

WESTCHESTER COUNTY
Mental Health & Wellness: It's Everyone's Responsibility

#BeTheLink



The warning signs that your loved one is struggling with a mental illness are not as clear cut as we would hope. Knowing who to link to if you are concerned about yourself or a loved one is an important first step in being able to reach out.

- If someone is in imminent danger, contact 911.
- The National Suicide Helpline 1-800-273-TALK (24/7 assistance, multiple languages, Option 1 for military/veterans & their families)
- Text 741741
- Westchester County Crisis Prevention & Response Team (St Vincent's Hospital) 914-925-5959
- Westchester County Suicide Awareness and Prevention Task Force <http://westchestersuicidesafety.org/>

For more information visit <https://mentalhealth.westchestergov.com/> or call 914-995-5220

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Q | Why is our mental health important?

- A | Without mental health there can be no true physical health. Mental Health is part of overall health it needs to be cared for and protected. Positive ways to do that include:
- Talk about your feelings – especially when you are troubled.
 - Keep active: regular exercise helps self-esteem, concentration and your sleep.
 - Eat well: good nutrition helps fuel your mind and body.
 - Be mindful of alcohol use and misuse: alcohol is not a good way to manage difficult feelings. When the effects wear off, you often feel worse because of the way the alcohol affects your brain and your body.
 - Keep in touch: connectedness is one of the cornerstones of resilience, one of the tools of navigating the stresses of life.
 - Ask for help: we all sometimes get tired or overwhelmed by our feelings or challenges. Your family or friends may be able to offer practical help or a listening ear.
 - Accept who you are: we're all different. Feeling good about yourself boosts your confidence to learn new skills.

Q | What are the potential warning signs of a mental health challenge?

- A | Some common signs of mental health conditions in adults and adolescents may include:
- Excessive worrying or fear;
 - Feeling excessively sad or low;
 - Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning;
 - Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria;
 - Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger;
 - Avoiding friends and social activities;
 - Difficulties understanding or relating to other people;
 - Changes in eating, sleeping, or activity, habits; energy (too much or too little);
 - Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don't exist in reality);
 - And especially in adolescents, an intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance;

Q | How can I best help someone who may be struggling with mental health issues?

- A | Be a friend – talk to, listen and support. Things like “I’m concerned when I see you.” or “Can we talk about what you are experiencing?”
- Family, friends, spiritual and professional connections can help them identify a way forward.
 - Relationships, financial concerns, so many daily matters can affect mental health.
 - Sometimes talking to someone who has dealt with a similar experience helps.
 - Be positive – What they are experiencing is real. **Do not** tell them they are wrong, or what they are facing doesn't matter.