

## Teen Stress

Teens deal with stressful situations each and everyday: homework, extra curricular activities, part time jobs, peer pressure, drugs, alcohol, smoking, school violence, siblings, parents, divorce and step families. The list goes on and on. Teens can have added stress if they feel inadequate or not accepted in their peer groups or relationships with their family or friends.



There are several ways parents can help keep stress levels down for their teens.

- ◆ Accept your teen as an individual.
- ◆ Set limits for your teen and be consistent.
- ◆ Set study times and help your teen stay on track.
- ◆ Help your teen choose one or two outside activities that they like the best to avoid becoming overwhelmed.
- ◆ Create a friendly home environment for your teen.
- ◆ Let your teen know when you are proud of them. Small comments like; “way to go, you tried hard, I’m proud of you and you look nice today” provide encouragement.
- ◆ Welcome their friends and point out their good qualities. Your teen will learn from you and will want to surround themselves with friends that have high standards.
- ◆ Talk to your teen several times throughout the year about good choices and peer pressure situations.

Parents need to be aware of the potential of stress leading to adolescent depression, especially if there is any sort of family history of depression.

### Warning signs of adolescent depression

- ◆ Changes in behavior or lack of participation in social activities.
- ◆ Changes in choice of clothes or the way he/she dresses.
- ◆ Changes in his/her grades in school.
- ◆ Change in sleep patterns.
- ◆ Inability to concentrate or focus for long periods of time.
- ◆ Alcohol or drug use.
- ◆ Outburst of rage or anger, or sudden crying.

It is important to keep the lines of communication open with your teens, so you are aware of what stress levels your teen is going through and how they handle the stress. If you see any of the warning signs listed above contact your EAP.

**For more information please contact your Employee Assistance Program at 800-862-3398**