Helping Your Teen Thrive: Supporting Study, Wellbeing, and Connection

Joanne Whelan

Overview

- Supporting study and decision-making
- Managing anxiety and emotional wellbeing
- 3. Building connection with your teen
- 4. Navigating digital influences and toxic content

Background - Being 16yrs old...

Increased academic pressure

Growing independence & peer influence

Identity formation and emotional vulnerability

A time when support matters more than ever

1. Supporting study and decision-making

Supporting Study

- Create a consistent, quiet study space
- Use planners/timetables
- Set aside time for their chores so as not to interrupt study
- Break work into manageable chunks (Pomodoro Technique etc.)
- 5 minute rule Mel Robbins
- Encourage progress over perfection
- Use exam papers/flashcards

1. Supporting study and decision-making

Supporting Study

Watch For:

- Over-scheduling (burnout) Happy Medium
- Unrealistic expectations
- Excessive pressure disguised as motivation

1. Supporting study and decision-making Supporting Decision-Making

- Encourage discussion of options aloud
- Avoid making choices for them—be a guide
- Share personal stories to normalise uncertainty
- Use decision tools (pros/cons lists, timelines)
- Attend open days/career talks together
- Get them to talk to your friends/relatives
- Tell them what they are good at
- Encourage them to try work experience if possible

2. Managing anxiety and emotional wellbeing

Understanding Teenage Anxiety

Signs:

- Avoiding school or social settings
- Sleep issues/Fatigue
- Irritability/Withdrawal
- Perfectionism
- Physical symptoms (headaches, stomach pain)

2. Managing anxiety and emotional wellbeing

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What Helps:

- Stay calm, validate before advising
- Help label emotions 'I sat with my anger long enough, until she told me her real name was grief' CS Lewis
- Reinforce routines, sleep, exercise
- Know when to seek further help (school counsellor, GP)

2. Managing anxiety and emotional wellbeing

What Parents can say

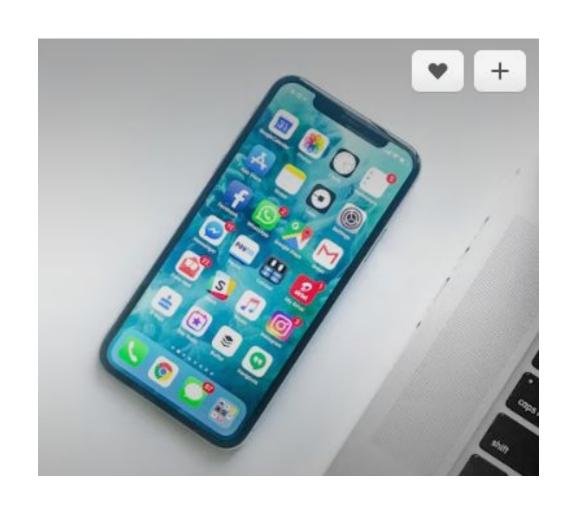
- "It's okay to feel like that—we'll figure it out."
- "Want to talk this through or plan it out together?"
- "Let's take a break and come back to it."

3. Building connection with your teen

Staying Connected with Your Teen

- Prioritise small daily interactions
- Share an activity (TV show, meal, walk)
- Ask about their world—friends, music, apps
- Be there, even if they don't talk back
- Apologise when needed—model emotional honesty

4. Navigating digital influences and toxic content The World in Their Pocket



4. Navigating digital influences and toxic content The World in Their Pocket

Teens often spend 4–7 hours/day on phones

Algorithms reinforce their current interests

Pressure from idealised online lives

Risk of exposure to negative or extreme content

4. Navigating digital influences and toxic content What Parents Can Do

- •Ask open questions: "What made you laugh at that?"
- Watch online content with them
- Avoid overreacting—be curious, not critical
- •Encourage media literacy: "Who made this and why?"
- •Suggest breaks, not bans: "Let's both do a no-phone hour"
- Focus on connection, not control
- Every family is different
- Presence not perfection

Final Thoughts

- Your teen doesn't need a perfect parent—just a steady one
- Listen more than you speak
- Stay involved, even when pushed away
- You matter more than you think