

The **CommunityWell**

Resources
compiled by
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2688 Main Street | Lawrenceville, NJ

Resources for Community Luncheon, June 11, 2026

Teens

Brainstorm, The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain, Daniel J. Siegel, MD (2013)

<https://drlisadamour.com/>

<https://drlisadamour.com/resource/series/ask-lisa-podcast/>

Protecting Youth Mental Health U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory

<https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/youth-mental-health/index.html>

Social Media and Youth Mental Health U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory

<https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/youth-mental-health/social-media/index.html>

Additional Resources

<https://namimercer.org/toolkits/>

<https://nap.nationalacademies.org/resource/other/dbasse/wellbeing-tools/interactive/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TfZj2L9Xmo>

Suggested Books, Films

The Anxious Generation, Jonathan Haidt, 2024

The Social Dilemma: <https://thesocialdilemma.com/>

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF STRESS IN KIDS/TEENS



HEADACHES
NECK ACHES
LIGHTEADED
DEPRESSION OR ANXIETY



FATIGUE
BACKACHES
NIGHTMARES OR
TROUBLE SLEEPING



STUTTERING



CHANGE IN EATING HABITS
UPSET STOMACH/NAUSEA
THROWING UP



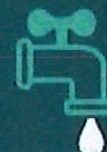
MORE LIKELY
TO CATCH COLDS



SHAKY HANDS/
SWEATY PALMS



DIARRHEA
OR CONSTIPATION



BEDWETTING

Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory (Executive Summary)

Social media use among young people is nearly universal, with up to 95% of teenagers, and even 40% of children aged 8-12, on social media.^{1,2} Despite this widespread use among children and adolescents, we do not yet have enough evidence to determine if social media use is sufficiently safe for them — especially during adolescence, a particularly vulnerable period of brain development.

Social media has both positive and negative impacts on children and adolescents

Different children and adolescents are affected by social media in different ways based on their individual strengths and vulnerabilities and based on cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors.^{3,4} Social media can provide benefits for some children, including by serving as a source of connection for youth who are often marginalized, such as the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities, providing positive or identity-affirming content, creating a space for self-expression, and helping youth feel accepted. However, increasingly, evidence is indicating there is reason to be concerned about the risk of harm social media use poses to children and adolescents. Children and adolescents on social media are commonly exposed to extreme, inappropriate, and harmful content, and those who spend more than 3 hours a day on social media face double the risk of poor mental health including experiencing symptoms of depression and anxiety.⁵ This is deeply concerning as a recent survey of teenagers showed that, on average, they spend 3.5 hours a day on social media.⁶

What’s driving the growing concerns?

Social media can expose children to content that presents risks of harm:

- Social media may perpetuate body dissatisfaction, disordered eating behaviors, social comparison, and low self-esteem, especially among adolescent girls.^{7,8,9,10}
- When asked about the impact of social media on their body image: 46% of adolescents aged 13-17 said social media makes them feel worse, 40% said it makes them feel neither better nor worse, and only 14% said it makes them feel better.¹¹
- Roughly two-thirds (64%) of adolescents are “often” or “sometimes” exposed to hate-based content.¹²
- Some social media platforms show suicide- and self-harm-related content including even live depictions of self-harm acts, content which, in certain tragic cases, has been linked to childhood deaths.^{13,14}

Social media use can be excessive and problematic for some children:

- On a typical weekday, nearly one-in-three adolescents report using screens (most commonly social media) until midnight or later.¹¹
- Studies have shown a relationship between excessive social media use and poor sleep quality, reduced sleep duration, sleep difficulties, and depression among youth.¹⁵
- One-third or more of girls aged 11-15 say they feel “addicted” to certain social media platforms and over half of teenagers report that it would be hard to give up social media.^{1,16}

1. [Vogels et al., 2022.](#)
2. [Rideout et al., 2022.](#)
3. [Beyens et al., 2020.](#)
4. [Hollis et al., 2020.](#)
5. [Riehm et al., 2019.](#)
6. [Miech et al., 2022.](#)
7. [Lonergan et al., 2020.](#)
8. [Meier and Gray, 2014.](#)
9. [Thai et al., 2023.](#)
10. [Vogels et al., 2014.](#)
11. [Bickham et al., 2022.](#)
12. [Rideout et al., 2018.](#)
13. [Dyer, 2022.](#)
14. [Carville, 2022.](#)
15. [Alonzo et al., 2021.](#)
16. [Nesi et al., 2023.](#)



There are critical gaps in our understanding of mental health risks to children and adolescents posed by social media

There is broad concern among the scientific community that a lack of access to data and lack of transparency from technology companies have been barriers to understanding the full scope and scale of the impact of social media on child and adolescent mental health and well-being. While more research is needed to fully understand the impact of social media, this gap in knowledge cannot be an excuse for inaction.

A Way Forward: The Surgeon General's Advisory outlines some immediate actions we can take to make social media safer and healthier for youth

This burden cannot simply fall to parents and children. We must engage in a multifaceted effort to maximize the benefits and reduce the risk of harm posed by social media, with actions taken by groups across the spectrum: policymakers, technology companies, researchers, families, and children and adolescents themselves.

- **Policymakers can** take steps to strengthen safety standards and limit access in ways that make social media safer for children of all ages, better protect children's privacy, support digital and media literacy, and fund additional research.
- **Technology companies can** better and more transparently assess the impact of their products on children, share data with independent researchers to increase our collective understanding of the impacts, make design and development decisions that prioritize safety and health –including protecting children's privacy and better adhering to age minimums –and improve systems to provide effective and timely responses to complaints.
- **Parents and caregivers can** make plans in their households such as establishing tech-free zones that help protect sleep and better foster in-person relationships, teach children and adolescents about responsible online behavior, and model that behavior, and report problematic content and activity.
- **Children and adolescents can** adopt healthy practices like limiting time on platforms, blocking unwanted content, being careful about sharing personal information, and reaching out if they or a friend need help or see harassment or abuse on the platforms.
- **Researchers can** further prioritize social media and youth mental health research that can support the establishment of standards and evaluation of best practices to support children's health.

For more information on social media and youth mental health, read the Surgeon General's Advisory:

surgeongeneral.gov/ymh-social-media



Protecting Youth Mental Health

Key takeaways from the Surgeon General's Advisory

Mental health is an essential part of overall health

Mental health conditions are real, common, and treatable. People experiencing mental health challenges deserve support, compassion, and care — not stigma and shame.

COVID-19 added to pre-existing challenges that youth faced

Since the pandemic began, rates of psychological distress among young people have increased. The pandemic is most heavily affecting those who were already vulnerable. This includes youth with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, LBGTQ+ youth, and other marginalized communities.

Mental health is shaped by a combination of factors

Mental health conditions can be shaped by biological factors, including genes and brain chemistry and environmental factors, including life experiences.

Focusing on youth mental health now is critical

We all have a role to play in supporting the mental health of children and youth.

Read more information and download the advisory at: <https://hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/>



Family Mindfulness Schedule

Mindfulness, simply put, is being focused on the present moment. This skill improves emotional awareness and reduces stress. A parent can help their child achieve mindfulness by modeling mindfulness themselves, or by teaching their child to focus on the present moment.

Below you will find mindfulness techniques you can practice with your child during a busy daily routine. Focus on doing one technique very well each day, rather than trying to do many.

Waking Up

Five Senses. With your child, take a few moments to explore the morning through your senses. Take turns naming things you see, hear, feel, taste, and smell. Try to notice things you would normally tune out, like the distant buzz of a neighbor's lawnmower, or the softness of a pillow.

Body Scan. Starting with your toes and working your way up to the top of your head, notice the sensations in each part of your body. For example, notice the feeling of clothing resting on your legs, tension in your muscles, or cool air on your face.

Meals

Mindful Check-In. Start a conversation about the here-and-now by asking your child to share one thing they are feeling physically, one thing they are thinking about, and one thing they are feeling emotionally. If your child has difficulty putting their emotions into words, try giving them options to choose from.

Mindful Eating. Rather than rushing through a meal, eat slowly and mindfully. Notice how the food looks, and how it smells. What does it taste like? What does the food feel like on your tongue? Take turns sharing different things you notice about the food, no matter how minor the observations might seem.

Travel

I Spy. In this game, your child will "spy" a color they see and ask you to guess what the object is. Playing this game will allow your child to take in their surroundings and notice things they might otherwise miss.

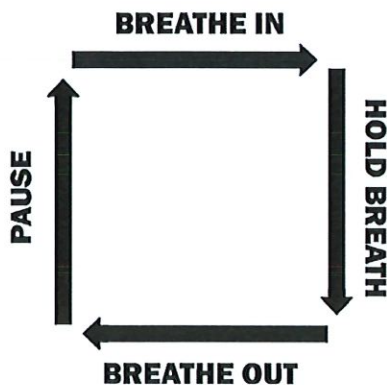
The Alphabet Game. While driving, ask your child to look for words in their environment beginning with each letter of the alphabet, in order. For example, a billboard with the word "Advertise" would start the game.

School

Mindfulness Bracelet. With your child, spend an afternoon making bracelets that are fun, and comfortable to wear. Every time you notice the bracelet on your wrist, take a moment to note one thing you see, hear, smell, and feel. Practice at home to get your child in the habit of using this skill even when they are not with you.

Family Mindfulness Schedule

Square Breathing. Teach your child this breathing technique to help them be in the present moment at any time. Draw a square on paper, or in the air with your finger. Perform one step of the technique while drawing each line of the square. Time each step to last about four seconds.



Free Time

Mindfulness Box. With your child, decorate a box large enough to hold several small objects. Fill the box with interesting items found around your home and yard (e.g. feathers, rocks, flowers). Encourage your child to explore their surroundings with more than just sight. For example, notice the texture, weight, and smell of each item.

Keep adding to your mindfulness box, and review it from time to time for further practice. Try to notice something new about each of the objects inside.

Bedtime

Progressive Muscle Relaxation. This activity will help your child become aware of the sensations throughout their body, and it's a great way to begin relaxing the body for sleep. Read the following script slowly, allowing time for practice.

Close your eyes, and pretend that you're holding two juicy oranges—one in each hand. Start to squeeze the oranges by making fists. Squeeze hard to get all the juice out. Notice what your fists feel like when you squeeze hard. Now let go of the oranges, and let your hands rest. Notice how good it feels to relax your hands.

Next, pretend like you're sitting on the beach. Squeeze your toes as if you are trying to pick up sand between them. Hold onto the sand by squeezing *even tighter*. Now, let go of the sand, and relax your feet. Notice how your feet feel different when you let them rest.

Finally, pretend like a fly landed on your nose. You want to get it off, without touching it with your hands. Scrunch up your face, wiggle your nose, just go crazy! Keep moving your face so the bug will fly away. Now, stop, and let your whole face relax. Pay attention to how it feels.

How to Apologize

Apologizing means expressing regret for something you did. A sincere apology involves reflecting on your actions, taking responsibility for them, and making changes to improve things in the future. Giving an apology can help repair a damaged relationship while showing care and respect for the other person.

Reflect on your Actions

Think about how your actions contributed to a problem, even if they were not the sole cause.

Even if someone else also contributed to the problem, what was *my* role?

Try taking the other person's perspective. How do my actions look from their side?

As a result of my actions, how might the other person feel?

Take Responsibility

Say "I'm sorry" (or some version of this phrase) and show regret for your actions. It's important to speak clearly and sincerely. In most cases, it helps to identify the actions you are apologizing for.

Example: "I'm sorry for the language I used during our argument. It was disrespectful, and it was wrong."

I'm sorry for...

It was wrong of me to...

I apologize for...

I feel terrible. I shouldn't have...

I take responsibility for...

This was my fault. I should have...

! Never make excuses or try to justify your behavior (e.g. "I'm sorry, but I was tired!").

Listen and Improve

Give the other person a chance to respond without interruption. Forgiveness may take time and is not guaranteed. Be prepared to discuss changes you will make to avoid repeating the problem.

Myths vs. Reality

Myth: Love means never having to say you're sorry.

Reality: Apologies can be particularly important when you love someone. An apology communicates you care about the other person and want them to feel better.

Myth: Apologizing is as simple as saying "I'm sorry."

Reality: Merely saying the words "I'm sorry" is not a complete apology. An apology requires remorse, an attempt to right the wrong, and taking steps to make sure the problem is not repeated.

Myth: Apologizing will make me look weak.

Reality: An apology shows you are secure enough to admit when you've done something wrong. It also shows you have respect for yourself and the other person.

Gratitude Exercises

Gratitude means appreciating the good things in life, no matter how big or small. Making the practice of gratitude a regular part of your day can build happiness, self-esteem, and provide other health benefits.

Gratitude Journal

Every evening, spend a few minutes writing down some good things about your day. This isn't limited to major events. You might be grateful for simple things, such as a good meal, talking to a friend, or overcoming an obstacle.

Give Thanks

Keep your eyes open throughout the day for reasons to say "thank you." Make a conscious effort to notice when people do good things, whether for you or others. Tell the person you recognize their good deed, and give a sincere "thank you."

Mindfulness Walk

Go for a walk and make a special effort to appreciate your surroundings. You can do this by focusing on each of your senses, one at a time. Spend a minute just listening, a minute looking at your surroundings, and so on. Try to notice the sights, sounds, smells, and sensations you would usually miss, such as a cool breeze on your skin, or the clouds in the sky.

Gratitude Letter

Think about someone who you appreciate. This could be a person who has had a major impact on your life, or someone who you would like to thank. Write a letter that describes why you appreciate them, including specific examples and details. It's up to you if you'd like to share the letter or not.

Grateful Contemplation

Remove yourself from distractions such as phones or TV and spend 5-10 minutes mentally reviewing the good things from your day. The key to this technique is *consistency*. Think of it like brushing your teeth or exercise—it should be a normal part of daily self-care. This technique can be practiced as part of prayer, meditation, or on its own.

Gratitude Conversation

With another person, take turns listing 3 things you were grateful for throughout the day. Spend a moment discussing and contemplating each point, rather than hurrying through the list. Make this part of your routine by practicing before a meal, before bed, or at another regular time.

Using Praise

positive parenting skill

Praise is a powerful tool that parents can use to encourage their child's good behaviors. Research has shown that positive reinforcement—such as praise—is far more effective than discipline. This handout describes techniques for using praise to its maximum potential.

Catch your child being good.

It's normal to focus more on unwanted behaviors, rather than good ones. Sometimes, a good behavior can be as simple as the *absence* of an unwanted behavior (for example, talking with a sibling instead of arguing). Make a point to praise your child's good behaviors, even if they seem ordinary.

"You were really good during dinner."

"Thank you for getting along with your brother."

Start with small steps.

An easy goal for adults might be a big deal for kids. Try starting small. Instead of waiting for your child to follow the rules all day, praise them when they follow the rules for 15 minutes. Focus on the *steps* toward achieving a goal, rather than the end goal itself.

"Good job bringing home your homework."

"Thank you for remembering to start your chores."

Praise effort, not outcome.

Many things in life are outside of our control. For example, your child might study for hours and still not get the grade they want. By praising the actions that are in your child's control (studying), you will teach them skills that are more likely to create good outcomes (good grades).

"You've been doing such a good job studying—I'm sorry you didn't get the grade you wanted."

"I'm proud of you for trying out for the swim team. It's great that you tried, even if you didn't make it."

Don't sweat the small stuff.

When kids don't get positive attention, they'll often settle for negative attention. If an unwanted behavior isn't dangerous or destructive, try ignoring it. After the unwanted behavior has stopped, wait a few moments, and praise your child for something good they are doing.

Be consistent.

Just like eating one apple won't make you healthy, praising your child once won't instantly improve their behavior. Giving praise *regularly* will help your child build the behavior you're looking for.

POSITIVE PARENTING



15 Ways To Be a Positive Parent

BilingualKidspot.com

- 1 CONSEQUENCES THAT MAKE SENSE
- 2 VALIDATE, EMPATHIZE, SYMPATHIZE
- 3 TALK AT THE CHILD'S LEVEL
- 4 EXPLAIN & HELP THEM LEARN FROM THEIR MISTAKES
- 5 TALK TO YOUR CHILD LIKE AN INDIVIDUAL
- 6 PROVIDE WARNINGS
- 7 PROVIDE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS
- 8 TELL KIDS WHAT THEY SHOULD DO RATHER THAN WHAT THEY SHOULDN'T
- 9 KEEP IT POSITIVE
- 10 BE CONSISTENT AND KEEP YOUR WORD
- 11 BE LOVING AND FIRM
- 12 USE HUMOR
- 13 LET YOUR CHILD HAVE A RIGHT TO THEIR FEELINGS
- 14 BE AWARE OF AGE APPROPRIATENESS
- 15 KEEP YOUR OWN FEELINGS AND JUDGMENTS IN CHECK

Read more: <https://bilingualkidspot.com/2018/10/31/what-is-positive-parenting-tips-techniques/>

Positive Steps to Wellbeing

Be kind to yourself



Our culture, genes, religion, upbringing, education, gender, sexuality, beliefs, and life experiences make us who we are. We all have bad days.

Be kind to yourself. Encourage rather than criticise yourself. Treat yourself the way you would treat a friend in the same situation.

Exercise regularly



Being active helps lift our mood, reduces stress and anxiety, improves physical health, and gives us more energy.

Get outside, preferably in a green space or near water.

Find an activity you enjoy doing, and just do it.

Take up a hobby and/or learn a new skill

Increase your confidence and interest, meet others, or prepare for finding work.



Have some fun and/or be creative

Having fun or being creative helps us feel better and increases our confidence.

Enjoy yourself!



Help others



Get involved with a community project, charity work, or simply help out someone you know.

As well as benefiting others, you'll be doing something worthwhile which will help you feel better about yourself.

Relax



Make time for yourself. Allow yourself to chill out and relax. Find something that suits you – different things work for different people.

Breathe... (imagine a balloon in your belly, inflating and deflating as you breathe in and out)

Eat healthily

Eat regularly, eat breakfast, eat healthily, eat fruit and vegetables, drink water.



Balance sleep

Get into a healthy sleep routine – including going to bed and getting up at the same time each day.



Connect with others



Stay in touch with family and friends - make regular and frequent contact with them.

Beware drink and drugs



Avoid using alcohol (or non-prescribed drugs) to help you cope – it will only add to your problems.

See the bigger picture

We all give different meanings to situations and see things from our point of view. Broaden out your perspective and consider the bigger picture ('the helicopter view')



What meaning am I giving this? Is this fact or opinion? How would others see it? Is there another way of looking at this? How important is it, or will it be in a year's time? What can I do right now that will help most?

Accepting: 'It is as it is'

We tend to fight against distressing thoughts and feelings, but we can learn to just notice them and give up that struggle.



Some situations we just can't change. We can surf those waves rather than try to stop them.

Allow those thoughts and sensations just to be – they will pass.

Discussion Panel



Dr. Arielle Skoryk

Dr. Arielle Skoryk is a licensed psychologist and Nationally Certified School Psychologist based in Lawrenceville and the founder of See the Strengths, a psychological services practice dedicated to helping young people and families thrive.

Dr. Skoryk works with children, adolescents, and young adults, and also specializes in supporting parents as they navigate

emotional and behavioral challenges that arise across development. With over a decade of experience in both school and clinical settings, she has worked with a wide range of concerns, including more complex behavioral and mental health needs.

Dr. Skoryk has extensive experience partnering with schools to support students and build systems that promote emotional well-being. As both a community member and a local parent, Dr. Skoryk understands the unique perspectives and needs of families in the community. She is grateful to be part of this community and to support its well-being.

Tee Moschberger

Tee Moschberger is the owner of Mercer Counseling Services, a group therapy practice dedicated to supporting children, teens, young adults, and their families. With more than 15 years of experience as a children's therapist, Tee specializes in helping young people navigate emotional, behavioral, social, and family challenges with compassion and practical support.



A Lawrenceville local for the past 10 years, Tee is deeply committed to strengthening the community through early mental health intervention, parent partnership, and destigmatizing therapy for kids and teens. At Mercer Counseling Services, Tee leads a team of therapists focused on creating a warm, supportive environment where young people and their families can build resilience, confidence, and become their best selves as they navigate the challenges of growing up in today's world.

Discussion Panel



Ann DeGennaro

Ann DeGennaro has dedicated her career to supporting student wellness, mental health, and substance abuse prevention across both secondary and higher education settings. She holds a Master's Degree in Counseling and is certified in addictions counseling. Over the course of a 40-year career, Ann served as a Student Assistance Counselor at Lawrence High School, following tenured positions at Livingston High School and Montgomery High

School. Ann began her professional career at The College of New Jersey as the institution's Drug and Alcohol Coordinator before advancing to Wellness Director. She has remained deeply committed to fostering healthy, supportive environments for students and school communities and has been widely recognized for her contributions to the field of substance abuse prevention.

Now retired from public education, Ann continues her work through a small life coaching practice supporting tweens, teens, and young adults. She founded a sober living youth group dedicated to helping young people build healthy and connected lives.

Janet Haag



Janet Haag has been Executive Director at NAMI Mercer for 10+ years. She has overseen an expansion of the organization's programs and services, engaged in Board recruitment and development, increased funding, and forged several community partnerships that have significantly increased impact. She brought to this role 20+ years in nonprofit management, education, editing/publishing, and human services.

She has been an adjunct professor at several colleges and a field placement supervisor for multiple graduate and undergraduate interns. She is energized by the fresh perspectives of these young adults and enjoys mentoring them. She holds two advanced degrees, one in Leadership and Spirituality and one in Clinical Psychology.

Janet is passionate about making a difference--in society at large as well as in her own little corner of the world.

Discussion Panel



Maya Yatom

Maya is an ADHD Life Coach who brings a powerful blend of lived experience and professional rigor to the conversation on neurodiversity. She holds a Graduate degree in Education Development from Columbia University and is a Level Two ICF trained coach, specializing in a strength-based approach to neurodivergent growth.

Her career is defined by a deep commitment to the evolution of

learning. Maya's extensive classroom experience spans the full developmental spectrum, from early childhood through secondary education. Beyond the classroom, she has held leadership roles in education, teacher training, and curriculum development, complemented by a successful tenure in management within high-tech corporate environments. This "full-picture" perspective allows her to bridge the gap between academic theory, classroom reality, and professional workplace demands.

Deeply committed to her community, Maya serves as the Co-President of her school district's Special Education Parent Advisory Group.

As a "NeuroZesty" individual and mother to neurodivergent children, Maya's work is fueled by the belief that neurodiversity is a landscape to be navigated with strategy and confidence, not a deficit to be fixed. When she isn't working, Maya enjoys spending time outdoors gardening, geocaching with her family, and experimenting with new recipes.

Marcia Kipp-Adams

Marcia is a licensed clinical social worker and therapist and founder of In Solidarity Counseling.

She treats individuals of all ages, with a special focus on teens and young adults who are adjusting to life transitions and experiencing heightened anxiety, depression and elevated mood symptoms.

Marcia holds masters degrees in theology and social work, which lends to her therapeutic approach of treating clients from an emotional and spiritual perspective. Her counseling approach is supportive, as clients explore their needs without judgement or advice.

