



How to talk about mental health with teens and young adults

Mental health is an important topic anytime. After the pandemic, which 58% of teens say affected their mental health, it may be even more so. Wondering how to talk about it? The Mass4YOU Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help. Use the 5 tips below to get the conversation rolling and help everyone be heard.

For support and resources, call **Mass4YOU** at:

1-844-263-1982, TTY 711

Or visit liveandworkwell.com, use access code **mass4you**.

5 tips to start the conversation

- 1 Remember what being a teen is like.** Teenagers may be getting their first job, learning to drive, hanging out with friends more and spending less time with parents. At the same time, their brains are still developing, and the parts that control impulses and help them make decisions aren't fully formed.
- 2 Watch for cues.** Teens may bring up mental health topics on their own. They might mention what a friend is going through or how they're feeling themselves. It's important to listen, so you don't miss these opportunities.
- 3 Respect differences.** You and the teens or young adults in your life may have very different opinions about political, social or other topics. Try to stay calm and respect their views. This can help make them more open to talking.
- 4 Learn about mental health.** Many people have personal experience with depression, anxiety or other mental health concerns. For others, these topics are new. If you aren't familiar with them, educate yourself before bringing a topic up.
- 5 Don't avoid tough topics.** If you think someone may be having suicidal thoughts, ask. If the answer is yes, seek professional help, including contacting emergency services. Talking about suicide will not cause it.

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For 24/7 support from your phone, get the new Optum Assist app, which replaces the myliveandworkwell app. With the Optum Assist app, you can speak with a therapist, get self care, find a provider, and discover financial and wellness tips.



If you or someone you know has thoughts about suicide, seek help right away. To talk with a trained counselor, you can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline anytime at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911 — or go to the closest emergency room.

This service is provided at no additional cost as part of your benefits. All records are kept confidential in accordance with federal and state laws.

Information provided by this service is for informational purposes only. All information and ideas should be discussed in detail with your individual advisor prior to implementation to determine if it is applicable to you.

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