



FIVE TIPS FOR A HAPPY AND HEALTHY TEEN

Being a parent is a creative endeavor. When they were young, it was all about the art of distraction and clever ways to get them to eat meals. And with teens, it's all about suggesting ideas in ways that don't come from you but them. Here are a few suggestions on ways to introduce ideas without that parent tone!

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★ STRESS RELIEF

Stress is one of the top concerns for everyone and it comes from many outlets: school, social, performance anxiety. The sooner teens become aware of their stress triggers followed by best ways, for them, to support and manage it, the better they will feel and perform in everyday tasks.

- There are many local teen classes for yoga and meditation, designed to help them develop coping strategies that they can take with them and apply when confronted with life stress. Ask if they are interested—they just might be.
- Purchase an essential oil diffuser and some essential oils. Let your teen find an oil that soothing to them. If they take baths, adding a few drops plus some magnesium-packed epsom salt can help calm the mind and dispel stress.
- Have a calendar handy, or a notebook that your teen get write down their daily tasks. When teens learn to time manage and prioritize tasks it takes a lot of the pressure off that often leads to anxiety.
- 90 second rule: It really is best not to bury your emotions, but to stay present with them for 90 seconds, in order to process them. After those 90 seconds, use stress management tools out: listen to a favourite song, journal, or going for a run.

★ NUTRITION

Making the right food choices is key!

Teens are concerned about both their skin and their moods. A healthy diet that consists of whole colorful foods with plenty of fruits and vegetables is the best place to start. There is plenty of research that supports the link between diet, skin, and mood.

Tips and Tricks

Get them excited about eating healthy by looking for recipes that sound good to them and then cook them together or suggest they organize a dinner party with their friends and help them plan the meal.

★ POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

We all know that it takes a village to raise a child and we want to be able to answer your teen's questions and provide them with as much good, credible information as possible.

The truth is that teens need to hear information from someone other than their parents. There are few things as frustrating to parents as hearing their children excited about receiving the same information from someone else that they have been telling them for months— we get this—we are both parents to teens!

Tip

If your teen loves to write, the organization, Writegirl, is the perfect place for them to find mentors who are working in the field.

★ A GOOD FRIEND NETWORK

There is so much research coming out to support the fact that humans are social creatures and need to feel part of a strong social network to feel satisfied and fulfilled. However, the pre-teen and teen years can be a roller coaster ride full of emotions and drama learning how to be in friendships.

Tips and Tricks

Does your teen like to bake? If so, find a teen baking class.

Or do they prefer to watch films? Suggest they start a film club where they watch and then review the movie.

One of the best ways to develop long-term relationships, is finding friends with shared interests.

★ TIME IN NATURE

Getting into nature whether its on a hike in the woods or soaking in the sun at the beach is key to a happy and healthy life. There is plenty of research, especially with forest bathing, that shows how the scents of tree and bushes help calm our minds and relieve stress. It's a great way to ground ourselves, which then allows us to feel confident and strong.

Tips and Tricks

Plan some weekend trips to the mountains or beach. Encourage your teen to bring a friend.

Are they interested in something particular? Running? Nature walks? If so, joining a local running club, or wilderness camp like Outward Bound or NOLS would connect them with the great outdoors while also being a great way to meet new people.

If you have a backyard, create an area where he or she can hang out and perhaps, they will want to plant a garden or trees!