



Partners for Healthy Lives

Assessing Mental Health in Young People

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Learning objectives

This workshop provides learners with:

- key points for assessing a young person with mental illness
- what early signs of mental illness look like
- guidance and tips for effective treatment.

Poll

55% of youth experienced anxiety

45% Excessive stress

43% Depression

61% of teen said that COVID-19 pandemic has increased their feelings of loneliness

82% want to talk more openly about mental health

79% of teens surveyed wish there was an inclusive environment or safe space for people in school to talk about mental health

Adolescent mental Health

Facts:

- Half of all mental health conditions start by age 14.
- Depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in 15-19-year-olds.

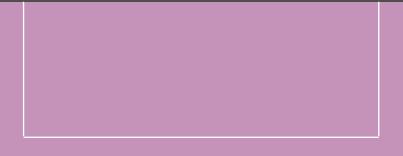


MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN
YOUTH ARE OFTEN ACCEPTED AS
“NORMAL” FEATURES OF
ADOLESCENCE.

Emotional
changes in
adolescence are
not always a
transitional
stage.

There are many negative short- and long-term consequences for not recognizing adolescence mental health needs, which include:

- Impaired social functioning
- Poor education achievement
- Unemployment
- Substance abuse
- Self harm
- Suicide



TYPICAL TRANSITIONAL STAGES IN ADOLESCENCE



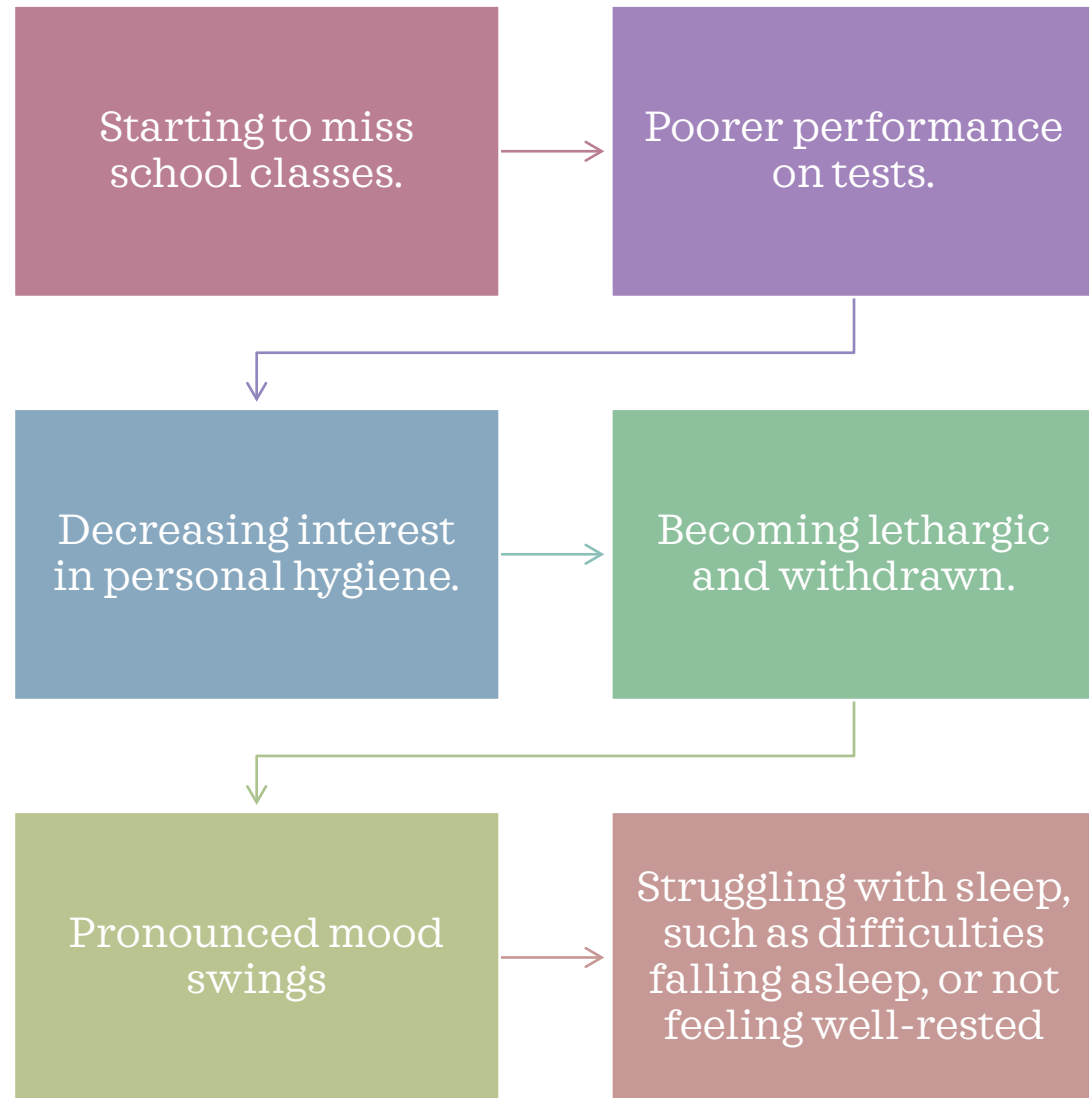
Adolescent development

- Movement toward independence
- Future interest and cognitive changes
- Sexuality
- More values and self direction
- Mood swings
- Spending less time with family
- Pushing boundaries and challenging rules
- Mild Experimentation

Risk Factors

- Desire for greater autonomy
- Pressure to conform with peers
- Exploration of sexual identify
- Increasing access to use of technology
- Media influence
- Gender norms
- Home environment
- Violence
- Socioeconomic problems

What do early stages of mental illness look like



Supporting a young person with a mental illness

Be genuine

Be honest and trustworthy.

Provide choices

Respect the young person's right to make their own decision, when possible.

Non-judgmental

Set aside your own biases and prejudices

Help is available

Make it clear to the youth that even if they refuses help now, they can still access help in the future.

Respect Privacy

Respect privacy and keep the person's story confidential
Consider culture, age, & gender

Good Communication: Things to say & do

- Try to find a quiet place to talk
- Stay near the youth , but keep an appropriate distance depending on their age, gender, and culture
- Let the youth know you are listening
- Be patient and calm
- Provide information but be honest about what you know and don't know .
- Give information in a way they can understand. Keep it simple.
- Acknowledge their strengths
- Allow for silence

A row of wooden ladders is positioned against a teal background. The ladders are arranged in a line, with one ladder in the center being slightly taller than the others. The text "STEPS TOWARD EFFECTIVE TREATMENT" is overlaid in the center of the image, enclosed in a white rectangular border. The text is in a white, serif font, arranged in three lines: "STEPS TOWARD", "EFFECTIVE", and "TREATMENT".

STEPS TOWARD
EFFECTIVE
TREATMENT

First steps towards effective treatment



Do your research



Assessment



Treatment options

Identifying services and support

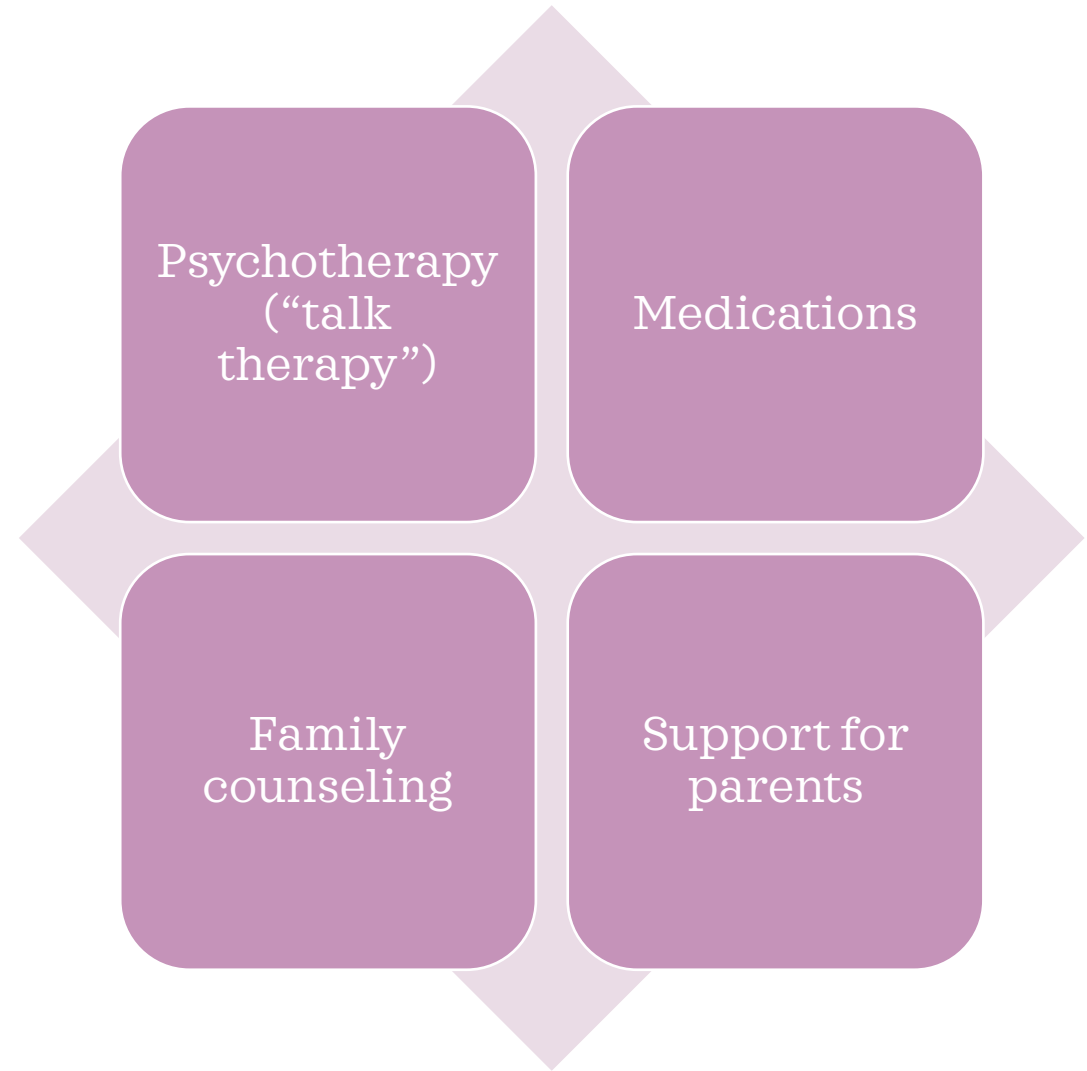
A comprehensive assessment of a child's mental health includes the following:

- An interview with parents addressing a child's developmental history, temperament, relationships with friends and family, medical history, interests, abilities, and any prior treatment. It is important to get a picture of the child's current situation, for example: has he or she changed schools recently, has there been an illness in the family, or a change with an impact on the child's daily life.
- Information gathering from school, such as standardized tests, reports on behavior, capabilities, and difficulties.
- An interview with the child about his or her experiences, as well as testing and behavioral observations, if needed.

Choosing a mental health professional:

- What is your experience in working with children with issues like the ones my child has?
- What is your approach or philosophy?
- How involved will I be in treatment and how will you keep me informed of my child's progress?
- Will I be involved in helping to set goals for treatment?
- How will I know if my child is getting better?
- How long does treatment typically take and how will I know when my child has finished treatment?
- What should I do if I have a crisis between treatment sessions or need immediate help?
- What should I be doing at home to help support my child's treatment?

Types of Treatment:





Monitor and assess for a mental health crisis

- Assess for thoughts of suicide
- Self-injury
- Threatening violence or harm to someone else
- Experiencing a traumatic event such as bullying, abuse, or assault
- Use of alcohol or other drugs
- Isolating themselves from friends and family; not coming out of their room
- Not eating or eating all the time, rapid weight loss or gain



Things caregivers can do to help youth

- Give them your time and attention.
- Help them keep regular routines.
- Allow them to be sad. Don't expect them to be tough.
- Listen to their thoughts and fears without judgement.
- Set clear rules and expectations.
- Ask about the dangers they face and support them/discuss how they can best avoid being harmed.
- Encourage and allow opportunities for them to help.



PROMOTE SELF-LOVE

Encourage positive self coping strategies

- Get enough rest.
- Talk and spend time with family and friends.
- Eat as regularly as possible and drink water.
- Discuss problems with someone you trust.
- Do activities that help you relax
- Get involved in community activities.
- Exercise.





LOOK AFTER
YOURSELF



Look after yourself

- Think about what has helped you cope in the past
- Try to take time to eat, rest, and relax, even for short periods
- Try to keep reasonable working hours
- Talk with friends, loved ones, or other people you trust for support

Get Help:

- **Findtreatment.gov**
- **National Helpline** (treatment referral, and information 24/7): Visit <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline/> or call 1800-662-Help (4357)
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** : Visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/ or call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- **Crisis Text Line**: Visit www.crisistextline.org/ or Text “START” to 741-741
- **National Eating Disorder Association**: Visit www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/ or call 1-800-931-2237

Resources

- **Center for Young Women's Health and Young Men's Health:** These websites provide a series of guides on emotional health, including on test anxiety, depression, bullying, and eating disorders
 - www.youngwomenshealth.org
 - www.youngmenshealthsite.org
- **Jed Foundation:** Promoting emotional health and prevent suicide among college students, this website provides an online resource center, ULifeline, a public dialogue forum, Half of Us, and Transition Year, resources and tools to help students transition to college.
 - <http://www.jedfoundation.org/students>
- **Reach Out:** This website provides information on specific mental health disorders, as well as resources to help teens make safe plans when feeling suicidal, and helpful tips on how to relax.
 - <http://au.reachout.com/>
- **Teens Health:** Providing a safe place for teens who need honest and accurate information, this website provides resources on mental health issues.
 - http://teenshealth.org/teen/your_mind/
- **Teen Mental Health:** Geared towards teenagers, this website provides learning tools on a variety of mental illnesses, videos, and resources for friends.
 - <http://teenmentalhealth.org>
- **Accessing Mental Health in Youth:** Created by Partners of Healthy Lives
 - [Resource Guide](#)



References

- MentalHealth.gov at www.mentalhealth.gov
- NIMH website at www.nimh.nih.gov.
- Center for Disease control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/features/health-care-transition-gaps.html>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>
- Penn Medicine: <https://www.pennmedicine.org/updates/blogs/health-and-wellness/2017/may/teens-mental-health>

QUESTIONS:

