

Summer Tips for Parents to Promote Good Mental Health

- 1. Balance relaxation, fun, and structure:** Summer is a great time for high school and middle school students to relax and recharge, but it's also important for them to have structured time, be physically active, and involved in activities or work. If your child is not enrolled in camp or working, seek out volunteer or intern opportunities in your community. Volunteer and paid activities expose your child to new experiences, contribute to their self-esteem, and keep them busy!
 - *Your Village, Town, City, or County Recreation Department or Youth Bureau may be able to provide suggestions ranging from a few days to the entire summer.*
 - *Local camps, pools, and day care centers can be places for Middle and High School students to find babysitting opportunities.*
 - *Local Ys, Boys and Girls Clubs, faith based organizations, libraries, and community centers may have summer activities that interest your child.*
- 2. Encourage exploration** of an interest, hobby, or sport your child didn't have time for during the school year.
- 3. Set rules:** Teens with too much time can get bored or get into trouble. If they are old enough to be left alone, set clear rules about what they can and cannot do when they are home alone, such as having friends over.
- 4. Have Family Time:** Find an activity that might interest your teen. Schedule family activities like walks, hikes, picnics, day trips, fairs, time at a lake, beach, or park, watching live sports events, going to a free concert etc.
- 5. Sleep is still important:** Lack of sleep or poor quality sleep impacts mental and physical health. Set a curfew to promote getting enough sleep and limiting exposure to unsafe activities.
- 6. Limit screen time:** Live interactions with a variety of people are critical for social development and learning and practicing social skills.
- 7. If you have concerns about your child's emotional well-being **summer is a good time to seek help.****

National surveys have shown big increases in teens experiencing depression, anxiety, and a sense of hopelessness (Protecting Youth Mental Health, The Surgeon General's Advisory). Signs of adolescent distress can vary widely. Below are some signs that indicate your child may benefit from professional help or that a parent should seek consultation.

 - *Inability to function in day-to-day activities*
 - *Sleeping excessively or not being able to sleep at all*
 - *Difficulty thinking, concentrating, or speaking coherently*
 - *Anxiety that interferes with basic functioning*
 - *Withdrawing from family, friend, or activities*
 - *Uncharacteristic irritability and oppositional behavior*
 - *Disregard for the family rules*
 - *Finding alcohol or other drugs and/or drug paraphernalia*
 - *Changes in eating and weight*

If you are concerned about your child, or sense something is “going on” with your teen, trust your instincts and contact one of the resources listed on the back of this page.

SUMMER RESOURCES

For Families

PSYCHIATRIC/MENTAL HEALTH

- Call 911 in any emergency
- National Suicide Hotline 800-273-TALK or 800-273-8255

Non-life threatening crisis (24/7)

- Crisis Prevention and Response Team
914-925-5959
- Crisis text line - Text "Home" to 741741

Information and Emotional Support

National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI)

Trained staff answer calls and provide information about mental health resources in Westchester. Call 914-592-5458 Help Line, 9am- 2pm, Monday-Friday
<https://www.namiwestchester.org>

Family Ties of Westchester

Provides resources, support and advocacy services for parents of youth with mental health issues. Call: 914-995-5238
<https://www.familytieswestchester.org/>

NY State Office of Mental Health

Provides emotional support and resources for Covid related issues
Call: NY Project Hope Helpline 844-863-9314
8am-10pm / seven days a week

BULLYING

Student Assistance Services Corporation

Adolescent Counseling and
Bullying Prevention Resource Center
Call: NoBullying, 662-855-9464
8am-5pm, Monday - Friday
bullyinghelpline@sascorp.org

Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health

Lists local mental health and substance use prevention and treatment programs, provides information and resources:
<https://mentalhealth.westchestergov.com>

SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION & TREATMENT

Regional Addiction Resource Center

Provides regional information, resources and lists prevention, treatment, and recovery programs in Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties:
<http://fordrughelp.com>

NY State Office of Addiction Services and Supports

Provides information and access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services for alcohol and other substance use disorders and problem gambling. <https://oasas.ny.gov>
Call: 877-846-7369 or text HOPENY (467369)
for help 24 hours a day

Family Support Navigators

Provide support, guidance, resources, and referrals for families of persons misusing substances or with a substance use disorder.
Call: 914-575-1605 or 914-582-8384
9am-5pm, Monday-Friday
Email: Ineuman@covecarecenter.org or
ssal@drugcrisisinourbackyard.com

Team Teen

Education and early intervention for youth who have begun to use alcohol, vaping devices, or other substances.
Call: 844-855-8000, 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday
TeamTeenNY.org

BEREAVEMENT

Bereavement Center of Westchester

Provides grief counseling to individuals & their families. <https://www.bcwtreehouse.org>
Call: 914-787-6158