

How to Help Your Teen Manage Stress

Is Your Teen Stressed Out?

Your teen might feel like there is so much pressure to “do and be the best” in school, at home, online, in after-school activities and his or her social life. As a parent, you know that stress is just about everywhere!

Stress

Stress is your body’s fight-or-flight response. You may feel extra energy surge through your body if you are in an emergency situation. You may also feel this energy if you are worried or anxious about something.

Signs of Stress

People react to stress in different ways. There are some general signs of stress:

- constant tiredness (fatigue)
- a change in eating habits
- an increase in the use of alcohol, tobacco (including vaping) or drugs
- a change in usual bowel or bladder habits
- aches or pains not caused by exercise.
- a change in usual sleep patterns
- emotional upsets (anger, anxiety, depression).

Help Your Teen Stress Less

Here are some tips to help your teen manage stress.

- **Maintain good health habits.** Make sure your teen is eating well-balanced meals and avoiding caffeine, alcohol and nicotine. A healthy body tolerates stress more effectively.
- **Get some kind of physical activity every day.** Do physical activities as a family. Go for a bike ride, walk, skate (inline or ice) or play catch at the park. Build weekend family activities around physical activities.
- **Get plenty of rest.** Your teen’s body and mind need to “re-energize” each night. Most teens do not get enough sleep.
- **Do an activity you enjoy.** Make sure your teen is involved in activities that he or she enjoys doing. Along with school sports or clubs, this might also include community activities, clubs or outdoors groups. Be sure not to push your teen into activities he or she does not want to do.
- **Structure daily activities.** Help your teen plan out his or her activities to make the best use of his or her time. Be sure to plan enough time for homework, activities and time to relax.

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- **Talk about stress.** Talking with your teen may help him or her relax.
 - Help your teen identify things that might be making him or her feel stressed and ways to cope with the situation.
 - Encourage your teen to avoid holding in feelings day after day. Let him or her know that he or she can talk with you about them and, together, you will think of ways to make things easier.

When to Get Help

If you notice that stress is interfering with your teen's everyday life or he or she is having physical problems, talk with your health care provider.



For additional tips and resources to help manage stress, visit changetochill.org.