

The state of youth mental health

As parents, it's natural to be concerned about the wellbeing of our children, and it's important to keep ourselves informed about the current state of youth wellbeing. Unfortunately, the data paints a concerning picture. Across the world, young people are facing a range of challenges that is impacting their mental, physical, and emotional health. Factors such as social media, academic pressure, and economic instability are just a few of the many challenges affecting the wellbeing of children and adolescents today. While it's important to remember that every child is different and may face unique challenges, understanding the broader trends can help parents stay informed and better equipped to support their children.

Empower confidence. Start the conversation using these strategies:

- 1. Open communication**
An open and honest line of communication with young people can help them feel more comfortable talking about their mental health. Create a safe and non-judgemental space where they can express themselves without fear of being criticised or ridiculed.
- 2. Promote healthy habits**
Encourage regular exercise, a balanced diet, and enough sleep to promote good mental health. These healthy habits can help reduce stress, anxiety and depression.
- 3. Encourage time outdoors**
Nature is a proven mood-booster, so encourage young people to spend time outdoors. This can be as simple as going for a walk or hike, playing sports, or spending time in the garden.
- 4. Educate about mental health**
Provide education on mental health and mental illnesses affecting young people, and discuss the importance of seeking help if needed. This can help reduce stigma and improve understanding.
- 5. Support social connection**
Encourage young people to build and maintain positive relationships with friends and family. Social connections can provide a sense of belonging and support during challenging times.
- 6. Monitor social media**
Help young people navigate social media by setting guidelines and monitoring their use. Social media can be a source of stress and anxiety for young people, so it's important to teach them healthy ways to use it.
- 7. Encourage hobbies and interests**
Encourage young people to pursue hobbies and interests they enjoy, as this can help boost their self-esteem and improve their overall sense of wellbeing.
- 8. Model self-care**
Be a positive role model for self-care by practicing it yourself. This can include taking time to relax, engaging in self-care activities, and prioritising mental health.
- 9. Foster resilience**
Help young people build resilience by teaching them coping skills, problem-solving skills, and stress management techniques. This can help them better handle difficult situations and bounce back from setbacks.
- 10. Seek professional help when needed**
If young people are struggling with their mental health, encourage them to seek professional help. This can include therapy, counselling, or medication, depending on their needs. Be supportive and understanding throughout the process.