Decoding the Mental Health Messages of Children and Adolescents
A Webinar for Parents and Caregivers
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Settle in for a moment to get grounded and present.

Meditation Monday
Settle in for a moment to get grounded and present.

Let’s Begin
Session Overview

Development in a COVID Context

Mental Health Struggles

Takeaways to Practice

Concluding Remarks

Q&A

Growing and changing every day...
...and in a pandemic

- Social Distancing
- Remote Learning
- Public Health Guidelines

All the feelings

- 😞😢😔
- 😠🤬🤨 hài
- 🙃😍😭
- 😟😡😠 😘😊
We are, as individuals and as a collective, changed by this experience.

Grief and loss since COVID-19

Developmental Responses to Grief

What is “Normal” about this “New”?

There is a new update available for your normal.

Ready to Install?

- self-discipline
- emotion regulation
- reflectiveness
- resilience
- active listening
- compromise
- communication
- empathy
and, if the glass is half full?
Understanding common mental health struggles for young people

From worries & fears to anxiety
A complex state of psychological distress in response to a threat
From sad to depressed

Characterized by a change in functioning and period of feeling unhappy and/or not enjoying activities that used to bring joy.

Issues involving externalizing

Behaviors that are directed toward others and may involve aggression and/or acting out.
Overlapping issues

Eating disorders, substance abuse, and suicide can co-occur with other issues.

FindTreatment.gov

Millions of Americans have a substance use disorder. Help is available.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) collects information on thousands of state-licensed providers who specialize in treating substance use disorders, addiction, and mental illness.

Find treatment Learn more

Counseling 101
Take a page from your school counselor’s playbook.

Sign Me Up
Messages of anxiety

“I can’t do it!”

“My heart is beating out of my chest!”

“I’m not going to school and you can’t make me!”

“No! It’s not good enough!”

“You never understand me!”

[annoyed eye roll] “Why are you being so dramatic?!”

“Get a grip” “You’re getting yourself worked up over nothing”

mindfulness empathy

reflective listening role reversal
Messages of depression

"I'm fine. I am just tired."

"I don't even care."

I don’t want to! It’s all just dumb and none of it matters."

"Just leave me alone!"

"I'm not friends with them anymore!"

"You’re tired?! Ha!"

[distressed]

"Can we quit with the teenage angst?"

How am I supposed to keep up with everything in your life when you don’t tell me anything?

meaning-making

miracle question

reflective listening

silence
Messages of externalizing

“I hate you!”

“Have you always been this stupid?”

“Why can’t you just let me do what I want to do?!”

“Just shut up!”

[Balled fists; Stomping, Slams door]

“Woah, what’s your problem?”

“Don’t you talk to me like that!”

[expletive]

“Somebody woke up on the wrong side of the bed!”

listening!

I-statements

art and calming toys

WDEP
Working on Ourselves, too

Are you willing to do what you are asking of your child?

- Maintaining your own mental health
- Modeling healthy coping
- Taking care of yourself matters

Have I irreparably wrecked my child?

How many times must I count to 10 before I stop wanting to yell?

Am I doing any part of this right?!
An affirmation to remember:

Nothing is going to work every time, but one thing can work this time.

Parenting pledge I learned from my parents:

When we’re not able to connect with you, we’ll find someone who can.

You Know Your Child!
Ground yourself in the goodness.

Restart
Wanna keep learning?

Check out these organizations and resources for more information about the topics reviewed in today’s session.

- Talking about Mental Health (US HHS)
- More about Development (NIH)
- Changes because of COVID (NASP)
- Caregiver Resources (CASC)
- COVID-19 and Schools (ASCA)
- Adolescent Mental Health (CDC)
- Therapy for Kids (AACAP)

Thank you for listening! and, if you have any questions, please ask them in the Q&A