

Mental Health Matters

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Why Exercise is Wise



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When you exercise, you make your body stronger, and you probably exercise all the time without even thinking about it. When you run around outside or play kickball at school, you are exercising.

Make Your Heart Happy. Your heart is a muscle, so do aerobic exercise to strengthen your heart.

Heart Pumping Exercises include things like swimming, basketball, hockey, running or walking, skating, soccer, cross-country skiing, bike riding, or jumping rope.

Build Stronger Muscles by doing exercises such as push-ups, pull-ups, tug-of-war, rowing, running, jumping, or bike riding.

How Can You Be More Flexible? Exercises that build flexibility feel really good, like when you take a big stretch in the morning. Gymnastics, yoga, dancing, and karate, are all exercises that help you stretch.

Exercise Feels Good. It feels good to have a strong, flexible body that can do all the things you enjoy. Exercising can also put you in a better mood, because when you exercise, your brain releases chemicals that make you feel happier.

Source: www.kidshealth.org



Self-Esteem Matters

Source:
www.kidshealth.org

Self-Esteem Means You Mostly Feel Good About Yourself

Kids with self-esteem feel proud of what they can do; see the good things about themselves; believe in themselves, even when they don't do well at first; feel liked and accepted; and accept themselves, even when they make mistakes.

Low self-esteem means you don't feel very good about yourself. Kids don't think they are as good as others; don't feel liked or accepted; think more about the times they fail than the times they succeed; don't notice the good things about themselves; and are hard on themselves and give up easily.

Self-Esteem Matters. Here are three things to know about self-esteem:

1. Self-esteem helps you. It gives you the courage to try new things or make new friends. With self-esteem, you believe in

yourself.

2. Low self-esteem can hurt you. It makes kids feel unsure. They don't think they can do things well. With low self-esteem, kids might not try.
3. You can build your self-esteem. Notice when you try new things. Notice when you learn to do something. Be happy and proud.

Try these steps to build your self-esteem:

- ✓ Make a list of the stuff you're good at.
- ✓ Practice the things you do well.
- ✓ Turn "I can't" into "I can"!
- ✓ Try your best.
- ✓ Spend time with people who love you.
- ✓ Pitch in and do nice things for others.

Where to Find Mental Health Help

AVERAGE TEEN OR WARNING SIGN?

Symptoms of mental illness can often appear similar to average teenage development. Learn how to spot the difference and what to watch for in your teenager.



SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Withdrawing from spending time with family to be with friends is normal teenage behavior. However, if a teen is keeping to his or herself and staying away from social activity and interactions with friends and family, it is cause for concern.



KEEPING SECRETS

Teenagers are known to crave privacy and be reluctant to share information about their personal lives with their parents, but if a teen is being sneaky and seems like they are hiding something, don't let their behavior go unnoticed.



CHANGE IN INTERESTS

While moving on from a childhood activity or hobby into something more age-appropriate is normal and expected, losing interest in favorite activities and not replacing them with an alternative can be worrisome.

www.robinsnestcounseling.org

Mental health is a critical part of overall health. If you're feeling distressed, there is hope. Even if you don't have any mental health concerns right now, it's always a good idea to stay mentally healthy. Monitor your mental health regularly, learn about ways to live well and stay well, be aware of risk factors and early warning signs, and look for tips to boost mental health.

If you think you're beginning to show signs of a mental health condition or just feel like something is "not right", you should talk to a doctor, mental health provider or a family member or close friend. Begin to read about different treatments, and think ahead and map out the steps you can take to get help and feel better.

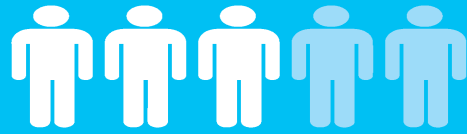
If you are starting to have trouble with family, friends, at work or school, or in other areas of your life, you really need to talk to a mental health professional or perhaps find a support group to join so that you can learn how to communicate your thoughts and emotions.

If things are getting bad and you feel like you are losing control of your life, or you are in crisis, you can text HOME to 741741 for free, 24/7 crisis support. Also, reach out to mental health professionals, support groups, or go to the hospital.

If someone you know is struggling with a mental health condition, encourage them to monitor their mental health regularly and to seek help when or if things begin to worsen. Many people diagnosed with mental illness achieve strength and recovery through participating in individual or group treatment. There are many different treatment options available. There is no treatment that works for everyone – individuals can choose the treatment, or combination of treatments, that work best for them. Treatment types can include psychotherapy, medication, case management, hospitalization, support groups, self-help plans, or peer support.

Source: www.mentalhealthamerica.net

60%



More than 60 per cent of people with mental health problems and mental illness won't seek the help they need; stigma is one of the main reasons.

What is stigma? People coping with mental illness have a lot more to deal with than just the disorder itself. Many people report that the stigma of mental illness, and the prejudices they encounter because of it, is nearly as bad as the disorder's symptoms themselves.

Stigma can be defined as a perceived negative attribute that causes someone to devalue or think less of the whole person. Given this, stigma is a deeply negative mindset and provides no value to society in general. Many of the more than 46 million Americans who suffer from some type of mental health disorder may describe and define stigma using one of these words or phrases: hate, discrimination, prejudice, fear-inducing, humiliating, or hurtful.

Truly, the meaning of stigma boils down to discrimination and hate. People with mental illness feel diminished, devalued, and fearful because of the negative attitude society holds towards them. As a result, people struggling with mental health challenges may not get the help they need for fear they'll be discriminated against.

People with mental disorders must cope with stigma on a daily basis. But why should they? Mental illness is a disease just like cancer. No one wants to develop cancer. No one wants to deal with mental illness either. Let's work together to stop the stigma.

Source: www.healthyplace.com/stigma

Ways to Build Mental Strength

By Kalia Kelmenson

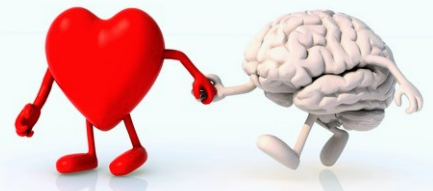
There has been a great deal of research in recent years about how positive emotions can build your resilience, help you bounce back from setbacks faster, and help you enjoy a better quality of life. Building mental strength has three main parts: thoughts, feelings, and behavior; and they are all interrelated.

Here are three ways to build your mental strength:

1. **Don't compare yourself to other people.** Create a rich-enough life that you won't care what others are doing. Minimize exposure to media, social and mainstream. Instead focus on what you want to create in your life, and put that time and energy into creating it.
2. **Don't stay silent.** Many women have started coming forward and sharing their stories of sexual abuse. Acknowledge what is happening and recognize when your rights have been violated or when you've been objectified. Then tell someone, and speak up for others who aren't able to speak for themselves.
3. **Don't fear breaking the rules.** Identify the unwritten rules you follow, and then be accountable to yourself and your own values. Be brave enough to question the attitudes that led you where you are today.

Healthy Mental & Emotional Development

Just as you prepare your children for the start of a new school year with the right school supplies and materials, it's also important to think about their emotional health. Remember that children may not only be excited about the new school year, but also apprehensive about all of the changes that come with growing up. Their emotional health is tied into their mental health, and parents need to be supportive and give the proper guidance. Despite the fact that children may not actively seek out a conversation with you, it is important to engage with them on a regular basis so that you become part of the support system they look to when they are in trouble. So be prepared for the variety of issues that can "stress out" your children. Below are some pointers that can help you address the needs of children in various age groups.



A poll conducted by KidsHealth found that kids said they were stressed out the most by the following:

- Grades, School, Homework (36%)
- Family (32%)
- Friends, Peers, Gossip, Teasing (21%)

However, only 22% of these kids dealt with their stress by talking to their parents.

Source: www.mentalhealthamerica.net

Ages 5-9		Ages 10-12	
What to Expect	Tips for Caregivers	What to Expect	Tips for Caregivers
<p>This group will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Have increased ability of their emotions, self-control› Know how to mask emotions and their use of coping strategies (by age 8)› Have knowledge of how their actions affect others› Express preference for structure and routine but they are learning how to assert their independence› Be able to "step into another's shoes"› Form peer groups› Spend less time with parents and more time with peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Increase the child's self-esteem with warm, positive parenting and reinforcement› Minimize comparisons among children and help them overcome failures› Give advice and encouragement when he/she comes across moral questions such as lying, cheating, stealing, etc.› Help the child think about how to handle feelings of anger and similar emotions in safe ways› Promote respect and positive relationships between the child and others› Talk to the child about school, friends, and feelings regularly› Expect that the child's level of independence will change depending on the circumstance	<p>A pre-teen adolescent (tween):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Commonly has emotional swings (feeling wonderful one minute, and sad or irritable the next)› Begins to rely more on same-age friends› Views being accepted by peers means being liked› Still relies on bonds with parents though it may not be demonstrated› Has thoughts of independence but bonds with family are still clear› Questions rules and values, often will say things are "unfair"› May begin to have body image issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Listen to the preteen and take his/her feelings seriously› Don't minimize the issues they stress out about› Work together for solutions when problems arise› Schedule time for family connectedness (shared meals, weekend activities)› Be involved in social media activities› Reinforce your family's values› Give room for independence and identity exploration› Be mindful of their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth› Talk openly about teasing, bullying, and similar problems and the appropriate actions to take when these issues arise