

TALKING MENTAL HEALTH

Mental and behavioral health activities worksheet

Teen and parent communication: Building a bridge through journaling

The teenage years are a tremendous time of physical, emotional and social growth. With that growth can also come challenges, especially for parents/caregivers navigating how to support all of these changes. Sometimes, teens and parents/caregivers may struggle to communicate effectively. In this activity, we encourage the use of teen AND parent/caregiver co-journaling as a tool to help strengthen your relationship and improve communication.

Guiding your child through the activity

- Choose a writing prompt that both the teen and parent/caregiver will respond to and then share with each other. Prompts that may be more serious as well as those that are fun are encouraged. Consider the following:
- What is something that makes you feel happy, sad, angry, etc.?
- I love you because...
- What is something that makes you feel better when you are upset?
- What are your favorite three songs?

Things to try every day

- Find time to chat with your teen every day.
- Listen to what your teen is saying and validate (acknowledge) what they may be feeling.
- Problem-solve WITH them rather than FOR them.
- Spend time together doing things that you both enjoy.
- Check in with them on their mental health (how they are feeling) even when nothing seems “wrong.”

