

# Tip sheet

## Supporting teenagers

Navigating the ups and downs of puberty, school pressures and friendships can make those high school years tricky for both teens and the adults that support them. By understanding and responding to the challenges they might face, you can help your teenagers maintain positive mental health throughout this transformative phase.



### Tips for supporting teenagers

#### Open communication

Foster an environment of trust. Start conversations about their day, friends and concerns, and actively listen without judgement – but don't forget to give them a reasonable amount of privacy as well.

#### Teach them about mental health

Discuss common misconceptions around mental health to help shed any stigmas, letting them know that it's always okay to ask for support.

#### Encourage healthy habits

Teenagers are often known for going to bed late, but a lack of sleep can take a toll on developing minds. Getting enough sleep – along with a balanced diet, regular exercise and a limit on

screen time – contributes to their physical and mental wellbeing.

#### Support their passions

Encourage your teens to pursue hobbies they're passionate about. This can act as a therapeutic outlet and boost their self-esteem.

#### Set realistic expectations

Understand that academic success is important, but excessive pressure can lead to anxiety. Set achievable goals and celebrate their genuine efforts, no matter the outcome.

#### Friendship dynamics

Guide your teens in recognising healthy friendships that uplift and support them. Explain the significance of setting boundaries and addressing conflicts constructively.

#### Normalise ups and downs

Remind them that everyone experiences highs and lows, and it's okay to have 'off' days. Let them know that your love and support are unconditional.

If your teens are still struggling, consider approaching a school counsellor or youth organisation for further support.

Finally, it's okay to seek support for yourself during this time. Please reach out to the Vitae team if you ever need to talk.

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#### Contact

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