



RUTGERS
University Behavioral
Health Care

GRIEVING TEENS



- Grieving is a teen's natural reaction to a death
- Each teen's grieving experience is unique
- There are no "right" and "wrong" ways to grieve
- Every death is unique and is experienced differently
- The grieving process is influenced by many issues
- Grief is ongoing

TALKING TO TEENS ABOUT SUICIDE



- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for youth age 10-24
- National surveys that tell us that 17.7% of high school students admit to thinking about suicide
- Almost 9% acknowledge actually making an attempt

-The Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide

STARTING THE CONVERSATION...

- Pick a time when you have the best chance of getting your child's attention
- Think about what you want to say ahead of time and rehearse a script if necessary
- If this is a hard subject for you to talk about, admit it!
- Ask for your child's response. Be direct!
- Listen to what your child has to say
- Don't overreact or under-react



UBHC - SCHOOL BASED COUNSELING



- On-Site Crisis Intervention & Screening
- Access to Mental Health Services
- Collaboration with Mental Health Providers
- Mental Health Awareness & Education
- Consultation to Support Current Practices
- Referrals made through School Counselors

PARENT QUESTIONS



- What are the signs of depression and suicidal behavior in students?
- What mental health supports can we provide?
- What are the signs of stress in students and when should I be concerned?
- How do we balance stress and down time for adolescence?
- How to identify the anxiety level among kids and how to encourage them to share their problems with their parents?
- How to help students maximize their potential during this period of life while try to help them being mentally healthy?

THE ROOTS OF MENTAL HEALTH

- The brain is the primary organ of concern
- Mental illnesses develop from malfunction or disruption within the brain and nervous system
- These chemicals and their action within the brain ***regulate thoughts, feelings and behavior*** through the continual flow of impulses along pathways of nerves throughout the brain and body (neuronal pathways)



TEENAGE BRAIN

Intensive brain development occurs during adolescence, continuing into your child's mid-20s. As such, teenagers are more likely to:

- Take more risks or choose high-risk activities
- Express more and stronger emotions
- Make impulsive decisions



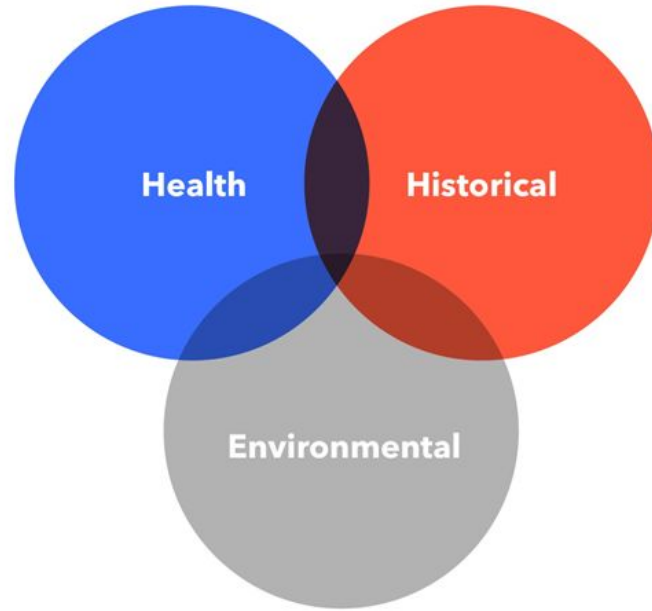
-National Institute on Mental Health

POSITIVE BRAIN CONNECTIONS



- Let your child take some healthy risks
- Help your child find new creative and expressive outlets for feelings
- Talk through decisions step by step with your child
- Use family routines to give your child's life some structure
- Provide boundaries and opportunities for negotiating those boundaries
- Offer frequent praise and positive rewards for desired behavior
- Be a positive role model
- Stay connected with your child
- Talk with your child about their developing brain

RISK FACTORS



MENTAL HEALTH

Depression and anxiety don't discriminate. Do you?



ANXIETY

- Anxiety disorders are the most commonly diagnosed mental health disorders
- Some anxiety is productive; it helps keep us alert and out of danger
- Constant, uncontrollable worry, fear or dread, that is not based in rational facts can cause someone to withdraw from activities or change behaviors, may be an anxiety disorder



WARNING SIGNS

- Often feels anxious or worried
- Has very frequent tantrums or is intensely irritable much of the time
- Has frequent stomach aches or headaches with no physical explanation
- Is in constant motion, can't sit quietly for any length of time
- Has trouble sleeping, including frequent nightmares
- Loses interest in things he or she used to enjoy
- Avoids spending time with friends



HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS

Sleep / Exercise / Nutrition

Mindfulness / Meditation / Breathing

Music / Art

Journaling

Pet Time

Talk it Out

Cuddle

Strength Focus

Laughter

Happiness



I NOTICE MY CHILD IS ACTING DIFFERENTLY... WHAT SHOULD I DO?



It can be tough to tell if troubling behavior in a child is just part of growing up or a problem that should be discussed with a health professional. But if there are signs and symptoms that *last weeks or months*; and if these issues *interfere* with the child's daily life, not only at home but at school and with friends, **you should contact a health professional.**

MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA



- A cluster of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate the general public to fear, avoid, and discriminate against people with mental illnesses
- A consequence of stigma is people don't get the treatment they need. Hence, only half of those with a mental health condition get treatment, according to Mental Health America
- People are afraid to disclose that they have mental health problems. They fear they will be treated differently

THE MYTH



- The myth: Mental illness is rare, and most people are not affected by it
- The truth: Most families in America are affected by mental illness
According to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), about 43 million American adults (18 percent of adults in the US) suffer from mental illness
- Furthermore, 1 in 5 teens (20 percent) suffers from a mental health disorder, according to the National Institute of Mental Health

PARENT SUPPORT



- Be aware of your child's behaviors and emotions
- Build trust with your child
- Be available and open to talk with your child when he or she is ready
- Encourage the expression of feelings
- Teach and model good emotional responses
- Encourage your child to tell you if he or she feels overwhelmed
- Encourage healthy and diverse friendships
- Teach your child to problem solve
- Remind your child of his or her ability to get through tough times, particularly with the love and support of family and friends

PARENT SUPPORT CONTINUED...

- Keep your child aware of anticipated family changes
- Monitor television programs that could worry your child and pay attention to the use of computer games, movies, and the Internet.
- Use encouragement/natural consequences when poor decisions are made
- Help your child select appropriate extracurricular activities, limit overscheduling
- Make your child aware of the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol before experimentation begins
- Monitor your own stress level. Take care of yourself
- Contact your child's teacher with any concerns and make him or her part of the team available to assist your child
- Seek the assistance of a physician, school psychologist, school counselor, or school social worker if stress continues to be a concern

OTHER MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Carrier <https://carrierclinic.org/>

Genpsych <http://genpsych.com/>

High Focus <https://highfocuscenters.pyramidhealthcarepa.com/>

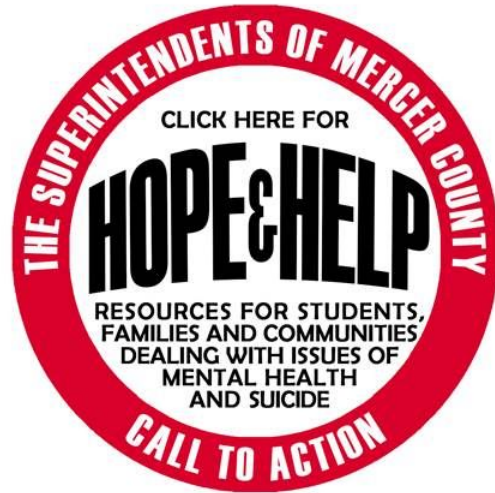
Jewish Family Services <https://www.jfcsonline.org/>

Princeton House princetonhcs.org/care-services/princeton-house-behavioral-health

Trinity <https://trinitycounseling.org/>

Village Counseling <http://www.vcsnj.info/>

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



http://www.west-windsor-plainsboro.k12.nj.us/Guidance/call_to_action

QUESTIONS?

Please contact your
child's school counselor.

