

HEALTHY MINDS AND BODIES

Helping Children and Adolescents Thrive



Your child's physical and mental health both need care and support to thrive.

It's just as important to take care of your mind as it is to take care of your body. You can show your kids how to be healthy by being healthy yourself. When you eat healthy food, exercise, and find time to relax, your child will see and want to do the same.

When children and adolescents feel good about themselves, they are more likely to make better choices about their health. Let them know when they do a good job of making healthy choices, and it will help them feel even better about themselves.

What is important for growing minds and bodies?

- Setting and following routines and boundaries
- Praise and guidance
- Mutual trust and respect
- Time for fun and play
- Healthy food choices
- Plenty of sleep
- Safe home environment
- Regular exercise
- Support system (family, friends, teachers)
- Care and love





What are signs that a child or adolescent might need help?

Sometimes, children and teens might experience physical or mental health issues. It is important to pay attention to any signs of trouble and seek help early from their pediatrician or specialist. This can lead to getting the right treatment and feeling better sooner.

Signs to watch for are:

- Changes in appetite or sudden weight gain or loss
- Hyperactivity (being too active) or not being able to sit still
- Mood changes (fearful, irritable, sad)
- Behavior changes (outbursts, isolation, self-harm)
- Not wanting to go to school or social events
- Getting bad grades or getting into trouble at school
- Sleeping more or less than usual
- Not wanting to do things they used to enjoy doing

If your child talks about wanting to hurt themselves or others, it is very important to get help right away. You can call 911 or take them to the emergency department for help.





TIPS FOR PARENTS

What can you do to support your child's mind and body?

Mistakes happen. Everyone makes a mistake from time to time. Let your child know that making mistakes is part of learning. Help them learn from their mistakes, and don't be afraid to admit to your own.

Eat healthy meals together. Whenever possible, have meals together as a family. Try to offer healthy foods at every meal.

Encourage social activity. Children and adolescents benefit from having friends who support them. Encourage your child to join a club, play a sport or do fun activities with their friends.

Have a regular bedtime. Getting enough sleep is important for everyone. Make sure everyone in the family has a regular bedtime that is right for their age.

Get moving. Encourage your family to exercise together. Play a fun game outside, take walks, or go for bike rides together a few times a week. It's a great way to have fun and stay healthy.

Limit screen time. It is important to limit the time spent on screens. Too much screen time can affect your moods, make it harder to be active, and give you problems with sleep. Set limits to make sure everyone in the family has a healthy balance.

Monitor social media. Social media can be a good way for your child to connect with friends. It can also expose them to potential risks, like cyberbullying, talking to strangers online and self-esteem issues. Keep an eye on what your child does online to keep them safe from these dangers.

Take part in your child's school life. Children and adolescents do better in school when their parents are involved. You can support your child's education by asking them about their homework, helping them study and going to school events with them.

Where can I find online resources for more support?



[Screen Time and Children – English](#)

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry



[Keeping Teens Safe on Social Media: What Parents Should Know to Protect Their Kids – English](#)

American Psychological Association



[What Every Child Needs for Good Mental Health – English](#)

Mental Health America



[Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds & a Happy Child – English](#)

Obesity Action Coalition