HELPING TEENAGERS Deal with Disappointment



The teenage years revolve around friends, school, family, sports, and events. Cancellations and social distancing may have real effects on the emotional health of teens.

LOOK FOR

- Change in Sleeping
 Patterns: Are they getting 8
 hours of sleep daily?
- Change in Behavior: Are they more easily irritable or exhibit lack of energy?
- Change in Activity Patterns: Are they engaging less with family members or staying alone in their room more?
- Change in Eating Patterns: Are they eating more or less than before?
- Change in Overall Health: Do they complain of headaches, stomach aches, or muscle pain?
- Changes in Mood: Do you see mood swings that are out of the ordinary: crying, laughing, gloomy?



As parents we may not always recognize what could warrant disappointment. Other events, beyond the current global crisis, may cause disappointments:

- An injury prevents playing sports.
- A family conflict causes them to miss a school dance.
- A loss prevents advancement into playoffs.
- An unexpected breakup occurs.
- A friendship experiences growing pains.
- A disconnect occurs from regular routines and schedules.





Remember,

disappointments are not all bad. Individuals can learn a great deal and develop several resiliency character traits from this. Disappointments shouldn't be minimized but it can be an opportunity to grow from the experience.

REFERENCES

Psychology Today:

https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/ blog/the-race-good-health/201402/5tips-helping-teens-cope-stress

American Psychological Association: https://www.apa.org/topics/stresschildren

American Psychological Association: https://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/04/ teen-stress

Here's how you can help your teen

Allow your teenager to experience frustration. Make

sure you don't minimize their feelings. Let them vent and assist with looking beyond their immediate emotions. Have open communication on what is disappointing them and suggest positive ways to help calm their thoughts.

Listen to your teenager. As

parents, we want to fix the situation; however, listening to their perceptions of the situation is essential.

Identify resources or other role

models for your teen. Resources should be about real stories of how people they identify with persevered in trying times.

Make your teen the primary

focus; it's not about ourselves. Perhaps sharing your thoughts that you are disappointed as well can be a way of building a connection with your teenager, but keep it in perspective about your teen.

Explore ways to de-stress.

Utilize techniques such as mindfulness practices, deep breathing, journaling, relaxation, and exercise.

Offer perspective on how they can deal with unexpected, disappointing circumstances.

The situation is not what they want, but, create realistic opportunities and explore the new opportunities the situation presents. Help your teenager acknowledge that stumbling blocks do occur and then assist them with coming up with alternatives.

Stay connected with

friends and family. When face to face is not an option, communicate by phone calls, texts, email, video chat, and social media with others who may be experiencing similar situations. Encourage your teenager to share about the disappointment but not to dwell on it and be open to positive conversations with others.

Find a distraction from the disappointing thoughts by playing a game or doing something relaxing together.

This can help your teenager see that they need to try to focus on other things that can be a positive experience.

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