

Five Practical Ways to Support Your Child's Mental Health

1. SHOW UP.

- Ask your child about their day.
- Invite your child to join you in a task, such as preparing dinner or running an errand in the car.
- Create opportunities for one-on-one time, preferably outside of the home.

2. SEE THEM.

- Ask questions like, "How did that make you feel?"
- Help your child acknowledge their feelings.
- When we truly see our kids, we are better able to recognize possible warning signs of depression and anxiety.
 - Depression is a sadness that doesn't go away.
 - Anxiety is a sense of uneasiness, worry, or dread of what's about to happen or what might happen.
 - When symptoms of depression or anxiety are seen more days than not, consult a pediatrician or mental health provider.

3. JUST LISTEN.

- Focus on what your child is trying to say.
- Your presence is more important than your words.
- If you want to keep your child talking, use these three words: Tell me more.

4. SPEAK LIFE.

- If your child struggles with negative self-talk:
 - Listen to them.
 - Help them put things in context.
 - Encourage them by speaking life and teaching them how to speak more positively about themselves and their situation.

- Be sure to praise them specifically and sincerely. Praise effort over outcome. For example: “I see all the effort you’re putting toward making healthier choices lately. I am proud of you.”

5. BUILD GRIT.

- Teach your child to view setbacks as opportunities for improvement.
- Teach emotional regulation. If we can’t regulate our emotions, we can’t make good decisions.
- Encourage independence. For example, let them organize their own backpack and their homework assignments, encourage them to make sure their athletic uniforms are packed and ready to go, and let them order their own food at a restaurant.

Additional Resource

Parenting with Mental Health in Mind – a digital master course for parents.

<https://parentcuestore.org/products/parenting-with-mental-health-in-mind-course>