pjs on first?”*

**Establish family rules and expectations**

[Link to behavioral management articles](#)



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# Emotion Regulation & Coping

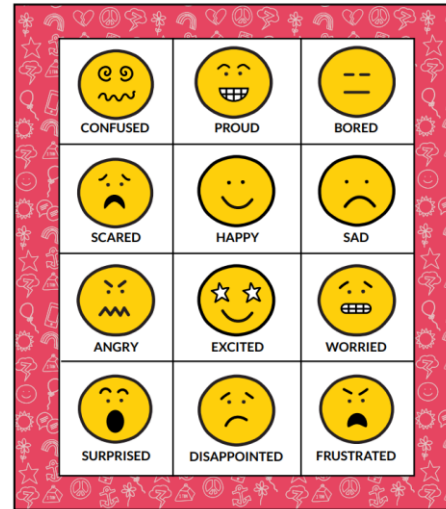
**Model** talking about feelings

**Label** the child's feelings

**Describe** the child's feelings

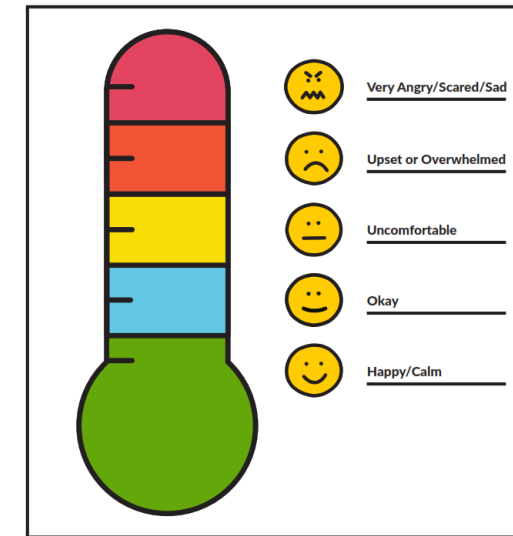
**Prompt** child to practice sharing their feelings

Helping Kids Cope with Emotions: Feelings Chart



Feelings Meter

Take the temperature of your feelings.

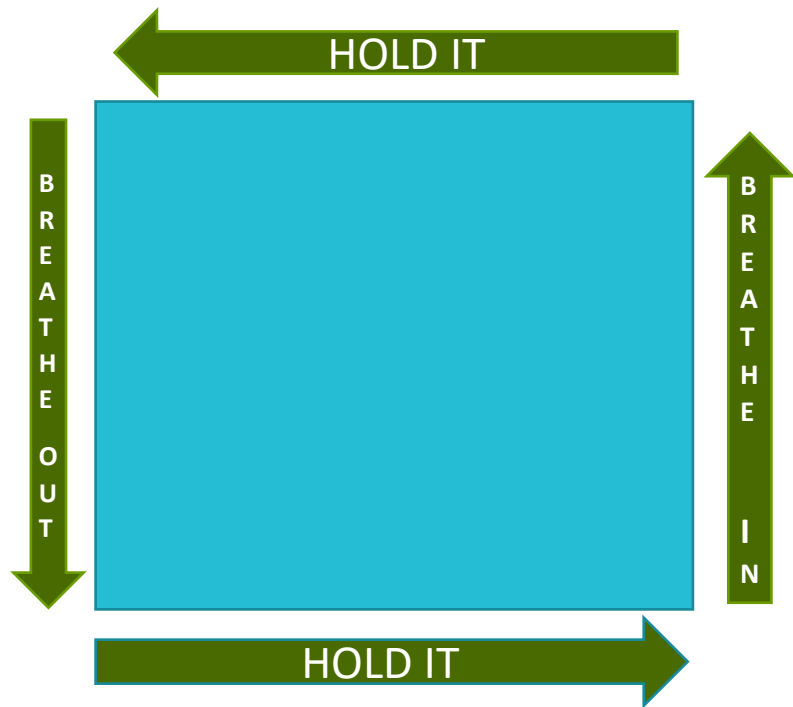


[link to articles on emotion regulation & coping](#)



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# Emotion Regulation & Coping



## “TAKE 5”

5 things you see  
4 things you feel  
3 things you hear  
2 things you smell  
1 thing you taste

### Deep Breathing Exercises



1. Lay down or sit comfortably.
2. Put one hand on your chest and the other hand on your belly.
3. Imagine you have a balloon underneath your belly button that inflates as you breathe in and deflates as you breathe out.
4. Breathe in slowly through your nose while you count to 4. Hold your breath for a few seconds. Breathe out slowly through your mouth like you're blowing through a straw while you count to 4. Rest for a few seconds and repeat.

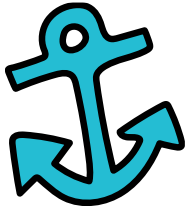


- Practice deep breathing for 2-3 minutes.
- The hand over your stomach should move in and out with your breathing.
- Keep your shoulders as relaxed as possible; they should not rise as you inhale.



# Navigating Screen Time

Not all screen time is created equal!



“There's a huge difference between an hour spent shooting zombies in an app versus an hour spent composing music online.”

Passive

Interactive

Communication

Content creation



American Academy of Pediatrics, May 2023



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## Family Gaming Plan



Having fun is a good thing! And games are just one way we can have fun. Use this to work together to think about what kinds of games your family wants to spend time on and what limits you all agree to put on game play.

Revisit this plan every few months to make sure it still lines up with what's important to your family!

### What Do We Love to Do?

If we've hit our limit on gaming, here are other things we can consider doing. As a family, some other things we enjoy doing include:

- 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5: \_\_\_\_\_

### Priorities

Games are fun, but there are lots of other important things in our lives. What needs to get done before you can play games:

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chores       | <input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School work  | <input type="checkbox"/> Community activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family time  | <input type="checkbox"/> Time with friends    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outside play | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                |

### How Do We Feel When We Play?

When we play online/video games, we are looking for games that make us feel (circle up to 3):



### Limits

It's important to have and respect limits. Gaming is just one part of our lives.

Check the boxes for limits that we agree to follow:

- ☐ No games \_\_\_ hours before bedtime.
- ☐ We will limit gaming to \_\_\_ hours/day.
- ☐ I will turn in gaming controllers when my time is up.
- ☐ We will not game until schoolwork is done.
- ☐ No gaming with strangers.
- ☐ No signing up for a new gaming site platform without discussing it first.
- ☐ We will not share personal details (real name, home town, etc.) with strangers in a game.
- ☐ We will not use demeaning language or insults while gaming.
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

### We agree to the following consequences:

If the family rules are not followed, then: (some ideas might include no games for X days, giving up a certain game/gaming platform for a time, etc.)

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

All who agree will initial in the box below:

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



## Conversation Starters: Talking to Kids About Social Media

<b>Conversation Starters</b>  Who do you follow on social media? What interests you about their posts?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation	<b>Conversation Starters</b>  What's the best part about talking with your friends online?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation	<b>Conversation Starters</b>  How do you feel when people like your post? When they don't?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation	<b>Conversation Starters</b>  What kind of things do you see that are weird or uncomfortable?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation
<b>Conversation Starters</b>  What don't you like about social media?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation	<b>Conversation Starters</b>  How do you decide who to follow?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation	<b>Conversation Starters</b>  What things aren't you doing because you're spending time on social media?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation	<b>Conversation Starters</b>  How do you feel after spending time on social media?  The Kids Mental Health Foundation



Follow us and sign up for our free mental health resource emails to help you start conversations, and build skills to boost mental health and wellness in children at [KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org/Sign-Up](https://KidsMentalHealthFoundation.org/Sign-Up).

[Link to resources for kids and technology](#)



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# Tackle Stress: Problem-Solving

## Making a **PLAN**

**P**roblem:

**L**ist possible ideas:

**A**ssess the good and bad of each idea:

Pros:

Cons:

**N**ow pick one to try:

\*\*\*Sometimes you can't change the situation or problem-solve...



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# Tackle Stress: Problem-Solving

## Stress Buster Bingo

Create positivity by completing these small, yet simple things that will reinforce a healthy mindset. Share over a meal or quiet time what you did that day! Decide what small reward or treat you or your children will get when the card is completed, which equals a bingo.

Listen to a favorite song. What is it?	Text, call or email someone you miss. Who was that person?	Read a story from a positive news outlet or a book with a positive message. What was the story about?
Paint/color/draw. Share it with someone!	FREE SPACE Tell us what you did!	Tell your favorite joke. Share it!
Watch a funny video. What was it about?	Exercise for at least 20 minutes. What did you do?	Do something you enjoy! What did you choose?
Cook or bake a favorite recipe. What did you make?	Write a letter and leave it in someone's mailbox. What did you have to say to them?	Download a mindfulness app and complete an activity. What activity did you complete?

Share how you worked on creating positivity by using #KidsMentalHealthFoundation on your social media.



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## Less Stress Is Best!

We know life is stressful and sometimes you need resources to help. Resources can be all kinds of different things - like types of support (people, organizations, materials to do a project) but also the amount of time or energy you have.

**Step 1:** What resources do you have? Are there resources you need or need more of? Identify one resource you could try to get more of and a step you will take to get that.

**Step 2:** Self-care is also an important part of managing stress. How well are you taking care of yourself? If you need help increasing self-care - try making a plan!  
What do I want to get from self care? How will it help me?

**Step 3:** Come up with ideas of ways to start and then try one.  
Set a goal. Find areas that you could make a change and come up with 3 ideas you could try. Then set a plan for yourself.

### Example:

**Goal:** Having more energy or being in a better mood.

**Areas I could change:** Get enough sleep or move my body more.

### Ideas:

- Put down my phone 15 minutes earlier.
- Try deep breathing at night to help fall asleep.
- Ask my family member to watch my kids for a few hours on the weekend, so I can take a nap or go for a walk.

**Plan:** Put down my phone 15 minutes before bed this week.

### Goal:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Ideas:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Plan:

\_\_\_\_\_



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## Be Kind to Yourself



When feeling stressed, it is easy to see the things that aren't working or areas we aren't doing as best. Instead, try celebrating wins!

**Step 1:** What are you doing well? Write down all the ways you feel like you are good or OK in life.

**Step 2:** If a friend saw all that you do, what would they say to encourage you?

**Step 3:** Our thoughts will sometimes feel like a bully in our heads, only telling us negative things. Our thoughts play a role in how we feel - and we must push back and challenge those thoughts, especially if they only increase our stress.  
Use the chart to help you identify situations when you feel more stressed and have negative thoughts. Identify the thoughts you have and then work to change it to a more balanced thought.

Situation	What negative thought came up after this situation?	What feeling did this cause?	What is a more balanced way to look at this situation?	What feeling do I have when I have more balanced thinking?
Rushing to drop off kids to school - knowing we are going to be late	"Why am I the only parent that struggles with? Everyone is going to think I'm a bad parent!"	Shame, embarrassment	The kids might be a few minutes late but starting today I'm going to work to create a schedule.	More relaxed Determined

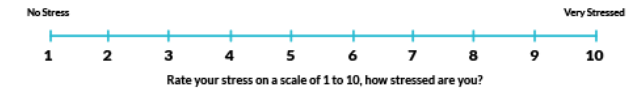


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[link to resources for handling stress](#)

## My Stress Management Plan

### Identify Your Stress



What areas are stressing you out? Check all that apply.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child's behavior or development | <input type="checkbox"/> Family demands | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring for others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child's health or safety        | <input type="checkbox"/> Finances       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work demands                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____      |

With the areas causing you the most stress - are there any changes you can make to reduce the stress?

Problem solving can help when trying to develop a plan to reduce stress.

**1.** Choose a goal you want to work toward. This could be: cope with stress, reduce my workload, manage sources of stress.

**2.** Come up with some ideas that could help, like: ask for support, give myself grace or taking action.

This exercise is just for you - and we want you to pick something that you feel makes the most sense for you and your goals.

### Example:

**Goal:** Reduce the amount of stress I have when I get home.

### Ideas:

- ☒ Make a menu for the week so I don't have to figure out what's for dinner
- ☐ Stick to bedtimes for the kids
- ☐ Spend 15 minutes journaling or reading before bed

Write a goal or two below. Under each goal, write several ideas you could try that would change one thing. Write the pros and cons for each idea. Pick one to try and see if it helps. If not, circle back to another idea.



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# Good Sleep

## Sleep schedules are important!

- Recommend same bedtime and awake times every day.

Can introduce visual routines to help with bedtime battles.

### Teens:

- No naps in the afternoon
- Use bed for sleep only
- Limit screens in bedrooms

## Bedtime battle strategies and [printouts](#)

- Bedtime pass
- Good morning light

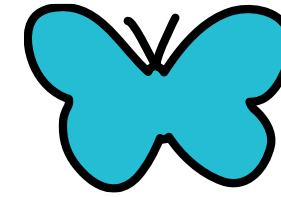


[Link to sleep resources](#)



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# Healthy Habits



## Physical Health

- Physical activity
- Nutrition

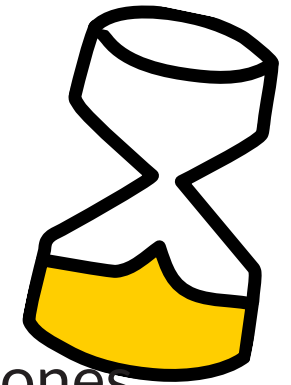
## Fun activities together

- Read together everyday
- Family board game night
- Creativity time

## Cultivate an [attitude of gratitude](#)

- Practice daily gratitude
- Make a gratitude jar

## [Spread kindness](#)



## Allow time to unplug

- Technology free times/zones

[Link to mental wellness articles](#)



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# Healthy Habits

“Behavioral activation” is a protective factor for depression and stress

- Valued activities
- Fun activities
- Mastery activities

## Choose Your Own Action Adventure

We know that doing things will help you feel better. Start small and build up over time.

Pick your favorite 3-5 activities from each category. Every day, pick an activity from your list to try for at least a few minutes.

Fun	Proud	Connect
<input type="checkbox"/> Watch a funny video	<input type="checkbox"/> Practice a sport or skill	<input type="checkbox"/> Hang out with a family member or friend
<input type="checkbox"/> Sing, dance or listen to music	<input type="checkbox"/> Create an art/craft project	<input type="checkbox"/> Call or text a family member or friend
<input type="checkbox"/> Ride a bike, skateboard or scooter	<input type="checkbox"/> Play a musical instrument	<input type="checkbox"/> Join a club or after-school activity
<input type="checkbox"/> Go on a hike or walk	<input type="checkbox"/> Organize an area of your room	<input type="checkbox"/> Help someone with something
<input type="checkbox"/> Go to a playground or park	<input type="checkbox"/> Read	<input type="checkbox"/> Interview someone about their life story
<input type="checkbox"/> Take a bath, shower or do some other self-care	<input type="checkbox"/> Take something apart and put it back together	<input type="checkbox"/> Do an activity like baking, crafts, or a board game with someone else
<input type="checkbox"/> Collect something you like	<input type="checkbox"/> Solve a puzzle	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan a fun activity with a friend (movie night, sleepover, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Screentime	<input type="checkbox"/> Build something	<input type="checkbox"/> Write someone a note
<input type="checkbox"/> Nails and makeup	<input type="checkbox"/> Learn about something new	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ (Write in your own)
<input type="checkbox"/> Draw or write about your perfect trip or party	<input type="checkbox"/> Do something you've been putting off or meaning to do.	
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ (Write in your own)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ (Write in your own)	

01/20/2024



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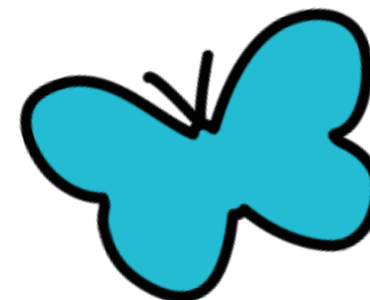
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# Get **FREE** information on kids' mental health and wellness



[link to sign up](#)

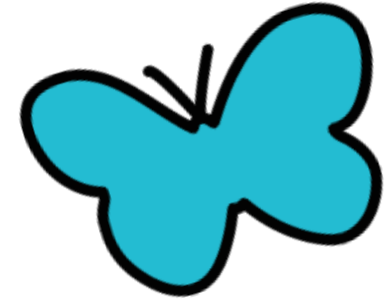
emailed to you once a week!



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Please go to:

[PollEv.com/whitneyraglinbignall921](https://PollEv.com/whitneyraglinbignall921)



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# Thank You!

Let's stay connected!

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