

Promoting Mental Wellness in Primary Care

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KIDS HAS A MENTAL ILLNESS. 1 IN 5

Creating a Platform for Change: OUR MISSION

Because we don't wear our

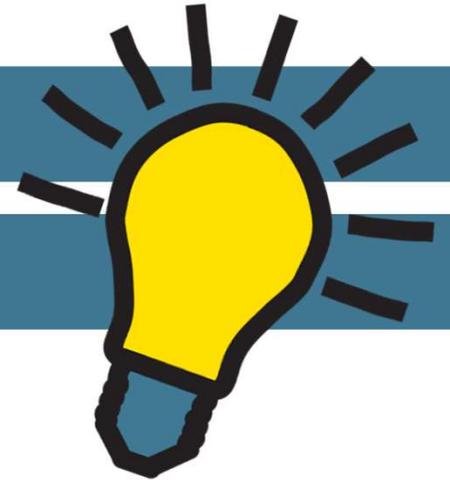
thoughts on our sleeves



On Our Sleeves is on a mission to give expert-created resources to all U.S. communities so **everyone can understand and promote mental health for children.**

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State of Children's Mental Health



The pediatric need is great

50% of all lifetime mental disorders start by the age of 14.

1 in 5 children has a significantly impairing mental disorder; less than half get the treatment they need.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people aged 15-24.

15,000:1 1 psychiatrist for every 15,000 children.

National Institute of Mental Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/

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Risk is higher for children from underrepresented groups

The suicide rate for Black children
ages 5 to 11 has nearly

DOUBLED.

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Suicide attempts for Hispanic girls,
grades 9-12, were

40% HIGHER

than for non-Hispanic white girls
in the same age group, in 2017.

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LGBTQ+ youth report experiencing
**HIGHER LEVELS
OF DEPRESSION**
than non-LGBTQ+ youth.

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Children of Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)
descent are **about as likely to experience mental
health problems** as the general population, but only

HALF AS LIKELY

to seek mental health services.

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National Institute of Mental Health/
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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“... a national health crisis.”

Dec. 2021

— U.S. Surgeon General



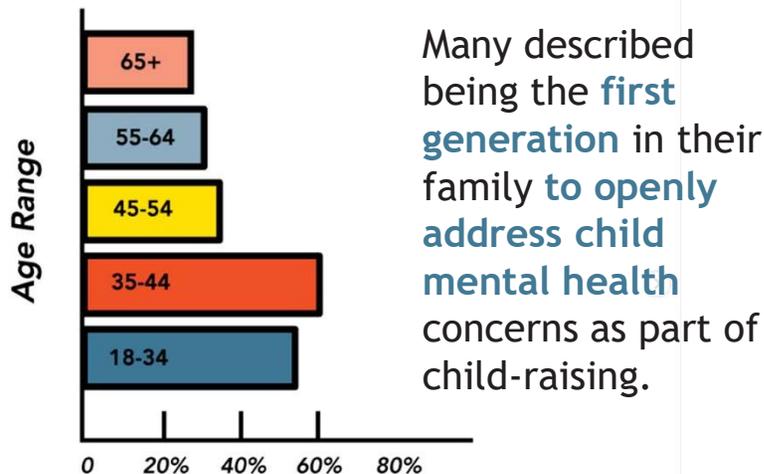
“... a national emergency.”

Oct. 2021

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Children’s Hospital Association
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

But caregivers tell us...

% of Adults Whose Families Talked Openly About Mental Health



Fielded April 5-7, 2022 among 2,063 U.S. adults ages 18 and older (includes 686 parents of kids under 18).

Ripple Effect The Influence of Children's Mental Health on The Great Resignation

Similarly, results of an online Harris Poll on behalf of *On Our Sleeves* found:

93% of parents of kids under 18 say it is important for parents and caregivers to talk to their children about mental health

59% need help knowing how to start the conversation around mental health with their children.

43% say their family talked about mental health openly when they were growing up

“

Mental health conversations in my family were **nonexistent**.

As a kid I remember having troubles, but the fact that I did not have anyone to talk to about the way I was feeling made me feel like **I had to bury those emotions**.

I think it was something **passed from my parent's generation**, their parents did the same thing to them.

I realize it **was not right to raise my kid the same way** and decided to start learning once he was born. I know how it feels to just suffer in silence and **I did not want that for my son**.

”

-- Sofia*, Hispanic, Millennial working mother

Treatment alone cannot solve the issue



“We can’t treat our way out of this crisis. There will never be enough therapists. So, we need brief models of treatment and prevention work so that we can decrease the need for treatment.”

March 2022

— Dr. Frank C. Worrell, President, American Psychological Association



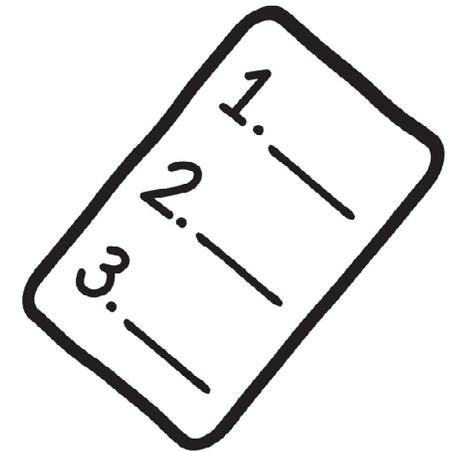
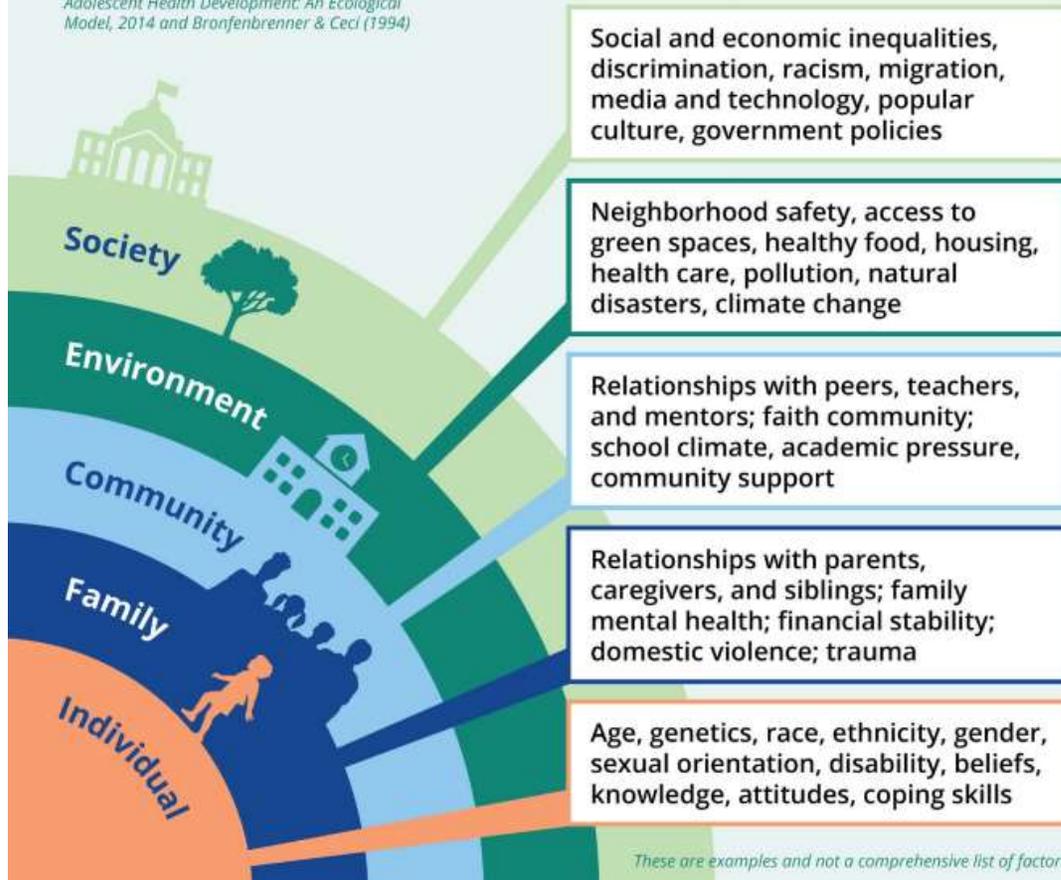
What shapes
children's
mental health?

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FACTORS THAT CAN SHAPE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE



Source: Adapted from WHO's *Determinants of Adolescent Health Development: An Ecological Model*, 2014 and Bronfenbrenner & Ceci (1994)



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Factors that shape children's mental health

- Many factors ranging from genetics, to environment (surgeon general, Dec, 2021)
- 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 change, war, current civil rights movement since 2020
 - Social media
 - Decrease of other activities
 - Social comparisons
 - Inappropriate sharing, Bullying
 - Access to information 24/7



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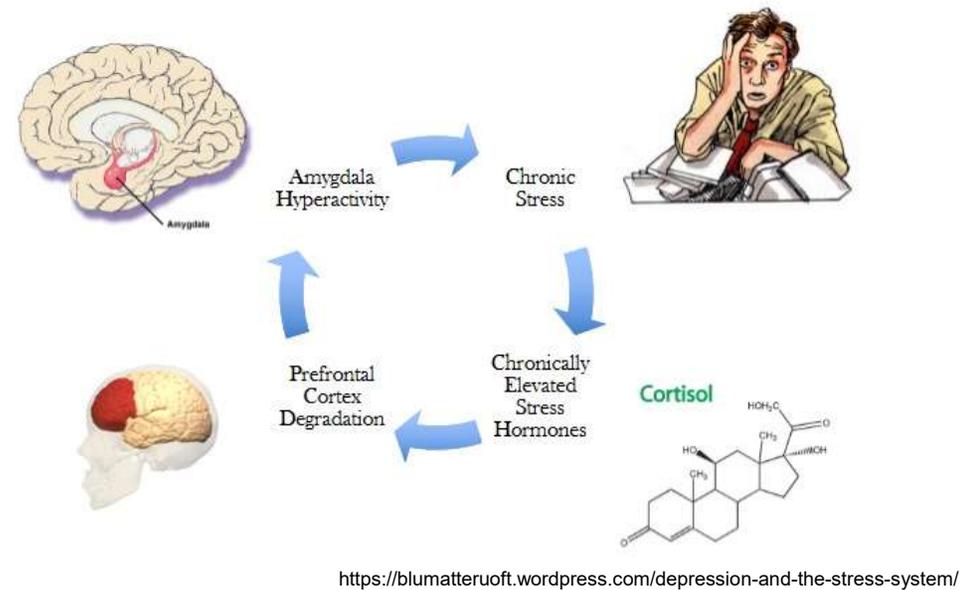
Chronic stress

- 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

HPA Dysfunction (too much stress)



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Racism & weathering effect

- Discrimination and racism (race/ethnicity, immigration, sexual orientation, etc) linked with negative mental health
- Weathering effect
 - Term coined by Dr. Arline Geronimus, public health researcher
 - It's not that ethnic/racial minorities are genetically more at risk or that they're making bad choices- it's the constant, daily stressors that add up and "weather" the body.



Other cultural factors

- Media coverage of racial violence
- Immigration experience
 - Acculturation & acculturation gap
 - Immigrant paradox



**What are some
signs and
symptoms?**

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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



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



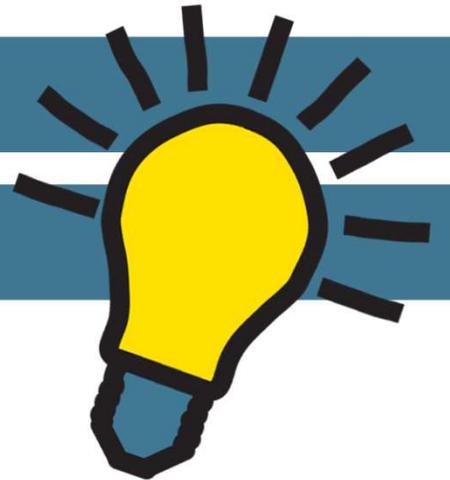


Teaching mental wellness strategies

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Well-child visit conversations

Infancy





Looking ahead

Family relationships

Routines and schedules

Sleep

Introducing solids

Tantrums

Family relationships



- Parenting is a protective factor
 - Good social and emotional interactions can offset impact of stressors of poverty on mental health
- Starting at the newborn visit, encouraging healthy family interactions is important
 - Talking to baby, reading together
 - Mindful play, screen free time
 - Social smiling

Routines and schedules

- Starting at the newborn visits, talk to families about how routines help children know what to expect and feel safe
 - Helps with sleep and eating too!
- Discuss recommended feeding and sleeping schedules (as much as possible, newborns are hard 😊)



Sleep

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/good-sleep>



- **Newborn visit: Sleep Onset Association**
 - *“Children may get used to having certain things - like rocking, breastfeeding- and then become unable to fall asleep without that thing. They may also have a hard time staying asleep when that thing they are used to is not present all. This is called a sleep association.”*
 - Come up with ideas together of associations families can start from day one:
 - Swaddle
 - Sound machine
 - Feeding at the start of the bedtime routine
 - Putting to sleep awake, but drowsy
- **6 month visit: Don’t need to feed overnight.**

6-9 month WCC: Introducing solids

- Picky eating can create a difficult battle between parents and children, leading to a strained relationship.
- We can set families up for success by setting realistic expectations
 - We want to explore and introduce, we don't expect kids to like it at first
 - This is where we share the stat of needing to try a food 15 times!
 - Share portions and expected nutrition intake to decrease anxiety.

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9-12 month WCC: Tantrums

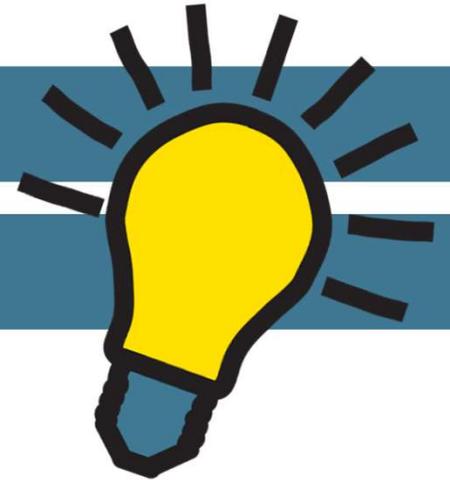
- Kids as young as 9 months old may start showing tantrums.
 - Start by normalizing and setting the expectation
- Discuss ways to respond
 - If upset, parent can help the child regulate with hugging, rocking, singing, distraction, etc.
 - If tantrum is due to behavior/not getting their way: planned ignoring.

Goal is to normalize AND ensure parents don't enter into a reinforcing cycle.

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Well-child visit conversations

Early Childhood





Looking ahead

Sleep

Daily family habits

Behavior management

Emotion regulation

Sleep

- Schedule: continue reinforcing importance
 - Recommend same bedtime and awake times every day.
- Routine
 - Can introduce visual routines to help with bedtime battles.



Daily Schedule for Younger Kids

Tips:

- Routines help children know what to expect.
- Post it somewhere in the home where your child can see it.
- Use the routine graphics at the bottom or create your own. You can even take a photo of your child doing the activity and use that to create a schedule.
- Review expectations every morning.
- Be flexible! Things will change and that's okay!

Weekday Routines

MORNING



Sleep

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/good-sleep>

- Bedtime battle strategies and printouts
 - Bedtime pass
 - Good morning light

I stayed in my bed all night long!

Put a sticker or cross out the days you stayed in bed all night!



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Daily family habits to encourage

- **Cultivate an attitude of gratitude**
 - Practice daily gratitude
 - Make a gratitude jar
- **Allow time to unplug**
 - Technology free times/zones
- **Relaxation activities**
- **Allow your kids to have a voice**
 - Child directed play



<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/helping-kids-stay-positive/gratitude-in-kids>

Behavior management

Behavioral techniques to teach to parents that help increase desired behaviors:

- **Focus on the positive** and the behaviors you want to see.
 - Instead of *“Don’t hit or kick,”* try *“Keep your hands and feet to yourself.”*
 - **Be specific** in your commands
- **Give them choices**
 - *“Do you want to brush your teeth or put your pjs on first?”*
- **Catch them being good.** Kids respond to frequent reinforcement—in the moment—rather than at the end of the week or month.
 - Specific praise so they understand what they did well: *“Great job using your walking feet”*
 - Implement a token economy so they can receive **immediate** reinforcement and then trade their tokens at the end of the day or week for a reward.

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Emotion regulation

GUIDE

Step 1: Identifying Emotions



Helping a child build their emotional language gives them a better understanding of how to use words to express how they are feeling – a crucial component of Emotional Empowerment.

GUIDE

Step 2: Recognizing Emotions



Many people – both kids and adults – find it difficult to recognize emotions as they are feeling them. We can create a mental habit of doing a self-check and adjust our thoughts and behaviors based on how we feel.

GUIDE

Step 3: Understanding Emotions in Others



Noticing and understanding emotions in people around you is crucial for forming and maintaining close personal relationships. It's one of the core components of empathy or recognizing how others are feeling.

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/emotional-development>

GUIDE

Step 4: Expressing Emotions Appropriately



It's important to learn how to communicate all emotions we feel, but some are more difficult to express than others. Children can learn how to express any emotion they feel in an appropriate way.

GUIDE

Step 5: Regulating Strong Emotions



Regulating strong emotions and having a balanced state of mind is an important part of the developmental process. Learning foundational skills early helps kids keep their emotions from taking over.

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Normalize the emotions

“I understand what it’s like to be scared. Tell me about what’s making you nervous right now.”

Avoid...	Instead try...
“Don’t be scared.” (Dismisses feeling)	“I can tell you are worried about going to the doctor. Honestly, I don’t like getting shots either. But I know you can be brave and we’ll get through it together.”
“You’ll be fine.” (Promises of safety)	“I can tell you’re feeling nervous about trying to ride your bike, but I’m going to be there next to you to help you learn how to do it.”
“Are you worried about passing your test today?” (Leads to anxiety)	“How are you feeling about today’s test?”

Encourage movement towards the emotions instead of away

- One of the things I see happen most often is we try to comfort our kids by trying to keep them from the distress or emotion.
 - The problem is, if we avoid, we let the emotion grow!
- We should encourage continued engagement in the activities that make them nervous.
 - This can be done gently and with support (“gradual exposure”).
 - Practice at home (role plays, videos, talk about it).



Coping strategies: Emotion regulation

<https://www.youtube.com/@OnOurSleeves>



3 Deep Breathing Exercises for All Ages



3 Deep Breathing Exercises for All Ages

90 Views • Mar 15, 2022

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We have these in Spanish too!

Grounding Meditation

for All Ages



Grounding Meditation for All Ages

338 views • Mar 1, 2022

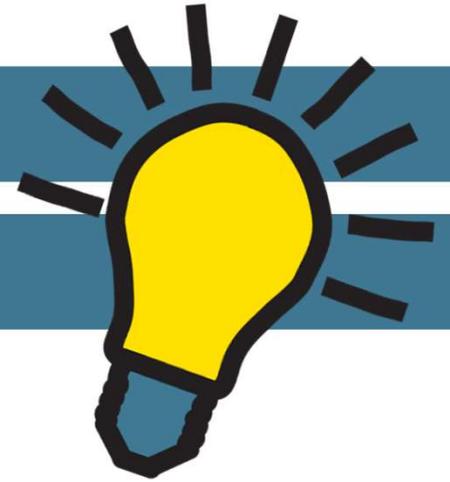
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Well-child visit conversations

School-aged kids





Looking ahead

Racial-ethnic socialization

Social relationships

Sleep

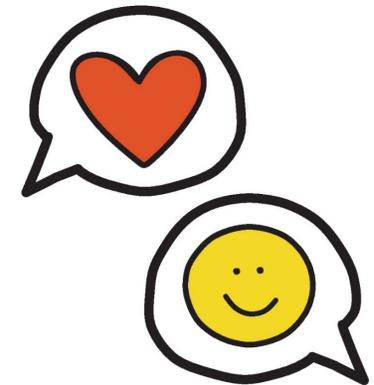
Daily habits

Family relationships through conversation

Emotion regulation

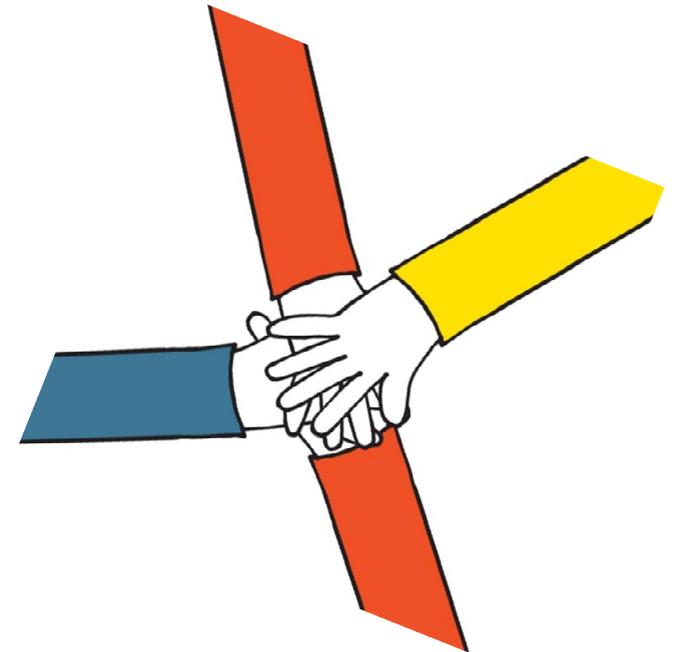
Protective factors against systemic stressors

- Encourage racial-ethnic socialization in our patient families of diverse backgrounds
 - Caregivers can talk to kids about their ethnic and racial heritage and traditions to create a sense of belonging and pride
 - Practice traditions, learn or practice their family's language, or eat traditional foods together.
 - Prepare kids for possible experiences of discrimination by having open, honest conversations. Discuss ways they can respond and the right people they can talk.
- All families should talk to children about racism and discrimination
 - Helps promote awareness and positive culture and environment in the community and schools



Encourage social relationships

- Share information on how community belonging, social support, and trust in others linked to positive mental health
 - School
 - Faith based or community organizations
 - Arts and music
 - Neighbors
- Network size is a protective factor
 - Especially for immigrants, refugees, and transgender people



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Sleep

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/good-sleep>

- At this age, you can start discussion of sleep hygiene with families
 - Learn about their schedules and routines
 - Discuss impact of naps on sleep
 - Encourage bed be used only for sleep
 - Review screen use in bedroom



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Daily habits: Behavioral activation

- “Behavioral activation” is a protective factor for depression & stress
 - Valued activities
 - Fun activities
 - Mastery activities

Mental Fitness Challenge

Keeping our brain in shape is just as important as physical fitness. Try doing one of these tips every weekday!

1. Over dinner, talk about 3 things you are grateful for.
2. Take a walk.
3. Send an email/message to someone you love.
4. Allow yourself to be present in the moment.
5. Plan a family activity night, like game night or movie night.
6. This morning, talk about what you are most excited for today.
7. Donate to or volunteer at an organization.
8. Draw a picture of someone or something you are grateful for.
9. Make a list of 3 things you want to do this year.
10. Sing a song together.
11. Limit screen time today.
12. Read a book.
13. Make dinner together.
14. Smile and say hello to every person you see today.
15. Focus on the positive. Try not to complain about anything today.
16. Ask your kids to share one thing they like about themselves and why.
17. Write down one thing you want to get done this weekend – and do it.
18. Do one random act of kindness today.
19. Color a picture.
20. Go to sleep a half hour earlier.
21. Send a text message to someone you miss.
22. You decide: How will you be mentally fit today?

For more mental health tips and information, visit [OnOurSleeves.org](https://www.onoursleeves.org). Share how you're being mentally fit. Use #OnOurSleeves on social media.

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.

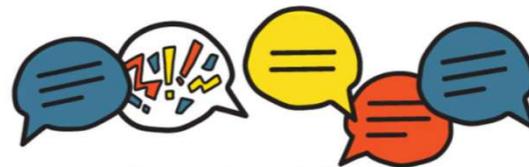
Listen to a favorite song. What is it?	Text, call or email someone you miss. Who was that person?	Read a story from a positive news outlet or a book with a positive message. What was the story about?
Paint/color/draw. Share it with someone!	FREE SPACE Tell us what you did!	Tell your favorite joke. Share 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 #OnOurSleeves on your social media.

Family relationships

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/conversation-starters>

- A great way to help create healthy parent-child relationships is to encourage conversation!



OPERATION: CONVERSATION

Let's check in on children's mental health.

Operation: Conversation

What is *Operation: Conversation*? It's a check-in on kids' mental health. When we start simple habits of conversations, we can learn about concerns or problems kids are dealing with, help them problem solve, and build their confidence for life's difficult moments.

Join us from **Mental Health Month** in May through **World Mental Health Day** on October 10 for *Operation: Conversation*. Together, we can start important conversations - and keep them going.

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Encourage mental health conversations

- **Create an open environment.** Build the habit of talking about mental health before you are worried
- **Define mental health.** Have conversations with your children about what mental health is.
- **Normalize.** We all feel emotions and that even young people can have difficulty navigating through tough moments or feelings.
 - Share personal examples



Starting the conversation if I'm worried

- **Timing.** Pick a time when everyone is calm and emotions are not high.
 - Ask permission to start the conversation
- **Support and validate.** Remind your child you love them and you are there to support them. Validate any emotions. Sometimes, what seems silly to adults means the world to a child.
- **Be objective.** Share what you have noticed without judgment.
 - “I’ve noticed your grades have changed...” or “You don’t spend time with your friends anymore...”
- **Open-ended questions.** Then you can ask open-ended questions to express interest and worry.



Questions for Talking About Feelings, Coping Strategies and Mental Wellness



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Ask directly

- Asking about feelings and thoughts of suicide does not increase the risk

I've noticed ____ (you seem sad, you don't hang out with your friends anymore, your grades are decreasing, etc). Is there something bothering you?

I'm worried about you recently. Is there something going on I can support you with?

Have you been feeling ____ (sad, angry, nervous) a lot lately?

Sometimes kids feel so sad or upset that they feel like hurting themselves. Have you been feeling like that?

Are you thinking about killing yourself?



Problem solving



- **LISTEN**
 - Don't ask a lot of follow up questions.
 - Instead, use reflective listening
- Ask *them* how they want to make the situation better
 - *Is there something you think could make it better?*
 - *How can I help you in this situation?*
- Ask permission
 - *I have a few more questions, is it okay if I ask now or do you prefer later?*
 - *I have some ideas, would you like to hear them?*

Emotion regulation

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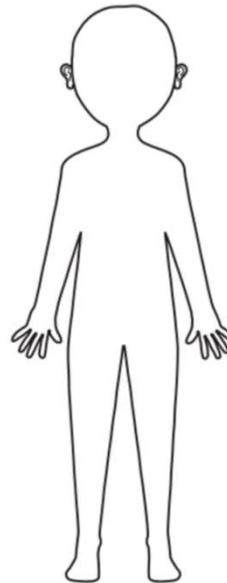
Emotion regulation: labeling & identifying

At this age, parents can start working with children on how emotions feel in their bodies.

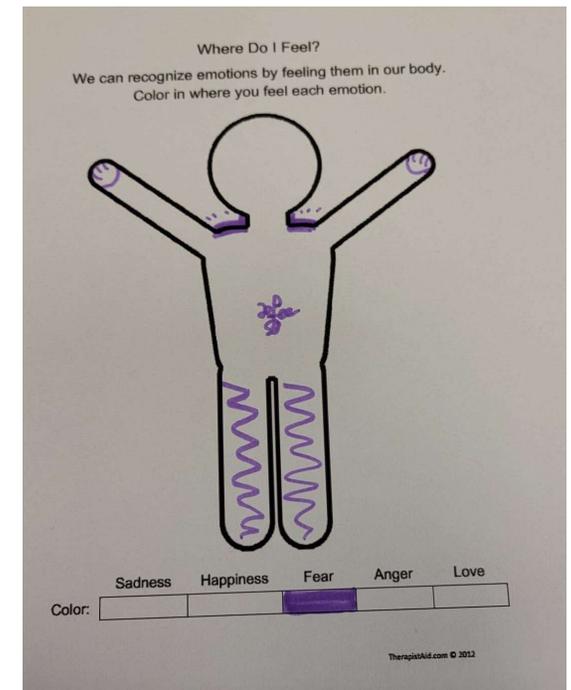
<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/help-kids-manage-anxiety/anxiety-activities-to-help-kids>

What Anxiety Looks Like in My Body

If you are feeling anxious or nervous, use this outline of the human body to draw what you are feeling inside. It could be butterflies in your stomach or squiggly lines in your head for racing thoughts. Ask a parent or caregiver to help you talk through your feelings as you draw them.



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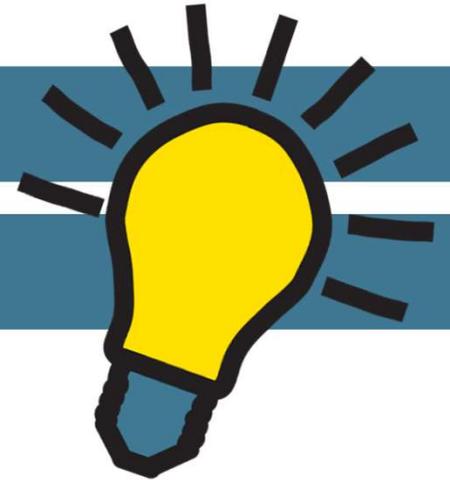
Thought Challenging

- During well-visits, you can start to introduce thought challenging as a coping tool
- For this age group I often use:
 - *Inside Out*
 - *What is fear saying? What would Joy say back?*
 - You can also play “thought detective”
 - Look for the evidence for and against your worry thought



Well-child visit conversations

Teenagers





Looking ahead

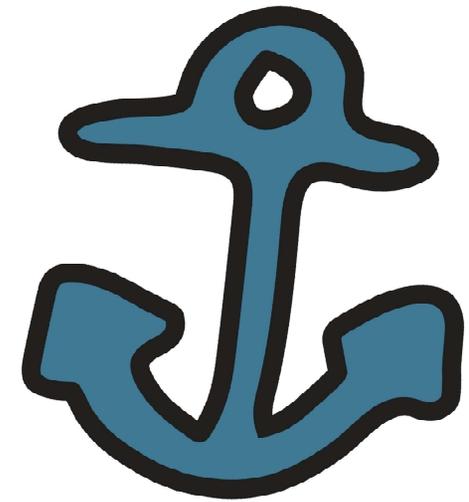
Continue reinforcing and encouraging previously discussed skills

Social media

Emotion regulation

Continue conversations and skills

- Daily conversations with trusted adults
- Social connections and school belonging
- Routines and schedules
- Sleep hygiene
- Behavioral activation



Social media use

- Social media is here to
 - Give parents the tools they need to talk to children about *safe* and *positive* use
- Encourage continued monitoring
 - Understand the apps they are using (maybe even use them yourselves!)
 - Make monitoring rules based on their developmental stage and child
 - **BE HONEST**

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/social-media>



Our family plans to use social media in a safe and responsible way. We recognize that social media can have many benefits, but also pitfalls and challenges. We will revisit this plan at least twice each year to make updates/changes as needed.

Benefits of Social Media

As a family, we've decided to use social media because:

Here are some topics, friends and family, and role models we hope to follow on social media:

- 1: _____
- 2: _____
- 3: _____
- 4: _____
- 5: _____

Safety

As an individual user, I promise to:

- Not share personal information (birthdate, address, phone number, name of school) and my location with others online. I will turn off the location feature in the apps I use.
- Not share photos of private areas of my body with others online.
- Remember that people online are not always who they say they are offline. I will tell my family if a situation with a particular individual feels uncomfortable.
- Tell my family all my usernames on the apps we've agreed to use.
- Review my accounts with my parents if they are concerned.

Social Media Etiquette

As a family, we promise to:

- Treat others with the same kindness and respect we would use offline.
- Not bully or post hateful content about others online.
- Alert one another if we are the victims of bullying online.

Apps

As a family, we've decided that I can use the following apps/platforms:

- 1: _____
- 2: _____
- 3: _____
- 4: _____
- 5: _____

I promise to:

- Discuss the general content I plan to share on the app with my family. I will bring up if I feel like I want to share more than what we talked about.
- Discuss the risks and benefits of the app with my family, as well as any security features we should implement.
- Help my family set up accounts and teach them how to use the app.

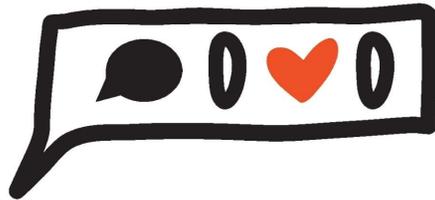
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Sign up for free weekly mental health and wellness resources at [OnOurSleeves.org/Sign-Up](https://www.onoursleeves.org/sign-up)

Social media use

- Encourage limits
 - It's all about balance
 - Have a schedule and screen free time
 - Charging stations at bedtime (no screens 30 mins before bed)
- Remember, once you introduce, it's hard to take away
 - Reflect on what age you think it's appropriate for your family



Emotion regulation

GUIDE

Step 1: Identifying Emotions



Helping a child build their emotional language gives them a better understanding of how to use words to express how they are feeling – a crucial component of Emotional Empowerment.

GUIDE

Step 2: Recognizing Emotions



Many people – both kids and adults – find it difficult to recognize emotions as they are feeling them. We can create a mental habit of doing a self-check and adjust our thoughts and behaviors based on how we feel.

GUIDE

Step 3: Understanding Emotions in Others



Noticing and understanding emotions in people around you is crucial for forming and maintaining close personal relationships. It's one of the core components of empathy or recognizing how others are feeling.

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/emotional-development>

GUIDE

Step 4: Expressing Emotions Appropriately



It's important to learn how to communicate all emotions we feel, but some are more difficult to express than others. Children can learn how to express any emotion they feel in an appropriate way.

GUIDE

Step 5: Regulating Strong Emotions



Regulating strong emotions and having a balanced state of mind is an important part of the developmental process. Learning foundational skills early helps kids keep their emotions from taking over.

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Individual level: mindfulness

The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Ease your state of mind in stressful moments.

Acknowledge **5** things that you can see around you.

Acknowledge **4** things that you can touch around you.

Acknowledge **3** things that you can hear around you.

Acknowledge **1** thing that you can taste around you.

Acknowledge **2** things that you can smell around you.

#DeStressMonday DeStressMonday.org **RESTRESS MONDAY**

- “Being in control of your mind instead of letting your mind control you...”
- All about being in the present moment, taking yourself “out of your mind and into your life”

Thought Challenging

Thought Challenging Worksheet

The situations we experience in life can cause, or trigger, us to have negative thoughts. Sometimes, we think of the worst thing that could happen or we find the most challenging part of a situation — causing us to feel strong negative emotions like anxiety, anger and/or sadness.

Use this chart to track the negative thoughts and difficult emotions that might come up after a variety of situations. Finally, try to challenge your negative thinking by finding a balancing thought.

For many people, our minds imagine a worst-case scenario, over-generalize or have difficulty finding middle ground. Ask yourself, what is likely to happen? Is this thought true in all situations? What is the middle ground or balancing thought? An example is provided below. Now, try filling out the chart yourself.

Situation	What negative thought came up after this situation happened?	What feeling did this thought cause?	What is a more balanced way to look at this situation?	What feeling do I have when I have more balanced thinking?
I got a bad grade on a math test.	I must not be as smart as the other kids, and I might fail this class.	Fear, Embarrassment	If I study hard, I can do better next time. Nobody does perfect on every test, and one test alone doesn't mean I'm not smart.	Peace, Determination

“Our emotions come from our thoughts. Help your child identify their worry thoughts and then guide them on talking back to those thoughts and creating new, alternative ways of thinking.”

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How to recommend therapy

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Signs to seek therapy

- We all feel all emotions
- Stress is normal...

- However, if strong emotions are happening more days than not, for more than two weeks AND they start to get in the way of day to day life you may want to seek therapy



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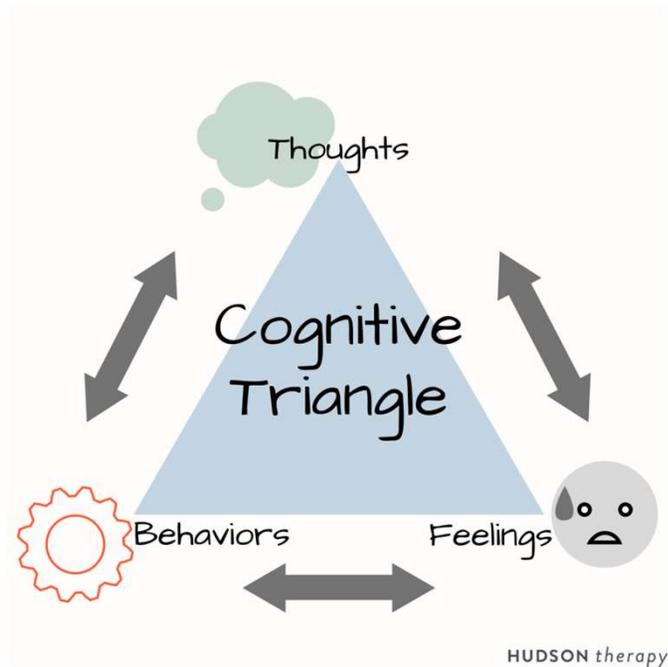
When to seek immediate help

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



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988

How I describe therapy



Cognitive Behavior Therapy

- Increases insight and understanding of themselves
- Teaches coping strategies
- Improves social skills

How I introduce medication

- Sometimes necessary
- Can be prescribed by pediatrician (PCP) or psychiatrist.
- In combination with therapy has best outcomes



Treatment takes time

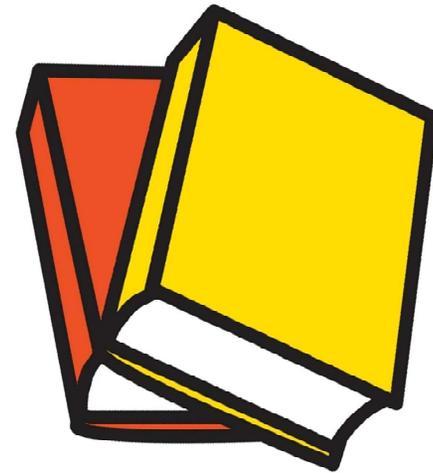


- Treatment can take a few weeks before a child feels improvement.
 - Your therapist needs a few sessions to get to know you and set goals.
 - Stick with it!
- BUT- relationship with therapist matters. Don't be afraid to ask for a new therapist!
- Symptoms will get better with the proper care and attention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

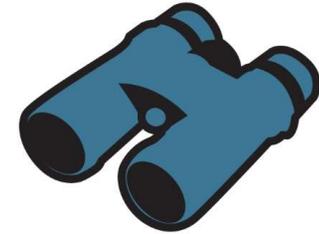
Types of Mental Health Professionals

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

- Psychiatrists
- Nurse Practitioners



What to Look For



- There are many barriers to therapy
 - Time, finances, culturally competent therapist...
- Ask questions and problem-solve around the barriers together
 - Frequency: will it be weekly, biweekly, monthly?
 - Length: will this be 4 weeks, 6 months, a few years?
 - Finances: how much is each session, does insurance cover, are there co-pays, sliding scales?
 - Cultural competency: do you work with other people of my background?
How do you gain training in this area?

What to Look For

ARTICLES AND SUPPORT

How to Find a Culturally Informed Therapist



Ariana Hoet, PhD (she/her/hers)

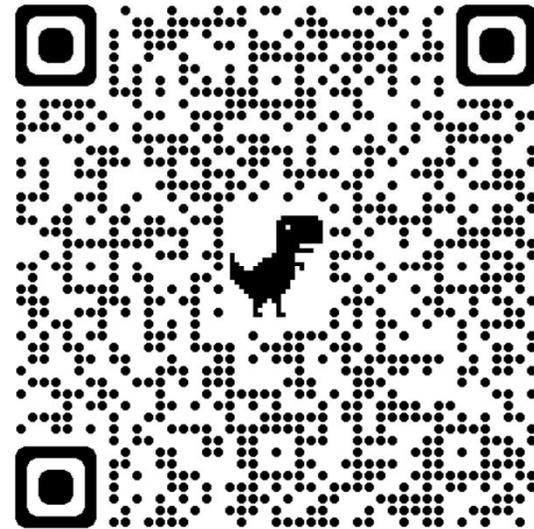
Search for local allies.

Do your research.

Seek diverse providers.

Ask questions.

Give the relationship a chance.



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What to do while you wait

While You Wait

You decided to seek mental health therapy for your child, but now you may be waiting for weeks or even months before the first appointment. This time can be truly stressful and, as a caregiver, you may feel powerless. However, there are some things you can start doing now to help your child and your family.

<https://www.onoursleeves.org/mental-wellness-tools-guides/while-you-wait-for-mental-health-services>



Here are some ideas of where to begin.

Thank You!



Stay connected!



@OnOurSleeves
@ArianaHoet



@OnOurSleevesOfficial
@ArianaHoetPhd

[OnOurSleeves.Org](https://www.onoursleeves.org)

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On Our Sleeves:

Who We Are



Expert-created resources...



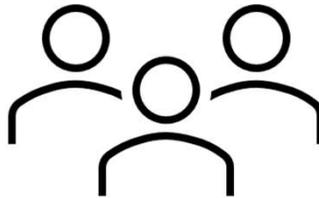
Trending Conversations



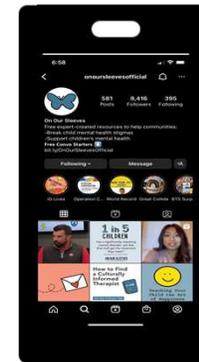
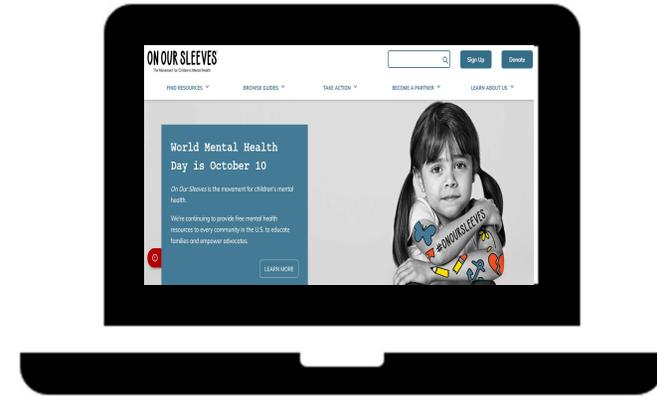
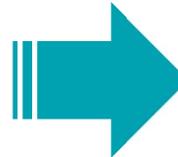
Global Research & Literature



On Our Sleeves
Insights & Data



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL
BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH EXPERTS**



On Our Sleeves Resources & Programs

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...to all U.S. communities...

Families



Weekly Expert Newsletter

OnOurSleeves.Org

YouTube Channel,
Social Channels

*Social Media & Kids' Mental
Health*
New! Q1

While You Wait Kits
Coming Q2

Teachers/Schools



Moderators with
GoNoodle

Emotional Empowerment

FirstBook

Kindness Kits

Monthly Teacher Kit
Subscriptions

Youth-Serving Organizations



*Teen Mental Health
Discussion Guide* for
Boys & Girls Club

Education Partner
Toolkits

Train the Trainer Program
Coming 2023

Employers



The Great Collide

The Ripple Effect

Advocacy 101

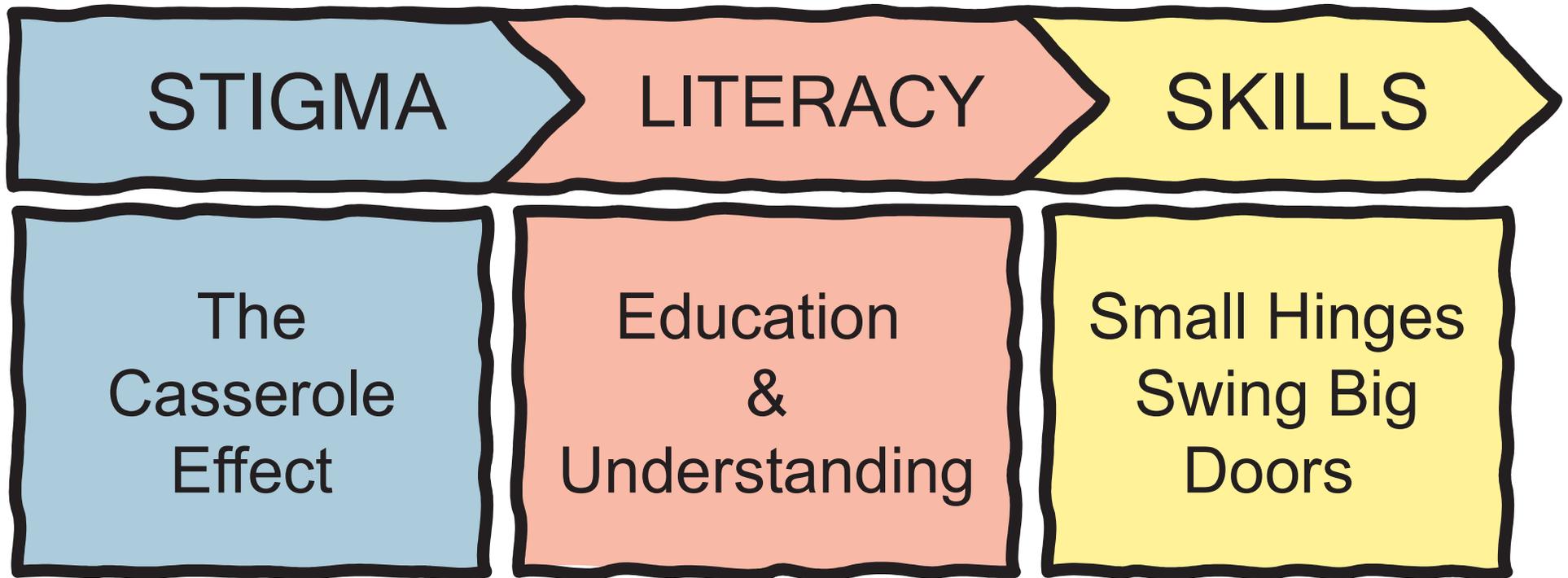
*Bloom: Supporting
You in Growing Kids'
Mental Well-Being*

Primary Care Clinicians



Anxiety Resources
New! Q2

...so everyone understands and promotes children's mental health



...so everyone understands and promotes children's mental health

STIGMA

Do's and Don'ts When Talking About Me... Watch later Share



Do's and Don'ts When Talking About Mental Health

Watch on  YouTube

HOW-TO GUIDES January 2022

Dos and Don'ts When Talking About Mental Health

 On Our Sleeves Behavioral Health Experts

"She's acting nuts."
"He's bipolar."

We've all probably used some form of these phrases at one time or another.

Did you know saying phrases like these creates more of stigma around mental health and getting treatment?

If we think carefully about the words we choose around mental health, we can help in breaking the stigma. Breaking the stigma mainly involves changing your outlook (and what you say) from a place of judgment to a place of acceptance and inclusivity.

Here are three ways we can change our language to show empathy to people who are experiencing symptoms of mental illness:

If a person is struggling, they might fear being judged by others. Using these labels can make their target feel even worse. Don't speculate about whether someone has a mental health disorder and what their diagnosis might be.

 **DON'T: use words that label others (crazy, nuts, psycho).**

 **DO: use words that show acceptance.**

For example, instead of saying "She's depressed" say "She has depression." Instead of saying "He's bipolar" say "He has bipolar disorder." And instead of saying "She committed suicide" say "She died by suicide." By making these small changes, we are showing acceptance.

 **DON'T: use stigmatizing language that labels people.**
"She's depressed."
"He's bipolar."
"She committed suicide."

 **DO: use people-first language that shows acceptance.**
"She has depression."
"He has bipolar disorder."
"She died by suicide."

It's not okay for them and by telling them "it could be worse" or "just brush it off" we are being unhelpful and often hurtful. Practice empathy by being mindful of what others could be experiencing.

 **DON'T: minimize what someone is going through ("it could be worse...").**

 **DO: practice empathy by being mindful of others**

Whether or not we are personally affected by a mental health disorder, we can be champions and advocates for a better understanding of people who have them by challenging harmful language and beliefs when we hear them.

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...so everyone understands and promotes children's mental health

LITERACY

Week 1: Setting the Stage for Conversations About Mental Health



Preseason Guide for Ages 6-9

How do you get started talking about their emotions?

For younger athletes, the conversation around mental health should focus on feelings. Ask your athletes to share what they know or think about each of the following questions. Encourage them to brainstorm, even if their responses reflect misconceptions. Then, guide the discussion with the definition and notes in parenthesis:

- **What does "mental health" mean?** (Mental health is how we think, feel, and act. It is also how we calm down, talk with others and make choices.)
- **What does it mean to have a mental health condition?** (We all feel sad, afraid, worried, or angry sometimes. Some kids feel these emotions strongly or frequently, making it hard to do things. This is when they need help and support to calm down or feel better.)
- **Why is talking about your feelings important?** (When we hurt our arm or our knee, we can see that. Your thoughts and feelings can't be seen like that, so it can make mental health harder to talk about. But you've probably heard many athletes — like Simone Biles, Michael Phelps, Kevin Love, Robin Lehner, Carey Price, Tyler Motte and Naomi Osaka — talk about it. It may be hard at first, but it gets easier with practice.)

Ask athletes: do you think these statements are true or false?

- | | |
|-------|--|
| True | Keeping our brains healthy is just as important as keeping our bodies healthy. (True: Health involves much more than what is happening in our bodies. Our minds and bodies are connected. To be our best in whatever we do, we want to focus on both physical and mental health.) |
| False | Young kids do not struggle with their feelings. (False: Mental health conditions can affect people of all ages. It is important for all of us to take care of our mental well-being.) |
| False | We can tell how someone is feeling by looking at them or listening to what they are saying. (False: We may not know what others are really feeling inside. Someone may not even know how they feel or may feel nervous or embarrassed to tell others.) |
| False | Kids who have lots of friends are always happy on the inside. (False: Anyone can have problems with their mental health, including those who may seem happy or successful on the outside.) |

BROWSE GUIDES ▾ TAKE ACTION ▾ BECOME A PARTNER ▾

ANXIETY > KIDS ANXIETY WHAT'S NORMAL

ARTICLES AND SUPPORT June 2021

Anxiety and Children: What's "Normal?"

 On Our Sleeves Behavioral Health Experts

Nearly 32 percent of youth struggle or have struggled with an impairing anxiety disorder. Though many children can manage their anxiety with help at home and school, some youth struggle enough that they need additional support from a mental health professional. Anxiety can affect their ability to function in the classroom, with peers, during extracurricular activities, and at home. This level of anxiety can make daily functioning difficult at times.

In many cases, anxiety is healthy and keeps us safe and motivated:

- *The anxiety I feel about passing a test at school motivates me to study.*
- *The anxiety I experience when someone asks me to do something dangerous prevents me from going through with it.*

The biggest difference between typical anxiety and an anxiety disorder is when the anxiety disrupts someone's ability to function in their daily life. It's important to know the specific types of anxiety as well as some common anxiety problems for children and adolescents.

The Stages of Anxiety

For children, anxiety is common throughout development and tends to occur in stages or phases.

BROWSE GUIDES ▾ TAKE ACTION ▾ BECOME A PARTNER ▾

MENTAL WELLNESS TOOLS GUIDES > KIDS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

How to Support Mental Health Needs for Kids

It's easy to know what to do when a child has a sore throat or breaks a bone. But what do you do when there's an emotional need? A child's mental health needs may not be as easily recognized and you may not know where to start.

Learn about how to find a mental health provider, all the different professions associated with the mental health field, what to expect at a counseling appointment and the next steps if you receive a diagnosis.

Latest Resources



HOW-TO GUIDES
Understanding Types of Mental Health Providers

 On Our Sleeves Behavioral Health Experts

Use this list to understand the difference between all the providers and help you find the right provider.

GUIDE

How to Find a Mental Health Provider

Finding a mental health provider can be really challenging. Here are tips on navigating the mental health care system.

VIDEO

What to Expect at Counseling

...so everyone understands and promotes children's mental health

Mental Fitness Challenge

Keeping our brain in shape is just as important as physical fitness. Try doing one of these tips every weekday!



1. Over dinner, talk about 3 things you are grateful for.



2. Take a walk.



3. Send an email/message to someone you love.



4. Allow yourself to be present in the moment.



5. Plan a family activity night, like game night or movie night.



6. This morning, talk about what you are most excited for today.



7. Donate to or volunteer at an organization.



8. Draw a picture of someone or something you are grateful for.



9. Make a list of 3 things you want to do this year.



10. Sing a song together.



11. Limit screen time today.



12. Read a book.



13. Make dinner together.



14. Smile and say hello to every person you see today.



15. Focus on the positive. Try not to complain about anything today.



16. Ask your kids to share one thing they like about themselves and why.



17. Write down one thing you want to get done this weekend – and do it.



18. Do one random act of kindness today.



19. Color a picture.



20. Go to sleep a half hour earlier.

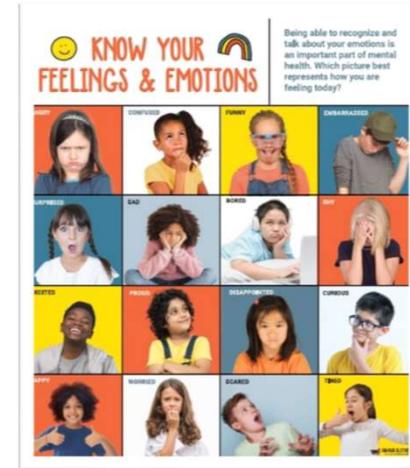
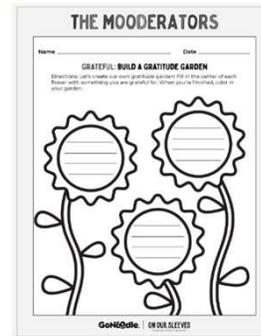
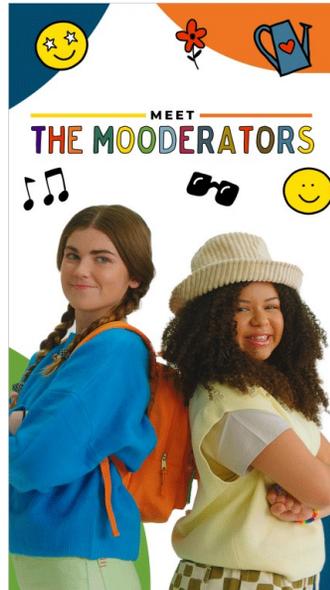


21. Send a text message to someone you miss.



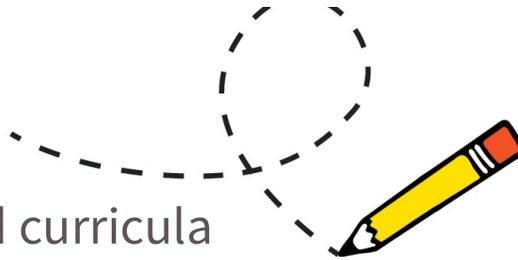
22. You decide: How will you be mentally fit today?

For more mental health tips and information, visit [OnOurSleeves.org](https://www.onoursleeves.org). Share how you're being mentally fit. Use #OnOurSleeves on social media.



National Impact

On Our Sleeves resources and curricula are in ALL **50 STATES** AND NEARLY **2 MILLION CLASSROOMS**.



MORE THAN 3 MILLION

people have interacted with content at *OnOurSleeves.org* and through our social and dedicated YouTube channel, including special resources to support LGBTQ children and historically underrepresented populations, resources on habit formation, and modern stresses.



The Great Collide publication on children's mental health and working parents has **OVER 104 MILLION IMPRESSIONS**

OVER 4.5 MILLION Plays of *The Mooderators* content on GoNoodle, since May 2022

OVER 73 MILLION IMPRESSIONS For *Operation: Conversation*; helping adults create a routine of having mental health "check-in" conversations with kids