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Learning to Cope: Teens and Stress



With each passing day, it seems there are more things for teens to worry about - school, sports, SATs, friends, and even the economy. Parents know firsthand that stress can wreak havoc on the body and mind, but they may not realize how stress manifests itself in their kids. Teens who are not sure how to deal with these [pressures](#) may try to cope with stress by taking drugs. They might think that if they are unhappy, drugs will make them feel better.

Parents need to know that drugs can actually worsen the situation and lead to even more stress, anxiety, and even depression. Research shows that weekly or more frequent use of marijuana doubles a teen's risk of depression and anxiety.[1] Parents should set clear rules about drug use and offer coping strategies about how best to deal with stress.

Learn [what behaviors to watch for](#) and how to help your teen handle stress.

Not sure how to keep your teen from folding under today's pressures? [Follow these tips](#) for a practical approach:

1. Focus on the positive. No one has all the answers to life's problems, and no one is perfect. Praise your teens on how well they handle tough situations in their lives.

2. Look for signs. Be involved in your teens' lives and watch to make sure they are not feeling overloaded.

3. Teach stress management. Offer different ways to cope with pressure. Use everyday opportunities to reinforce simple strategies like exercising, following a healthy diet and keeping a journal.

Teens Today

Teens are not always equipped to handle on their own the physical, emotional and psychological changes they experience during adolescence. Parents can be instrumental in helping teens through these phases by offering guidance and support. But because times have changed since parents were in their teens' shoes, it's important for parents to take an [inside look at today's teens](#) to learn more about the current pressures facing middle and high school students.

Help [guide your teen through today's challenges](#).

[1] 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, SAMHSA, 2007.
Pg. 160. URL:
www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k6nsduh/2k6results.pdf.

NEWS



Parents can help teens beat college application stress.
High school seniors say they are spending less time hanging out and more time freaking out. Here's how to help them relieve their college angst.

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ADVICE



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FREE RESOURCES



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Students Against Destructive Decisions