



THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF CARE A TEEN GIRLS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract : *Unfortunately, these types of negative thoughts are becoming increasingly common among young people. Today's teenagers are faced with higher levels of stress, and studies show that young people in the United States are developing perfectionist tendencies, holding themselves to unrealistic standards. On top of that, lasting anxiety, stress, and mental health challenges surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic continue to affect adolescent mental health. But there's good news: teenagers can take steps to build resilience to face life's challenges. Self-concept plays an important role in emotional health, meaning, when teenagers feel good about themselves, they can better cope with stressful life events and maintain positive mental health. So, how can parents and caregivers help teenagers navigate their mental health concerns? Whether your teen is struggling in school or seeking treatment for depression symptoms, it's important to help them incorporate the practice of self-care into their daily life. Here's how to empower your teen with self-care to jumpstart their journey toward mental wellness.*

INTRODUCTION

Self-care isn't just about mental health physical health matters, too. Young people can reap wide-ranging benefits from regular exercise, especially if they're used to sitting inside most of the day. Self-concept is also linked to an individual's sense of physical attractiveness an area where many adolescents struggle. Beyond boosting confidence, regular physical activity triggers positive feelings by releasing mood-boosting endorphins. Exercise increases our heart rate, putting our body systems under stress. In turn, our brain floods our body with mood-boosting endorphins, which reduce our perception of pain and trigger positive feelings. Parents should encourage regular exercise, support team sports, and help teenagers explore other kinds of movement. Studies show that regular physical activity can reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress,

and other mental health conditions. If your teen struggles to exercise, try buddying up or encouraging them to work out with a friend. If you're not sure where to start, try signing you and your teen up for a guided class either in-person or online to try out a kind of movement activity. Your teen might even meet some new friends.

So, how can teenagers start cultivating more compassion for themselves? Encourage your teen to take a moment every morning or evening to write down what they appreciate about themselves, even the little things. Giving your teenager things to look forward to whether that's a spa day, weekend trip, or lunch date with a friend is a great way to improve their outlook for the future. If your teenager has a mental health condition, such as major depression or an anxiety disorder, practicing self-compassion might take extra time and



effort. If they're struggling with feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness, talk therapy can help your teen identify their strengths and develop healthy coping strategies to combat negative thoughts. Some other tips to help teenagers cultivate compassion include.

OBJECTIVES

1. The concepts of self-management, self-care, and the context of adolescent's issues.
2. The strategies proposed to facilitate self-management, self-care for teenagers.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the analysis of the secondary data and published in the various journals, annual reports and websites.

Descriptive research includes surveys and fact finding enquires of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the situation as it exists at present. The researcher used secondary data for developing understanding of the pivotal role in the current issue of the Importance of self-care a teen girls' perspective.

SELF-COMPASSION: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR TEENAGERS

Teenagers can be very hard on themselves. They can also be very self-conscious, care a lot about what others think of them, and compare themselves to others. And they might experience intense emotions like shame and humiliation.

Self-compassion helps teenagers deal more positively with failures, mistakes, setbacks and other tough times. For example, if your child gets a bad grade on an assignment or isn't picked for a sports team, they might feel

disappointed. But self-compassion helps your child to handle the disappointment positively. Your child might say to themselves, 'It's OK – I've tried my best', 'I'll keep practising and try again' or 'I might ask for help next time'.

When teenagers treat themselves with self-compassion, they:

- are happier
- have the confidence to try new things or try again if things don't work out as planned
- take responsibility for their actions
- have more resilience, so they can 'bounce back' after difficult times
- get along well with others
- are likely to accept others and be more compassionate towards them.

Self-compassion helps protect teenagers against mental health problems like anxiety or depression. Teenagers with self-compassion are also less likely to self-harm, feel suicidal, or show signs of eating disorders or substance abuse.

Self-compassion and strong parent-child relationships

Adolescence can be a difficult time. During this time a strong relationship with you helps your child feel loved, accepted and secure, no matter what's going on in their life. When your child feels like this, they also feel more confident to face challenges. And they're more likely to be kind to themselves when things don't work out. This is because they know you won't judge or criticise them.

You can build a relationship that helps your teenage child feel secure and nurtures self-compassion in many ways. Here are ideas.



- ❖ Spend time with your child doing things your child enjoys. It could be shopping, cooking, playing sport, watching TV and so on. This sends a simple message you're important to me.
- ❖ Actively listen to your child's feelings. To listen actively, stop what you're doing when your child wants to talk. Try to understand your child's perspective, even if it's not the same as yours. For example, 'It sounds like you're feeling left out because you're not going to the party on Thursday night'.
- ❖ Forgive your child. This shows your child that it's OK to make mistakes. For example, your child forgets to call when they're late home from a friend's place. You could say, 'I stayed up late because you didn't let me know when you were going to be home, but it's OK. It's easy to forget about calling if you're having fun. What would help you remember next time?'
- ❖ Think of ways to show kindness in your family. For example, your family routines might allow for your child to have a break from the washing up on nights when they have a lot of homework. Or as one of your family rituals, you might take turns choosing favourite desserts for Sunday nights.
- ❖ Praise your child when they show themselves compassion. This builds your child's self-compassion even more. For example, you could say to your child, 'I know you're disappointed that they didn't pick you for the

team. But I feel proud to hear that you'll try out again next season'.

Building self-compassion in teenagers: 3 steps

Self-compassion is something teenagers need to learn and practise. Try these 3 steps to develop self-compassion in your child.

Step 1

Pause and notice when your child is angry, frustrated or disappointed because things haven't gone the way they wanted and they're being hard on themselves. For example, your child might be upset about how a haircut has turned out. Or they might be sad and embarrassed that someone they care about doesn't feel the same way. Maybe your child is worried that they've said something hurtful to a friend.

You might hear your child say things like 'I'm so ugly', 'Nobody likes me', or 'I'm a horrible friend'. Or your child might just be quiet and withdrawn.

Step 2

Let your child know that it's OK to find things hard and that everyone makes mistakes. It's also OK to feel sad, angry, disappointed or frustrated – but it isn't OK to be harsh on yourself.

For example, you could say, 'It's normal to feel unhappy with your body sometimes, but that doesn't mean you're ugly'. Or 'I'm sorry they don't feel the same way about you, but you're still a lovable person.' Or 'We all say things without thinking sometimes. Perhaps you could think about how you can make it better'.

Step 3

Encourage your child to say something kind to themselves. It can help to ask your child what they might say to a friend who made a mistake or who's going through a tough time.

Here are options you could suggest to your child.



- ❖ 'I'm doing the best I can.'
- ❖ 'I'm a good person.'
- ❖ 'We all make mistakes sometimes.'
- ❖ 'This is hard but I'm going to keep trying.'
- ❖ 'I can learn something from this.'

In some situations, it might be appropriate to get your child thinking about what they'd do differently next time.

When teenagers struggle with self-compassion or are very self-critical

Self-criticism is the opposite of self-compassion.

Self-criticism is judging yourself harshly or thinking mean thoughts about yourself. Everyone is self-critical sometimes, but if your child is very self-critical, it can increase their stress, affect their mental health, and lower their confidence. Teenagers who are very self-critical often say very harsh things about themselves. They might also say they can't think of anything kind to say or do for themselves, even with your support. If this sounds like your child, you can try being extra patient and persistent while helping your child learn to be kind to themselves. If you're worried that your child's self-critical thinking is affecting their mental health, it's a good idea to seek advice. You can start by making an appointment with your child's GP. They can refer you to a suitable mental health professional if they think it will help.

Cultivating a Healthy Mindset

These days, adolescents are confronted with distinct difficulties which can take a toll on their psychological health. To help them cope and nurture emotional equilibrium, it is essential to promote self-care and mental wellness among teens. While it is easy to overlook

the importance of taking care of one's mental health, especially during adolescence, it is essential to promote these practices among teens. Parents, educators, and other adult role models can help adolescents prioritize their mental health by practicing what they preach. Not only should adults lead the way in modeling healthy habits themselves; but they also must educate teens on why self-care is so vital.

The Importance of Sleep

Sleep is a primary factor in establishing and maintaining mental health among teenagers. The recommended amount of sleep for adolescents ranges from 8 to 10 hours daily, yet many fail at obtaining the necessary rest due to distractions such as technology, excessive school engagements, and anxiety-filled lifestyles. Insufficient sleep can have a significant impact on teens' mental health, as it can lead to a decrease in alertness and concentration as well as an increase in irritability and moodiness, which can further contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges. Moreover, create a consistent bedtime routine for your teen and ensure that technology use is held off until after their desired hours of shut-eye have been achieved.

Breaking the Stigma

Unfortunately, teenagers and young adults today still face a great stigma when it comes to talking about mental health issues. This means that they are exposed to an array of pressures and challenges that can significantly impact their emotional well-being without any adequate support system in place. We must strive to break this uncomfortable silence surrounding the critical issue of mental health among our youth. This can



create an atmosphere of fear and shame, making it difficult for teens to seek help or even talk about their feelings. Breaking this stigma starts with the adults in their lives. Adults can help normalize mental health conversations by modeling healthy habits and openly discussing mental health in an appropriate way.

Encourage therapy as a form of self-care

Fostering healthy lifestyle changes, getting enough sleep, adopting new hobbies, and practicing other forms of self-care can go a long way in helping your teen feel their best but they're not always enough. If your teenager is experiencing psychological challenges, talk to them about the importance of therapy as a form of self-care. Sometimes, teenagers feel hesitant to speak up about their mental health concerns, so it's important to show your unconditional love and support throughout every step of their journey. Tell your teen it's normal to feel some level of anxiety and to experience feelings of sadness occasionally. However, if those feelings interfere with their daily life, it's worth seeking professional help. Holding onto too much negativity can feel exhausting at any stage of life. On top of that, the symptoms of bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and other mental disorders can make it harder for teenagers to function in everyday life. As an effective treatment for many mental health disorders, talk therapy provides teenagers with a safe, supportive environment to navigate these feelings, develop healthy coping strategies, and improve their sense of self.

Mental health support for teens and young adults at Charlie Health

Today's teenagers and young adults face countless challenges and

pressures from adjusting to virtual school to missing out on important milestones. No matter where you are in your journey toward mental wellness, there's nothing wrong with needing some extra support to feel your best and Charlie Health is here to help. At Charlie Health, our virtual Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) connects teenagers and young adults struggling with their mental health to more than once-weekly therapy. Our expert team of clinicians will help you establish an individualized treatment plan based on your specific experiences, challenges, and needs so you can start feeling better. Fill out our form to get started immediately.

Self-care is defined as "the ability to care for oneself through awareness, self-control, and self-reliance in order to achieve, maintain, or promote optimal health and well-being." Self-care practices involve both nurturing one's physical and mental health, which can be accomplished in many ways. Self-care encompasses activities, practices, and habits intended to reduce mental and physical stress and strain while simultaneously fostering feelings of inner peace and happiness. There is a wide breadth of empirical evidence that substantiates the importance of self-care for teenage mental health, such as.

❖ **Builds emotional resilience:** Self-care practices such as mindfulness exercises (e.g., meditation, deep breathing, visualization, etc.), as explained by Courtney Clark, in her famous TED Talk, have been positively connected to emotional resilience. Data shows that meditation can help lower blood pressure, reduce feelings of anxiety



and depression, improve insomnia, and more.

- ❖ **Bolsters self-esteem:** According to research, engaging in self-care practices that involve creative activities can positively affect adolescents' behavioral changes, self-confidence, and self-esteem.
- ❖ **Reduced risk of health complications:** Engaging in self-care is proven to significantly reduce the risk of stroke, cancer, and heart disease.
- ❖ **Promotes physical wellness:** The Meta-Analysis, engaging in self-care through physical activity is associated with increased self-concept and self-worth in children and adolescents. Self-concept plays an important role in emotional health. Meaning, when teenagers feel good about themselves, they can better cope with stressful life events and maintain positive mental health.
- ❖ **Stimulates cognitive development:** A major study found that physical activity spurs the release of proteins that cause nerve cells to grow and make new connections, which improves brain function and subsequently enhances mental health.

Teenage mental health is intertwined and often informed by behavioral health. While one's mental health encompasses several factors (e.g., one's biology, one's psychological condition, and one's habits) behavioral health examines how one's habits impact one's overall physical and mental wellbeing. Good behavioral health means engaging in behaviors that help to achieve an ideal mental and physical balance. Self-

care practices are essential for teenagers as they help to cultivate and nurture positive adolescent mental health.

Information and Support

Every family in need of mental health treatment must select a program that will best suit the needs of their family. When one member of a family struggles, it impacts everyone in the family unit. To maximize the benefits of treatment we work closely with the entire family to ensure that everyone is receiving the support they need through these difficult times. Seeking help is never easy, but you are not alone! If you or someone you know needs mental health treatment, we strongly encourage you to reach out for help as quickly as possible. It is not uncommon for many mental health difficulties to impact a person's life, long term. Pursuing support at the beginning of one's journey can put the individual in the best position to learn how to manage themselves in a healthy way so they can go on to live happy and fulfilling lives.

CONCLUSIONS

Self-management, self-help, and self-care are all concepts which have been discussed in the literature around adolescents with emotional problems. There is considerable overlap in both the ways in which these concepts are discussed in the literature and the strategies or approaches which are proposed in relation to them. Previous research has suggested that these strategies should be grouped under an inclusive umbrella, such as "self or community approaches". This assertion is supported by the findings of this scoping review, as there is enough similarity in the literature to merit these strategies or approaches being grouped together. Whilst self-management, self-help, and



self-care may describe conceptually different ideas, the strategies or approaches to facilitate them appear to be similar across multiple domains. As no research has been conducted previously to draw together this literature, this scoping review has important implications for policy and intervention development for adolescents' self-management, self-help, and self-care of emotional problems, as it provides clarity on the similarities and differences between how these concepts are discussed, and the strategies associated with each of these concepts in the relevant literature. Despite this, more research is needed specifically for self-management, self-help, and self-care amongst marginalized groups, such as LGBTQ+ young people, as these groups may have the highest unmet need for mental health support and could benefit from online or digital approaches.

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