

Coping and Managing Stress

Now, more than ever, it is important to model healthy coping strategies for children and teens. Children and teens learn by watching the adults around them. The better adults handle stress and anxiety, the better able youth will be to manage stress.



Ways to Cope with Stress

According to the CDC, ways to cope with stress during this pandemic include:

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body.
- Take deep breaths, stretch, or [meditate](#).
- [Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.](#)
- [Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep.](#)
- Avoid [alcohol](#).
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.



It is important to set aside time for family activities and to communicate openly about feelings and to listen to each other.

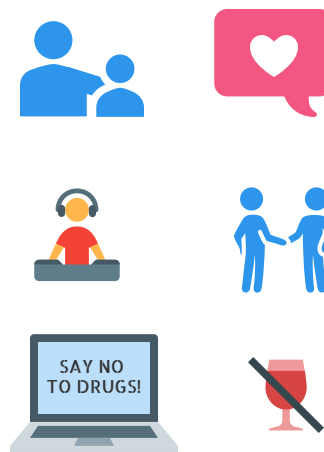
Talk to Prevent

Now is a good time for parents to discuss unhealthy ways of coping and begin by talking about the consequences of underage drinking and drug use. Parents/caregivers are the single biggest influence in a child's life. Youth who hear about the dangers of substance use are less likely to give in to potentially addictive behaviors.

- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Set clear rules and boundaries and communicate them often.
- Take measures to safeguard your liquor cabinet and prescription drugs.
- Don't be afraid to bring up peer pressure and experimenting, or family history with addiction.
- Get to know their friends and their friends' parents/guardians.
- Make sure they know your rules and boundaries regarding alcohol, drugs and gambling, sleepovers/parties and curfews.
- See <https://oasas.ny.gov/prevention/parents-and-caregivers>

A clear no-use message is the most effective way for parents to help keep their kids safe from the many dangers associated with underage alcohol use.

See: <https://oasas.ny.gov/talk-early-and-often>



Additional Resources: Not sure how to begin the conversation? The link gives suggestions on how to begin:

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/talk_to_your_kids_5_conversation_goals.pdf

For more information, see the SAMHSA.gov mobile app: <https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/mobile-application>

Videos designed to help parents give a no-use message to children and teens, see: SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You."

Discussion Starter Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0xTq15pzJU&list=PLBXgZMI_zqfTBdPhFWRi7UajR4WTztWLM&index=15