



WARNING SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

- ⚠ Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks
- ⚠ Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that cause harm to self or others
- ⚠ Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing
- ⚠ Seeing, hearing or believing things that aren't real
- ⚠ Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- ⚠ Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still that puts a person in physical danger or causes school failure
- ⚠ Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- ⚠ Throwing up, using laxatives or not eating to lose weight, frequent trips to the bathroom after meals; significant weight loss or weight gain
- ⚠ Using alcohol or drugs excessively
- ⚠ Trying to harm oneself, attempt suicide or making plans to do so

SIGNS OF BEING BULLIED

- **Recognize the warning signs:**
 - Unexplainable injuries
 - Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics or jewelry
 - Feeling sick or faking illness
 - Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
 - Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Learn what bullying **IS** and what it **IS NOT**
- Cyberbullying
 - Learn how to prevent it and how to address it if it occurs

SIGNS OF BULLYING OTHERS

- Gets into physical or verbal fights
- Has friends who bully others
- Is increasingly aggressive
- Gets sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently
- Has unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blames others for their problems
- Doesn't accept responsibility for their actions
- Is competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

SIGNS OF SUICIDE

- Talking, writing or drawing about death
- Talking about:
 - Having no reason to live
 - Being a burden to others
 - Not being here tomorrow
- Feeling hopeless, desperate or trapped
- Looking for ways to attempt suicide
- Giving away possessions
- Loss of interest in the things they care about
- Behaving recklessly
- Anger, irritability, violence

WHAT **NOT** TO SAY

- **DON'T** dismiss how they're feeling as routine or as something that will get better on its own
"We all go through times like these. You'll be fine."
- **DON'T** ask questions that will only give you a yes/no answer
"Are you OK?" / "Are you having any problems?"
- **DON'T** ask in a way that indicates you want "no" as an answer
"You're not feeling anxious about going to school, are you?"
- **DON'T** promise confidentiality
"You can tell me, and I promise I won't tell anyone."

- Social media can impact mental health, both positively and negatively.
- Teens often face comparison culture, leading to unrealistic standards
- Social media aids friendships but can also cause loneliness when in-person interactions are limited.
- Cyberbullying is another serious risk, making it crucial to have open conversations about online experiences.
- The overwhelming amount of information available on social media can lead to stress.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH



- Set examples of moderation and establish tech-free times or zones at home.
- Help teens learn to follow accounts that inspire positivity and self-acceptance, while unfollowing those that evoke negative feelings.
- Regularly discuss their social media experiences and encourage them to share their thoughts.
- Teach to think critically about what they see online.
- Promote offline activities to build real-life connections that balance their online experiences.



NAVIGATING SOCIAL MEDIA



QUESTIONS FOR ADDRESSING YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOL



Could we work together to meet my child's needs?

- Include what the teacher has found to be successful. Make it strengths based and empowering

Do all staff working with my child know about their needs?

- Include other staff members who have observed your child in the classroom and could share their ideas of what could help with student success

Are there any areas where my child is making progress?

- Make time to focus on the positive and re-affirm this to improve the student's self-esteem

What strategies are in place or could be in place to help my child?

- Discuss what has been used and what is available, maybe even include the student

When can we meet again?

- Recognize that emails and phone calls/texts can happen between meetings when questions or concerns arise

May I have a copy?

- Make copies for everyone involved and think about making a timeline to keep everyone on track





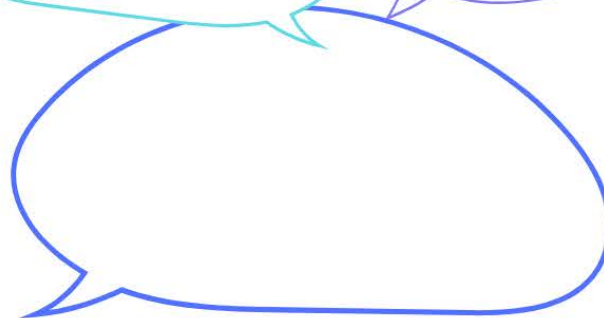
START THE CONVERSATION

What's the name of someone else you'd rather talk to about how you're feeling?

Tell me more about what's happening. Maybe if I understand better, we can find a solution together.

Sometimes you need to talk about your feelings. I'm here to listen. What would you like to talk about?

I'd like to hear more about how you're feeling.



TIPS FOR TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

- Choose a safe and comfortable time for a talk, perhaps during a fun activity like lunch.
- Communicate calmly and be ready to listen more than you speak.
- Use age-appropriate language; younger children need fewer details than teens.
- Pay attention to your child's reactions, and slow down if they seem confused or upset.
- Encourage your child to express their feelings, whether by talking, writing, or drawing.
- **It's ok to not know what to say.**

