
UNDERSTANDING YOUTH AND THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

BY SENIOR SCHOOL COUNSELLOR, JADE CHEE
SCHOOL COUNSELLOR, THAHIRA

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01 IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH

- Why is mental health important
- What are contributing factors

02 ERIKSON'S STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

- Understanding our teens' needs

03 SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN CHILDREN

- Observing and identifying

04 SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES AT HOME

- Self-care for parents
- Strategies for teens

05 Q&A

01 IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH



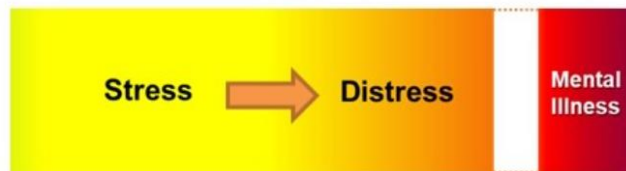
IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH – WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT?

Mental Health is part of overall health, which includes physical and social well-being. This includes having a healthy diet, exercising regularly, sufficient sleep.

In addition, good mental health will allow one to manage his/her thoughts, feelings and behaviours to effectively cope with life's stresses, relate to others, develop a sense of meaning and purpose in life, as well as contribute to the community.



Mental Health



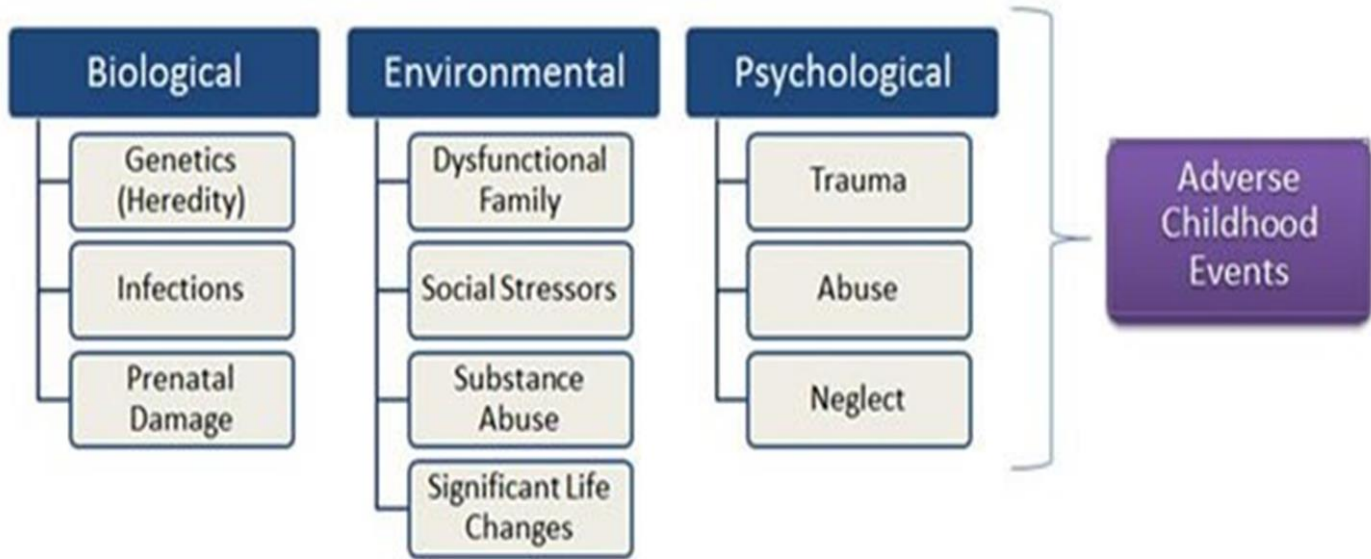
Stress VS Distress

Different people may cope with the same challenge differently; what is considered low stress by most people, may be considered high by others. This is why we need to help students differentiate between stress and distress, so that they are able to identify when they are able to cope and problem-solve on their own (i.e. stress) and when they need to reach out to seek help (i.e. distress).

IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH –

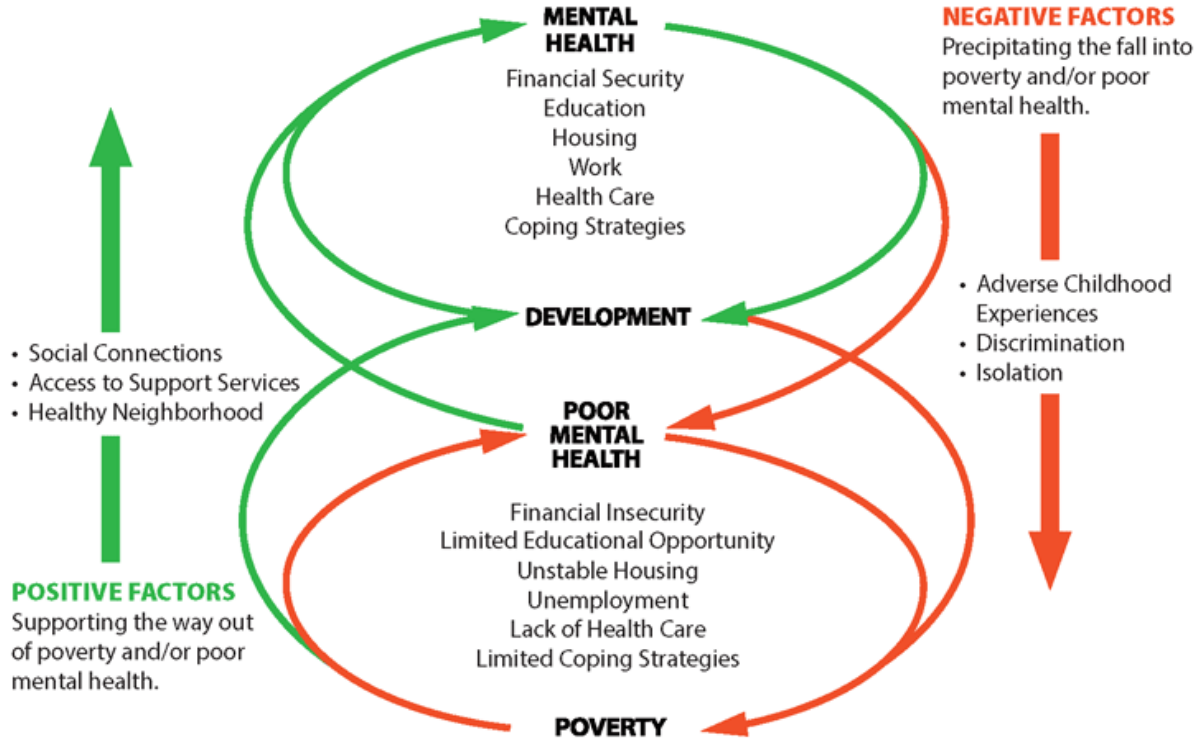
WHAT ARE SOME FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO OUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Important factors contributing to children's mental health



IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH –

WHAT ARE SOME FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO OUR MENTAL HEALTH?



Source: Adapted from World Health Organization

02 ERIKSON'S STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

Understanding our teens' needs

Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events	Key Questions to be answered	Outcome
Infancy (0 to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding/ Comfort	Is my world safe?	Children develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care and affection. A lack of this will lead to mistrust.
Early Childhood (2 to 3)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training/ Dressing	Can I do things by myself or need I always rely on others?	Children need to develop a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence. Success leads to feeling of autonomy, failure results in feelings of shame and doubt.
Preschool (3 to 5)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration/ Play	Am I good or bad?	Children need to begin asserting control and power over the environment. Success in this state leads to a sense of purpose. Children who try to exert too much power experience disapproval, resulting in a sense of guilt.
School Age (6 to 11)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School/ Activities	How can I be good?	Children need to cope with new social and academic demands. Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feeling of inferiority.
Adolescence (12 to 18)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships/ Identity	Who am I and where am I going?	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
Young Adult (19 to 40)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Intimate Relationships	Am I loved and wanted?	Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Work and Parenthood	Will I provide something of real value?	Adults need to create or nurture things that will outlast them, often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people. Success leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment, while failure results in shallow involvement in the world.
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Identity vs. Despair	Reflection on life	Have I lived a full life?	Older adults need to look back on life and feel a sense of fulfillment. Success at this state leads to a feeling of wisdom, while failure results in regret, bitterness, and despair.

Adolescence (12 to 18)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships/ Identity	Who am I and where am I going?	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
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03 SIGNS OF DISTRESS

So next one I want to ask is

1) Out-of-Character Behaviour



- Becoming quieter or more talkative than usual
- Behaving strangely
- Uncharacteristic risk-taking or recklessness
- Giving away possessions
- Saying goodbye to loved ones and friends

3) Temper changes



- Emotional outbursts such as unexplained crying
- Becoming more irritable, agitated, moody, stressed, or anxious than usual
- Expressions of worry, anxiety and/or fear
- Suddenly becoming calm or cheerful after a long period of low mood

2) Sudden changes in appearance, interests or habits



- Sleeping or eating too little or too much
- Sudden loss of interest in previously pleasurable activities
- Sudden loss of interest in studies
- Unusual neglect of personal appearance and/or well-being
- Unusual poor hygiene or unkempt appearance

4) Injuries or illnesses that are unexplained



- Bruises, burns, cuts or scars on bodies
- Tendency to hurt self
- Complaints of unexplained pains
- Wearing clothes that hide the limbs even when weather is hot

5) Aggressive or rebellious behaviour

- Display of impulsive or defiant behaviour
- Unaccountable rage, anger, and/or aggression
- Overly irritable or hostile
- Excessive smoking and/or drinking
- Drug abuse



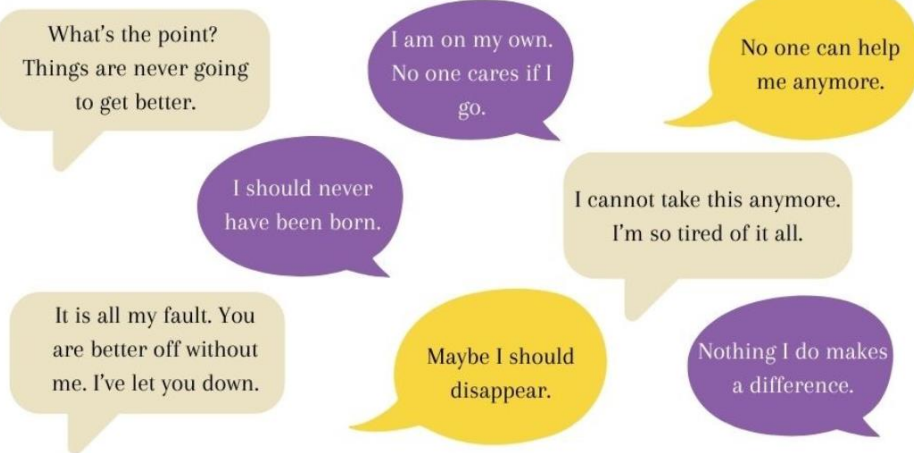
6) Deliberate social withdrawal or extended absence

- Unexplained and repeated absence or truancy
- Declining to join social activities
- Becoming withdrawn and avoiding others
- Having a lack of social contact



7) Moody or morbid postings of messages

- Expressing frequent negative and/or illogical thoughts
- Expressing unbearable emotional pain (e.g. through conversations, journaling, artwork, social media)
- Talking, writing or posting messages about death or dying
- Threatening or expressing plans to hurt or kill themselves



8) Increased lethargy or inattentiveness

- Difficulty in paying attention
- Difficulty in concentrating or making decisions
- Apathy in class



04 SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES AT HOME

Supporting our teens when they are in distress

Calm them down

- Take some slow deep breaths
- Drink some water
- Take some time to cool down

Teaching self-regulation

Hear them out

- Tell me more...
- Help me understand
- How are you feeling?

Allowing them to talk about it, without interruption or judgment.

Empathise

- That sounds tough / difficult
- Sounds like you are feeling angry / frustrated / disappointed / lonely

Labelling emotions can be helpful.

Other helpful strategies 😊

1. Making home a safe place for sharing of thoughts and feelings.
2. Using positive and affirming language to acknowledge and validate feelings, being mindful of how we respond.
3. Spending quality time with family members and being present with them, connecting emotionally.
4. Providing consistent boundaries and nurturing guidance.
5. Getting to know them as a unique growing individual 😊



DEAR STRUGGLING PARENTS, IT'S NOT JUST YOU. THIS IS HARD

TIME

Jan, 2021

Over the last few months, I've gotten so many emails from parents of teens—both readers of this newsletter and friends. And while the details vary, I can hear the thrum of fear in each one as they describe a child who seems to be slowly crumbling, or is in crisis. So this is a letter for all of you:

You're not alone. You're not the only one feeling lost or like you're the worst parent you know. So many of us have been where you are now, especially in an unimaginably fractured and stressful year, one that has made everything that's already difficult about adolescence that much harder.

While providing support to a young person experiencing mental health difficulties can be deeply rewarding, it can also be challenging and have an impact on you.

In plane travel, passengers are advised, in the event of an emergency, to apply the oxygen mask to themselves first so that they can assist a fellow passenger.”

Don't let go of what grounds you

What lifts your spirit or gives you energy? Pets, the beach, running, singing, connecting with nature, meditation? "

Share the responsibility

Share your experience with a supportive friend or family member but remember, you can always seek professional support if needed."

Be kind to yourself

Often self-blame goes with the experience of being a parent or carer. Being realistic and having compassion for yourself is important, especially if the self-blame is 'kicking in' or if the expectations of yourself are too high. Consider what it would be like if you talked to yourself like how you would talk to a friend in the same situation. You might encourage a friend to not be so hard on themselves and affirm their efforts. These messages can help with accepting that you are not responsible for the challenges that your young person is facing.

It is important to notice and celebrate the small successes. Reflecting on any positive changes for your young person can give you hope and optimism for the future. Acknowledging what you do that makes a difference can lift your mood and renew your commitment to be there for your young person.

One of the most effective ways family and friends can support young people to look after their mental health is to model healthy habits. It's a good idea to practise some of these tips yourself.



Self-care for parents

Caring for a loved one who is experiencing a hard time can impact on your health and wellbeing. Get some support by talking to someone you trust and seek professional help if you need it.

It's important to look after yourself during these times. By doing so, you're also **modelling** good self-care for your young person.

Counselling support
for parents

Care Corner Counselling Centre

Offers individual, couple and group counselling, with specialisation in children therapy, couple therapy, mental health, and trauma recovery. Average cost of \$40 to \$80 per session.

Address: Block 62B Lorong 4 Toa Payoh #02-143 Singapore 312062

Number: 6353-1180

Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 9am to 6pm, Tuesday & Thursday: 9am to 9pm, and Saturday: 9am to 1pm

Email: cccc@carecorner.org.sg

Website: <https://www.carecorner.org.sg/counselling-centre>

Life and Lemonade

Focuses on parenting work and family therapy. Adopts a pay-as-you-wish model.

Address: Peace Centre, #05-28,1 Sofia Road.

Number: 91388151 (phone and whatsapp)

Email: enquiry.lifeandlemonade@gmail.com

Website: <https://lifeandlemonade.sg/>

CPH Online Counselling

Description: CPH (Community Psychology Hub) provides free online counselling service for individuals facing marital, divorce and parenting difficulties

Website: <https://www.cphonlinecounselling.sg/hc/en-us>

Modalities: Live web chat, email, phone

Mental Health Helplines



Mental Health resources for parents

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS: SUPPORTING MENTAL WELL-BEING

These resources were specially prepared for Parent Support Groups (PSGs) to support you in your role as a Resource Supporter.

CONTENTS

What do I need to know?

How can I identify the signs?

How can I support my child?

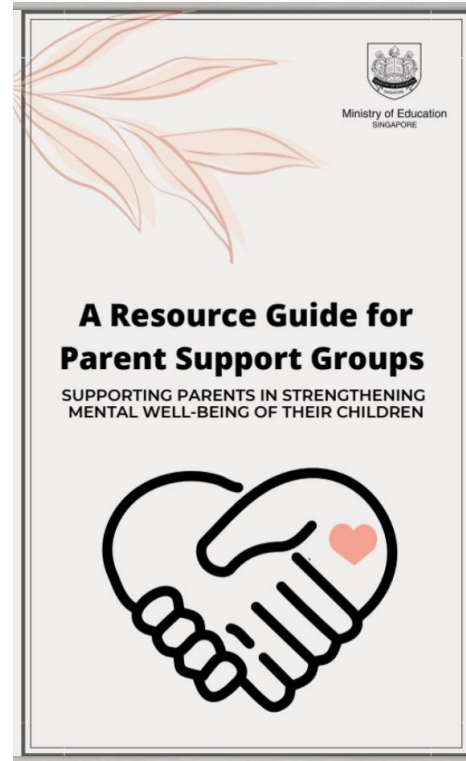
How can I seek additional support?

Webinars & Workshops

Helplines



<https://sites.google.com/moe.edu.sg/psg-mental-wellbeing-support/home>



CONTENTS

1 BACKGROUND

- WHY IS MENTAL WELL-BEING IMPORTANT?
- WHAT IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

2 BEING A RESOURCE & PEER SUPPORTER

- WHAT CAN PSGs DO AS A RESOURCE AND PEER SUPPORTER?
- WHAT CAN PSGs START?

3 READY TO SHARE RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

- WHAT PARENTING TIPS CAN PSGs SHARE ABOUT MENTAL WELL-BEING?

4 BE INSPIRED

- WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF PSGs SUPPORTING PARENTS?
- WHO CAN PSGs LEARN FROM?

5 ANNEX

- WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PSGs?
- HOW DO PSGs USE THE RESOURCES?

Mental Health resources for parents



MY MENTAL HEALTH MY WORK LIFE MY DAILY LIFE MY LOVED ONES I NEED SUPPORT NOW

Supporting Children

Children need support too during the COVID-19 pandemic. Let mental health practitioners show you how to talk to children about the pandemic, identify signs and symptoms of trauma or distress in children and how to support them.

https://stayprepared.sg/mymentalhealth/my-loved-ones/supporting-children/?gclid=CjwKCAiApfeQBhAUEiwA7K_UH7jq1vjfz2bnbCIQm7T-D0smrr2celsRmt_rbhPqSa7_MFegfUEzyhoCvNkQAvD_BwE



Navigating "Diagnosis Anxiety"



7 Strategies to Support Children with Special Needs in COVID-19



Building Resilience In Our Children

Videos!



#youarenotalone #worldmentalhealthday #mentalhealthmatters
Youth Conversations: Mental Well-being



#MentalHealth #MentalHealthAwareness #Poly
Students Answer Tough Questions About Mental Health



05

Q&A

THANK YOU!
