



# Tips for Managing Mental and Physical Health For Teens

School. Work. Friends. Relationships. Growing up. Being a teen can be complicated. As you're making sense of the world around you, it can be hard to know what is (and isn't) normal. And it's okay to not feel okay. When times feel tough, reaching out for help isn't weird – it's a sign of strength.

Mental health plays a key role in our overall physical health. It can impact things in our daily life such as sleep, concentration and motivation. Mental health is health and it's important to treat it that way. Building strong, healthy lifestyle habits can help you now (and in the long run) and can give you something you can control when things are changing all the time.

When building a healthy lifestyle, it's best to choose one or two lifestyle changes to start at a time to avoid feeling overwhelmed. A great place to start is identifying which area makes the most sense for you based on your current lifestyle habits.



**Get some Zzz's:** You may want to stay up late, but if you can aim for 8-10 hours of sleep, you'll feel more rested, focused and ready to cope day-to-day. This can be hard when school starts so early and your body isn't ready to shut down at bedtime. Getting sleep is one of the most important habits to address, as it affects your attitude, mood, and ability to focus on what you need to do.



**Eat healthy:** Have a goal of balancing a variety of healthy food choices. Avoid too much sugar, fried foods and takeout. To start, try eating healthy for five days in a row and see how you feel.



**Lend a hand:** We all know someone who could use some help and doing something for others feels good. Volunteer, visit a neighbor who lives alone, or deliver a meal or groceries to someone who needs it.



**Get moving:** Go for that run. Take a walk. Dance. Find a trail. Lift some weights. Movement improves our body and our mind.



**Do what you love:** De-stress with safe activities you enjoy. Listen to music or a podcast. Read a book. Get outside. Learn something new.



**Connect with others:** Lean into those you trust the most and be a listening ear for someone you know who may be struggling. While phone calls and texts are great, face-to-face video chats can help you better connect with someone.



**Make it stick:** Schedules are good for your well-being and can help you stay on track. Do daily activities like meals, workouts or homework at the same time every day.



**Disconnect for a bit:** Give your eyes (and thumbs) a break from social media and digital devices.



**Avoid drugs, vaping and alcohol:** It can be tempting to experiment with drugs and alcohol. But substances can actually worsen symptoms of anxiety, depression and stress – and even increase your risk in the long term. Instead, rely on healthy activities or reach out to a friend or trusted adult to help you de-stress and work through what you're feeling.

# When to seek additional help

Talk to a parent or trusted adult to get you connected with your primary care doctor or another helpful resource. If any of these symptoms interrupt your day-to-day life:

- Withdrawal from others
- Feelings of hopelessness that won't go away
- Any thoughts that you would be better off dead or of ending your life
- Drinking/drug use to cope with emotions
- Anxiety that makes functioning difficult

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## Helpful resources for improving your mental health

### Phone

Michigan Community Mental Health: 800.749.7720

Call 211 for Resources

### Apps

**Insight Timer\*** – Use to help fall asleep or for meditations to feel calmer.

**CBT-i Coach\*** – Use to help with insomnia.

**What's Up?\*** – Provides tips for coping skills.

**Headspace** – Helps with meditation, sleep solutions, exercise ideas and more.

\*Free in your app store.

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## Helpful resources for concerning reactions

### Phone

**Crisis Text Line:** Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor

**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:**

Call, text or chat 988 to connect to a trained counselor

### Web

**nowmattersnow.org** – Website for crisis situations, including strategies to safely cope with suicidal thoughts.