

Tips for Parents: Supporting Your Young Person



As a child grows into adolescence, a parent's role evolves—but remains just as important. Here are some tips to proactively support an adolescent's health and well-being:

1. Start Early, Talk Often >>

Create safe, supportive spaces for teens to talk about everything that is important to them. This may include their bodies, friendships, emotional wellbeing, and reproductive health. Open communication builds trust and encourages healthy decision making.

2. Stay Informed About Health Policies >>

Know federal, state, and local policies that affect adolescent access to:

- Support services
- Sexual and reproductive health care (e.g., birth control, STI testing)
- Comprehensive sex education in schools
- Age of consent
- Minors Rights



In many states, teens have the right to consent to certain medical services without a parent present. This helps ensure they receive timely and confidential care. Understanding these laws empowers both you and your child. Policies around mental health access for minors vary—know what's available in your community and how to access local services.

3. Model Healthy Relationships >>

During adolescence, young minds absorb everything—they're like sponges. Demonstrate respect, communication, and boundaries in your own relationships so they can do the same in theirs.

4. Pay Attention to Social Media & Screen Time >>

Stay engaged with how your young person interacts with peers and strangers online. Talk about safe digital habits, digital responsibility, how to locate reputable resources, and the way social media can impact mental health and influence behavior.

5. Support Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing >>

Talk openly about feelings and mental health. Let your child know it's okay to express emotions and ask for help. Normalize conversations about stress, anxiety, and sadness to reduce stigma and build emotional resilience.

6. Get Involved. Stay Engaged. >>

Participate in school and community work groups related to adolescent health and well-being. Advocate policies that promote positive youth development, equity, and safety. Your active involvement can shape a healthier future for all young people. Fact Forward offers resources and events to help you stay informed.



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