



## Behavioral health support for teens and adolescents

### Behavioral health during the formative years

Children begin creating the social and emotional habits that may affect their long-term mental health and well-being during the adolescent years (ages 10–19). It's also during these years that many may begin to experience behavioral health struggles.<sup>1</sup> UnitedHealthcare members have access to programs, resources and services to help support your family through behavioral health challenges.

### Providing emotional support

Children and teens may experience stress and other mental health challenges, but getting them to open up can be tricky. With the right resources, you can support your child and find the help they may need.

As a UnitedHealthcare member, you have access to a large network of behavioral health providers who specialize in child and teen care. There are also programs and self-help tools that may be available at no additional cost to you\* through your health plan, including:

- Self-help resources, including Self Care from AbleTo
- The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with 24/7 in-the-moment support
- Outpatient behavioral health therapy
- Behavioral health virtual visits

continued

\*Check your plan details for coverage on these and other forms of support.

**United  
Healthcare**

# Ways to help you support your teen

## Start a conversation

When kids feel safe and not judged, progress and growth often follow. Starting conversations with honesty and empathy may encourage your teen to open up about mental health concerns. Ask your teen how they're doing—and take their feelings seriously. Let them know that it's OK to not feel great all the time, and reassure them that you're there to offer support.

## Explore options for telehealth counseling

Look for organizations—like the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)—that can connect you with resources, or connect with your EAP. Self Care from AbleTo may be a convenient way to help reduce possible symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression.

## Move toward a healthier schedule

Encourage daily routines, keeping in mind that being active each day and getting enough sleep can have a big impact on mental health. For teens, a lack of sleep is linked to increased risk of depressed mood.<sup>2</sup>

## Evaluate screen time

Technology may be an essential way young people connect socially, but time spent on phone calls, texts, video chats and social media platforms can add up. It's a good idea to make sure their screen time isn't negatively impacting their sleep schedule, daily routines or well-being.

## Be mindful of potential substance use

Teens and young adults may begin using substances for many reasons—from peer pressure to curiosity to coping with depression or anxiety—and substance use may lead to addiction. It's important to get ahead of the problem before it gets worse.

UnitedHealthcare members and their covered family members have access to resources to help them overcome challenges. Discover our conversation starter cards, self-help digital tools, licensed therapists (in person or virtual) and more, all in one place.

Half of all mental health conditions start by age

14<sup>1</sup>

Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for ages

15-19<sup>1</sup>

Many mental health conditions appear before age

24<sup>3</sup>

## Learn more

Visit [uhc.com/parentyouth](https://uhc.com/parentyouth) for a full list of available resources

United  
Healthcare

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. "Adolescent mental health." <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>. Accessed June 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Short M, et al. The relationship between sleep duration and mood in adolescents: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sleep Med. Rev.* August 2020; Volume 52. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S108707922030054X?via%3Dihub>. Accessed February 16, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Blakemore, Sarah-Jayne. Adolescence and mental health. *Perspectives. The Art of Medicine.* May 18, 2019; Volume 393, Issue 10185. 2030–2031. Available at: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(19\)31013-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(19)31013-X/fulltext). Accessed June 2021.

This program should not be used for emergency or urgent care needs. In an emergency, call 911 if you are in the United States or the local emergency services phone number if you are outside the United States, or go to the nearest accident and emergency department. This program is not a substitute for a doctor's or professional's care. Due to the potential for a conflict of interest, legal consultation will not be provided on issues that may involve legal action against Optum or its affiliates, or any entity through which the caller is receiving these services directly or indirectly (e.g., employer or health plan). This program and all its components, in particular services to family members below the age of 16, may not be available in all locations and are subject to change without prior notice. Experience and/or educational levels of Employee Assistance Program resources may vary based on contract requirements or country regulatory requirements. Coverage exclusions and limitations may apply.

Self Care by AbleTo should not be used for urgent care needs. If you are experiencing a crisis or need emergency care, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. The information contained within Self Care is for educational purposes only; it is not intended to diagnose problems or provide treatment and should not be used on its own as a substitute for care from a provider. Self Care is available to members ages 13+ at no additional cost as part of your benefit plan. Self Care may not be available for all groups in District of Columbia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia or West Virginia and is subject to change. Refer to your plan documents for specific benefit coverage and limitations or call the toll-free member phone number on your health plan ID card. Participation in the program is voluntary and subject to the Self Care terms of use.

The material provided through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is for informational purposes only. EAP staff cannot diagnose problems or suggest treatment. EAP is not a substitute for your doctor's care. Employees are encouraged to discuss with their doctor how the information provided may be right for them. Your health information is kept confidential in accordance with the law. EAP is not an insurance program and may be discontinued at any time. Due to the potential for a conflict of interest, legal consultation will not be provided on issues that may involve legal action against UnitedHealthcare or its affiliates, or any entity through which the caller is receiving these services directly or indirectly (e.g., employer or health plan). This program and its components may not be available in all states or for all group sizes and is subject to change. Coverage exclusions and limitations may apply.

Insurance coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates. Administrative services provided by United HealthCare Services, Inc. or their affiliates.