



# Supporting Adolescents

Learn about adolescent mental health and how Modern Health can help

# Introduction

Adolescence (ages 10-19) is a formative time, and this transition to adulthood is filled with positive learning experiences that are critical to adolescent development and also potentially stressful events that might leave young people more susceptible to mental health challenges. Concerning trends of increased depression and suicidal ideation in adolescents began nearly 10 years ago, well before additional societal factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and increased political unrest.

Experts point to several reasons why the decline in mental health among adolescents has occurred, from increased social media use to structural factors that impact many children such as poverty, homelessness, and lack of access to health care and education. Mental health experts, including those at Modern Health, are working on solutions like creating access to inclusive mental health services for you and your dependents. If your child or dependent is an adolescent, it's important to understand the resources that are available through Modern Health to support your adolescent's mental health.



## Common Experiences To Expect During Adolescence

During adolescence, the area of our brain responsible for managing emotions, decision-making, and problem-solving (known as the prefrontal cortex), is rapidly developing. It's important to understand that taking risks is a normal part of growing up, and it's common for adolescents to experience more intense emotions during this time of life as the prefrontal cortex continues to develop. Here are some common experiences to expect during adolescence:

- Experimenting with different social groups and interests
- Wanting greater social independence
- Caring more about what peers think of them
- Engaging in risky behaviors
- Being more strongly influenced by peers
- Exploring romantic relationships and sexual identity
- Exploring gender identity and gender expression
- Experiencing strong and intense emotions that might seem unpredictable to parents

## How To Know When Your Adolescent Might Need Mental Health Support

Parents, caregivers, and adolescents find that seeking support during significant changes and transitions in life, like those that occur during adolescence, can be helpful even if your adolescent does not have a clear diagnosable mental health condition.

- **Understand when your adolescent may be seeking support**

Observe changes in their mood, behavior, eating, sleep, and daily functioning and evaluate whether these changes appear sudden or severe, or are negatively impacting their home, social, and academic lives.

- **Common mental health challenges during adolescence include:**

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Disordered eating or excessive concern about body weight and shape
- Learning and attention difficulties
- Issues with substance use
- Suicide or self-harm behaviors



### AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

Some people experiencing depression and anxiety symptoms may have thoughts of death or suicide, which is one reason it's so important to seek help. **If you or a loved one are in immediate crisis, contact your local crisis resource — in the U.S., you can call 988.**

The [World Health Organization](#) estimates that one in seven (14%) 10-19 year-olds experience a diagnosable mental health condition, and the following groups may be at higher risk of developing mental health challenges due to societal and systemic inequities:

- Adolescents from lower-income households
- Female adolescents
- LGBTQIA+ adolescents
- Adolescents with chronic illness
- Adolescents from marginalized backgrounds

It's important to note that there are protective factors that can buffer the effects of societal and systemic inequities, such as:

- Strong social support (including from family, friends, community, mentors, teachers)
- Self-regulation skills
- Faith or spirituality
- Hope and optimism
- Self-confidence
- Positive school environment
- Assistance from a community organization or the government

## Factors Impacting Adolescent Mental Health

- Problematic social media use and cyberbullying
- Difficulty coping with stress and regulating emotions
- Grief and ongoing stress from the COVID-19 pandemic and political unrest
- Substance use
- Inadequate financial resources
- Feeling unprepared for the transition out of high school



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Questions? [help@modernhealth.com](mailto:help@modernhealth.com)



# How Modern Health Can Support Adolescents

Clinical research on interventions for youth demonstrates that appropriate care options for this population are diverse and vary greatly, in part, due to age. For this reason, Modern Health's approach to youth mental health is to directly support their caregivers, and as clinically and developmentally appropriate, involve the child in care (either with their caregiver or independently). When adolescents require direct care with a therapist (either independently or with a caregiver), Modern Health can match an adolescent with a licensed therapist who specializes in supporting children's mental health.

Although dependents under the age of 18 can't have independent access to the Modern Health app, they can use their parent's app to access digital content that may be helpful. For example, we have specific meditations for children and older adolescents. Regularly practicing meditation and mindfulness have indicated reductions in stress, anxiety, and depression and increases in well-being in adolescents.

We offer a robust set of programs and resources to equip parents and caregivers with skills to support adolescents, including:



## One-On-One Care

Modern Health can match you with a certified coach or therapist trained in evidence-based methods to support your unique needs. This includes coaching for ages 18+ and therapy for minor dependents of all ages in the U.S., and ages 6+ outside the U.S., which is sometimes necessary for more severe clinical challenges. You have access to licensed therapists specifically trained to work with members on parenting and caregiving-related concerns. Work one-on-one with a provider to:

- Address your own mental health needs in order to improve family relationships
- Improve parent management skills to increase compliance and reduce disruptive behaviors
- Cope with stressors associated with parenting and caregiving, including for children with exceptional needs

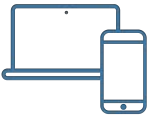






## Circles

Circles are live group sessions led by Modern Health therapists and coaches. You'll walk away from each session with skills to navigate challenges that may impact you at school, at home, or in your relationships. Circles help you proactively improve your mental health, and you have unlimited access to our community and on-demand Circle offerings. Sessions cover parenting and caregiving, how to support your children through stressful events, and more topics related to parenting adolescents. Check out our [Circles page](#) to sign up for a session!



## Self-Guided Digital Resources

With Modern Health, you have access to digital resources on-demand 24/7 with self-serve care options you can engage with at your own pace. These resources include digital programs, guided meditations, and courses including our:

- [Ground Yourself in the Moment With Naomi Osaka meditation](#)
- [The Journey of Parenting podcast](#)
- [Help Kids Cope with Stress program](#)
- [How to Handle a Heated Moment program](#)
- [Skills for Navigating Intense Emotions course](#)

