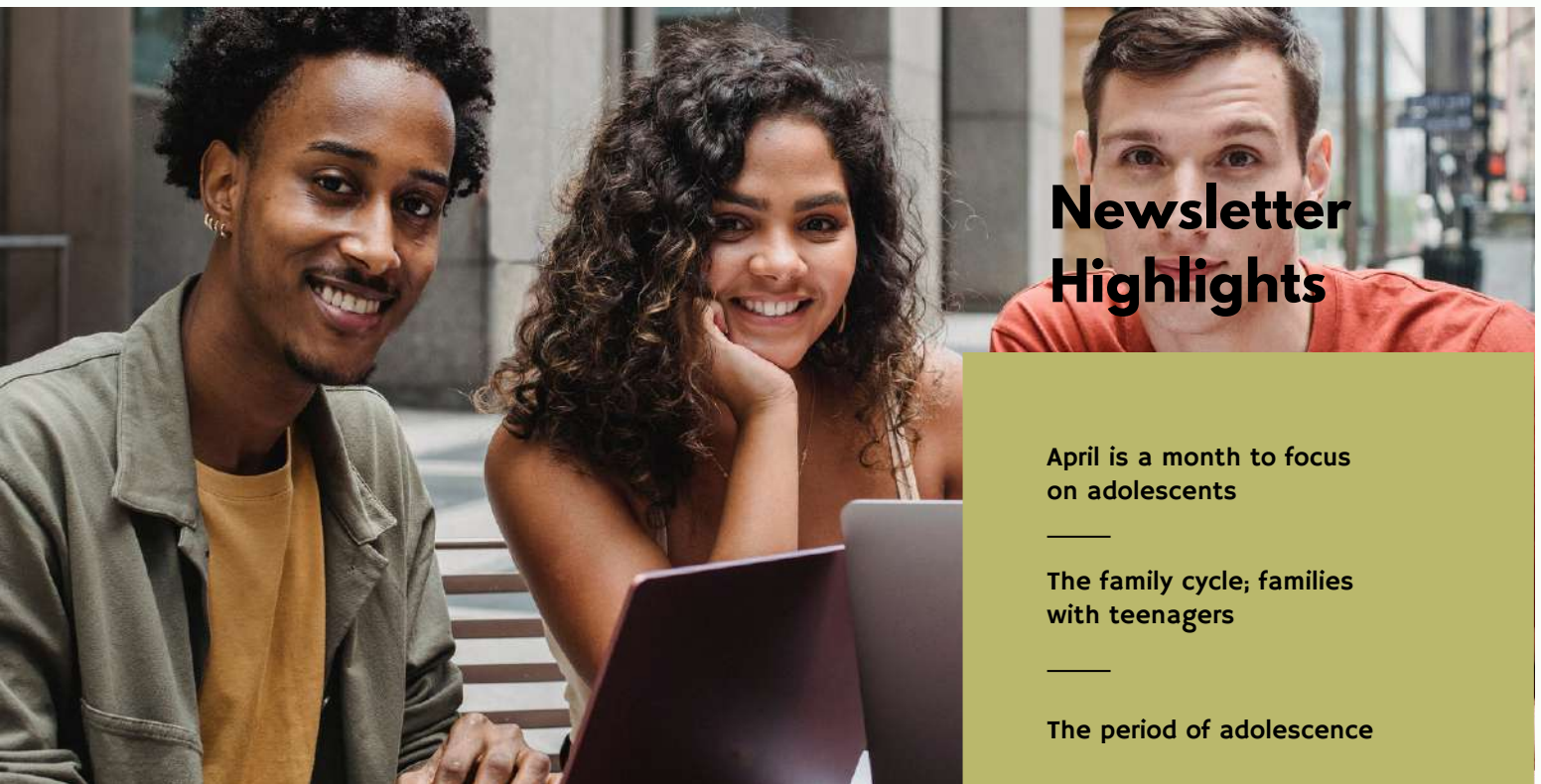


THE FAMILY CORNER NEWSLETTER



Newsletter Highlights

April is a month to focus on adolescents

The family cycle; families with teenagers

The period of adolescence

The common teenage problems that teenagers face and possible solutions

Valuable life skills to teach your teens as they prepare for adulthood

Effects of teenage pregnancies on the family

Drug and substance abuse

Talk to your children about vaping

Things parents can do to nourish their kids' mental health

Upcoming programmes

APRIL IS A MONTH TO FOCUS ON ADOLESCENTS

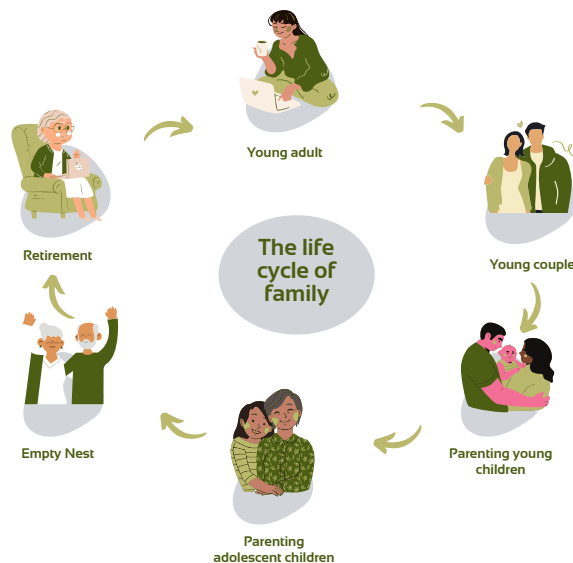
Adolescence, a vital stage of growth and development, marks the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by rapid physiological changes and psychosocial maturation.

Adolescence is also the stage when young people extend their relationships beyond parents and family; they are intensely influenced by their peers and the outside world in general.

These are truly the years of creativity, idealism, buoyancy and a spirit of adventure. But these are also the years of experimentation and risk taking, of giving in to negative peer pressure, of taking uninformed decisions on crucial issues, especially those relating to their bodies and their sexuality.

Adolescence is thus a turning point in one's life, a period of increased potential and at the same time, one of greater vulnerability.

THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE: FAMILIES WITH TEENAGERS



Families go through a family life cycle from the time a young adult marries. Each of the family life-cycle stages are important and families should be intentional to go through the necessary developmental aspects to equip the family at any given stage.

Lets look at the stage where a family has teenage children.

As children grow into teenagers, the family dynamic can become difficult. Lack of flexibility can cause problems within the family. Adolescence is a tough time and teenagers within the family are working towards independence of their own so there can be a lot of conflict between parents and the teenage children.

A well-balanced family will absorb all of the experimentation and questioning that adolescence brings. Emotional safety will need to be procured for teenagers during this time and a couple that has worked through the earlier steps successfully together will usually be able to provide that.

This could be the most demanding stage in the family life cycle and a lot of planning needs to be done by family entering this stage of family development. The is the stage where the budding teenagers in the family can have teenage pregnancies, or a lot of experiments with different substances can be taken.

Parents can not be absent at this stage of development, they need to be hands on exercising patience and flexibility. At the same time parents parenting teenagers need to take care of their health, as stress-related conditions might start surfacing.

Be grateful for teenagers!



Reese Zunga

THE PERIOD OF ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence is an exciting but stressful time in your child's life as he or she prepares to enter adulthood. During this time, there are many rapid changes and developments, and it is not always a smooth ride. Your child will begin to learn who they are and where they belong as a result of physical, cognitive, and psychological changes.

Children entering adolescence experience several changes in their bodies and brains. Physical, intellectual, psychological, and social problems, as well as the formation of their own moral compass, are among them. The changes are quick and frequently occur at different rates. A teenager's life can be both exhilarating and hard at times. Adolescence is a period in your child's life when they become more independent and begin to explore their identity.



Adolescent **physical development** involves changes that occur as a result of the puberty process. Your youngster will most likely go through a growth spurt. They will grow significantly in height and weight throughout this time. Body odor, acne, and a rise in body hair are all possible physical changes. Girls typically experience growth spurts earlier than boys.

Breast development will commence in girls. Boys' penis and testicles will develop. They will start having erections and ejaculations. Everyone experiences these physical changes, but the timing and sequence varies from person to person. Some teenagers mature quickly, while others progress gradually.



Improved abstract thinking, reasoning skills, impulse control, creativity, and problem-solving abilities are among the **mental characteristics** that develop during adolescence, as well as decision-making abilities.

Several **emotional changes** will occur in your child during adolescence. Your youngster will start observing, measuring, and managing their emotions. That is, they will grow more conscious of their own feelings as well as the feelings of others. The process of emotional development will allow your child to gain abilities and find their unique features. Some adolescents appreciate these new challenges as they gain independence. Others may want more assistance in developing self-confidence.



Adolescents are also **socially** developing at this time. The most crucial challenge of adolescent social development is the search for identity. This is frequently a life-long journey that begins throughout youth. The struggle for independence goes hand in hand with the search for identity. Your child may become more interested in their sexuality and romantic relationships, turn to you less when faced with a struggle, and demonstrate more independence from you. Spend less time with you and more time with their friends, and they may get anxious, sad, or depressed, which may lead to problems at school or risk-taking.



THE COMMON TEENAGE PROBLEMS THAT TEENAGERS FACE AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Teenagers experience serious problems on a daily basis because they are in the midst of the most awkward stage of their life. Teens are exposed to some tremendous external and internal problems during this period. They must deal with hormonal changes, puberty, social and parental demands, work and school pressures, and so on. Many teenagers believe they are misunderstood. Not surprisingly, all of these frequent adolescent difficulties are linked in some way. However, this does not imply that having one will result in the other.

The common teenage problems that teenagers face today are usually related to:

- Self-Esteem and Body Image
- Bullying
- Cyber Addiction
- Teen Pregnancy
- Defiant Behaviors
- Stress
- Depression
- Drinking and Smoking
- Underage Sex
- Peer-Pressure and Competition

The following are some crucial stages to building a healthy relationship with teens and effectively dealing with concerns. None of the steps/solutions are successful in isolation, and a combination of some or all of them will be most beneficial.

Early Identification : Early indicators of depression include changes in sleep patterns, eating habits, a reduction in interest in normal and healthy activities, a drop in grades in school and college, and a preference for seclusion. Being alert to these warning signs at an early stage may assist to prevent future damage and direct them toward healthy ways of dealing with their issues.

Understanding Transition: It is crucial that teens feel validated in their feelings and thoughts because what they are going through is a real part of their lives. Parents and guardians should not judge or criticize their feelings or thoughts. Being sensitive towards teens and the fact that they are exposed to a range of emotions (puberty being one of the most important experiences) is an important step in understanding their transition.

Transferring Knowledge

Talking to your children about sex, drugs and teen pregnancy will enable them to be informed and will remove the “taboo” from the topic. Parents should also talk to their teens and make them conscious of cyber safety – and, how to protect themselves from Internet.

Respect: The teen’s opinion or decisions will enhance their self-confidence and self esteem. Most youths’ ability to develop positive self-esteem is affected by family life and parental criticism. Making respect a mutual virtue will help in developing a stronger bond between parents and the child.

Trust and Acceptance: Trust is the foundation of any relationship. Spying, cross questioning/checking with friends or doubting will hamper the bond, leading to defiant behaviors such as lying, stealing, hiding and being disrespectful. It is important to accept your teens as they are and to build trust in them. This will help them trust and accept themselves as well as those in their immediate environment.

Communication and Safe Space: A clear communication channel opens up many possibilities. This not only enhances the relationship but also helps the child confide in the parents about sensitive topics like bullying, peer pressure and abuse. Parents need to feel free to talk to their teens about certain common teenage problems like dating, sex, drugs, and alcohol. It is this inability to discuss the good and bad points that drives them to take wrong steps out of curiosity. Effecting use of communication will foster building of trust, respect and acceptance between the teen and the parent.



VALUABLE LIFE SKILLS TO TEACH YOUR TEENS AS THEY PREPARE FOR ADULthood

It is your responsibility as a parent to care for your children until the time comes when they can live on their own. While they graduate from high school knowing how to read and write, other skills that may not be covered in the classroom are equally important.

Before your teen leaves the house, make sure they are prepared to live independently while making a positive contribution to the world. Take a time to go over this list of critical life skills your kid will need to learn before moving out.

1. Time Management - Be a positive role model for establishing priorities and dealing with distractions. Show your teen how to use a calendar and work towards meeting a deadline.

2. Sticking to a budget - The choices your teen makes today will help to determine how much debt they accumulate during college and what their options will be when they graduate. Give them a head start on developing financial responsibility by assigning them tasks such as managing their allowance.

3. Healthy eating habits - Bring your teen along for grocery shopping and invite him/her to join you in preparing dinner. Stress the importance of eating a balanced diet rich in vegetables, fruits, and other whole foods. Teach your child essential basic cooking techniques.

4. Cleaning up - Kids who grow up doing chores are more likely to take care of their first apartment and personal possessions. Take the time to teach your kids how to vacuum, dust, and do their laundry.

5. Staying safe - Talk with your teen about protecting themselves online and off. Provide common-sense warnings and share your own experiences.

6. Handling emergencies - Does your teen know what to do if they have a fender bender or there's a severe storm in the forecast? Review how to respond to common emergencies.

7. Clarifying core values - The values your teen chooses will guide their behavior. Point them in a promising direction by ensuring they can articulate their beliefs and put them into action.

8. Giving generously - Your teen is more likely to succeed if they help others to do the same. Encourage them to share their resources and volunteer their services.

9. Acting mindfully - Mobile devices are shortening the average attention span. If you want your teen to understand the power of mindfulness, you'll need to teach by example. Give them your full attention when they're talking, and turn the TV off if possible.

10. Managing stress - Developing mindfulness will help protect your teen from depression and anxiety. They can also learn to relax by engaging in physical exercise and/or working on a hobby.

11. Cultivate relationships - Supportive relationships are vital to health and wellbeing. Coach your teen on how to make friends and network.

12. Be assertive - Help your child to develop healthy self-esteem and advocate for themselves. Knowing how to share their wants and needs will bring them closer to fulfilling their goals.

You can ease your teen's transition into adulthood. Protect your children when they are young, and then gradually give them more responsibility so they can acquire the skills they need to live on their own when the time is right.



EFFECTS OF TEENAGE PREGNACIES ON THE FAMILY

Teenage pregnancy is one of those life events that few families plan for, and the consequences extend far beyond the young mother's life, affecting the lives of other family members.

Whether the pregnancy is terminated, the baby is placed for adoption or whether the baby is accepted as an addition to the family, the emotional, economic, and social repercussions of teenage pregnancy can have a substantial and life-changing impact on the entire family.

Emotional Effects

Denial, remorse, and wrath are common parental reactions to news of a teen pregnancy; emotions which the pregnant girl often experiences.

Depending on the family's religious beliefs and social network, fear of being rejected or even ostracized can come into play.

Many parents who have a pregnant adolescent perceive the situation as a negative reflection of their own parenting abilities.

The pregnant teen may experience depression, which can have an adverse effect on the family's general mental well-being. On the positive side, many families reach a point of acceptance, focusing their emotional energies on welcoming the infant and helping the teenager move forward with her life and education after the birth.

Economic Effects

Having a baby creates financial obligations that most often fall on the young mother's family. Many employee medical insurance plans do not provide maternity benefits to dependents, leaving teenage mothers' families to bear the burden of prenatal and delivery costs.

After the baby is born, infant health care, along with everyday expenses such as diapers, clothing, and childcare, can have a significant impact on the family budget.

Ripple Effect

Often, a teenager's mother will step in to raise her grandchild, and her ability to raise her own children may suffer as a result of these new demands.

Adjusting Goals

A teenage pregnancy in the family can create a shift in goals, not only for the pregnant teenager, but for other family members as well. A pregnant teenager who had planned to go away to college after high school might obtain a GED and enroll in online college courses instead.



ALTHOUGH MOST ADOLESCENTS WHO USE DRUGS DO NOT PROGRESS TO BECOME DRUG ABUSERS, OR DRUG ADDICTS IN ADULTHOOD, DRUG USE IN ADOLESCENCE IS A VERY RISKY PROPOSITION.

DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

For many teenagers, illicit substance use and abuse become a part of their adolescent experience. Even minor amounts of substance abuse (such as alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants) can have serious consequences.

When drug usage becomes a part of a teen's daily life, it is one of the most telling symptoms of an expanding connection with drugs.

Preoccupation with drugs might alter the teen's perception of themselves in unrealistic and erroneous directions.

Friendship circles may shift, and interactions with family members may become more distant or contentious. Persistent drug usage patterns in adolescence indicate that problems in the teen's surroundings exist and must be addressed promptly.

What causes adolescent substance abuse?

There is no single cause of adolescent drug or alcohol problems.

Substance abuse develops over time; it does not start as full-blown abuse or addiction. There are different pathways or routes to the development of a teen's substance abuse problem.

Some of the factors that may place teens at risk for developing substance abuse problems include:

- Insufficient parental supervision and monitoring
- Lack of communication and interaction between parents and kids
- Poorly defined and poorly communicated rules and expectations against substance use
- Inconsistent and excessively severe discipline
- Family conflict
- Favorable parental attitudes toward adolescent alcohol and drug use, and parental alcoholism or drug use

Parents and guardians need to be aware of the power they have to influence the development of their kids throughout the teenage years.

Parents should not be afraid to talk directly to their kids about drug use, even if they have had problems with drugs or alcohol themselves. Parents are encouraged to give clear, no-use messages about smoking, drugs, and alcohol. It is important for kids and teens to understand that the rules and expectations set by parents are based on parental love and concern for their well-being.

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT VAPING



As a parent, you're able to exercise a great deal of influence on your child's actions. You may help your child decide whether or not to vape by talking to them about it. Look for opportunities to address vaping with your child in a calm and acceptable manner before starting this essential conversation.

When you think about it, there's probably no shortage of ways to bring this up. Look for news articles, letters from the school on vaping policies, advertisements, seeing someone vaping on TV or the street, or passing a vape store. Prepare to listen rather than lecture. Similarly, prioritize health and safety over threats and punishment.

To start the conversation, ask open-ended questions like, "What do you think about vaping?" In these discussions, solicit their opinions, acknowledge the possible appeal of vaping, and assist them in weighing the risks against the perceived benefits. Instead of scaring people, respond to their inquiries or remarks with honest, reliable, science-based facts. Finally, try to have these conversations on a regular basis, calmly, and, if possible, before they start vaping.

Try to understand why

Most kids start vaping out of curiosity, because their friends and family vape, they like the flavors, they want to do vape tricks, or because they believe it's cool or want to fit in. Vaping can become habit-forming if kids use it to fulfill other needs such as boredom and anxiety relief. Some people may develop a nicotine addiction and continue vaping to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

It is helpful to understand why your child has tried vaping. Consider asking, "What do you enjoy about vaping?" or "How does vaping make you feel?" The answers to these questions emphasize your child's needs, which can be addressed in a more healthy manner.

Set clear expectations

Share why you do not want your child to vape and indicate that you expect your child not to vape. If you choose to set consequences, be sure to follow through, and make sure that these consequences are not overly harsh, punitive or long-lasting. At the same time, try to encourage and reward healthier choices and ensure that your child has other means of having fun, feeling cool, fitting in, alleviating stress and addressing anxiety or depression.

THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO NOURISH THEIR TEEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Identifying the source of conflict is the first step to resolving the conflict. Here are a few tips for parents and teenagers to use:

- **Focus on common goals:** View each other as allies in the common goals you agree on, which usually include keeping the teen safe and wanting them be successful. Refocus your energy on these goals to keep from always clashing and getting into arguments.
- **Speak thoughtfully:** Use "I statements" to express feelings and make requests. Just say "I feel _____, when I _____." Make simple and specific requests. This is much better than blaming and name-calling, which normally happens when emotions run high.

Stay calm to stay productive.
Don't point fingers (literally or figuratively), and don't try to make a decision while you're still mad.

- **Brainstorm solutions:** List possible solutions to the conflict together. This may seem obvious, but many times a conflict will polarize viewpoints until no compromise or negotiation seems possible. Just start listing creative ideas, whether they seem reasonable or not. Creativity is your friend when solving any problem in life, including conflicts with others.

- **Make a decision together:** It's still a conflict if parents tell their teen that they have to do something "because I said so." It's also still a conflict if the teen just gives in to a threat and the relationship gets damaged. Decide on a solution together when both parties are calm enough to make rational decisions. Don't try this when anyone is angry, though.



THE 14 DAY SELF LOVE CHALLENGE

8 - 21 MAY 2023



What's New

14 DAYS

.....

14 ACTIVITIES

.....

1 GOAL

.....



Why take part in the challenge?

Burnout can be avoided by making self care part and parcel of your daily routine. No matter how busy your schedule is on a daily basis, sprinkle some joy in each day and practice self love. Self-love or self care is not a nice to have but a necessity.

This challenge will help you to understand that you are the only person who can take care of YOU and start increasing your levels of self appreciation.

Take care of you - stop neglecting yourself!



Be intentional, pressure will mount up but choose how to release the pressure

your greatest responsibility is to love yourself and know that you are enough

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



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