



## Teen Girls & Caregivers: What to Know About Therapy

### Frequently Asked Questions

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#### Teen Girls: Frequently Asked Questions



- **What is Therapy?**

Therapy is more than just talking, it is a place where we can explore different skills, better understand ourselves, and improve our mental health. Seeking therapy is nothing to be embarrassed about, it is always good to talk with someone you trust about your emotions and challenges.

- **What is mental health?**

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

- **How will I know that I need to seek therapy?**

When you experience challenges with being able to do normal things because of your emotions and thoughts

may mean that you can explore therapy for support. Also if your behavior changes or are doing things outside of the norm.

- **What will I experience in Therapy?**

Therapy is a judgment-free zone! Therapy can be a little awkward at first. It is completely normal for it to take some time to feel comfortable with your therapist. Therapy will not “solve all your problems” but it will give you strategies to help you work through them. For therapy to have an impact it requires work on your part as well; your therapist may give you assignments or activities to do on your own.

- **How can therapy help me?**

Therapists can help with home, school, and personal issues one may be dealing with. Therapy is a great way to learn your strengths and work on self-esteem. Therapy can help you learn how to manage your emotions better and create growth opportunities.

- **Will what I share in therapy be kept confidential?**

Everything you share in therapy will be confidential unless you are reporting abuse and neglect and/or a high-risk crisis.

- **Common mental health concerns that teens experience include:**



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Anxiety (being worried), depression (feeling down or sad regularly), low self-esteem (feeling bad about yourself and your abilities), relationship difficulties with peers and family, cyberbullying, suicidal thoughts or attempts.

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### Caregiver: Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What is therapy?**

Therapy is more than just talking, it is a place where your child can explore different skills, better understand themselves, and improve their mental health. Seeking therapy is nothing to be embarrassed about, it is always good to have someone that your child trusts about their emotions and challenges.

- **What is mental health?**

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

- **How can therapy help my teen?**

During therapy, you can expect your teen to be empowered by someone who understands their experiences. Therapy can build helpful thinking patterns and healthy behavioral habits. During therapy, your teen will be talking through issues, learning new coping mechanisms, and practicing problem-solving skills.

- **Can I know what my teen talks about in therapy?**

Your teen's therapist can share general information about their progress in therapy. However, Clinicians have an ethical obligation to preserve the confidentiality rights of our clients, this means we can only share certain information. You are welcome to schedule quarterly meetings with your teen's Therapist to discuss progress and updates. Also, you can sign a *Release of Information* to know more details about the treatment that your teen authorizes.

- **How do I know that my teen needs therapy?**

There are plenty of signs that your teen may be struggling with their mental health, some of these things include

- Your teens' appetite might change, it may increase or decrease.
- Your teen may be displaying behavioral problems at school or at home.
- A change in their sleeping patterns such as sleeping more or less.



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- Social withdrawal and isolation from others.
- Sharing increases worry or feeling sad.

### **What Caregivers Should Know about Black Girls' Mental Health**

- Black teen girls can suffer silently with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, they also have growing rates of suicide ideations that can show up as behavioral issues.
- Black teen girls can also struggle with low self-esteem; which may be due to the way Black Girls are portrayed in the media, particularly social media.
- Black teen girls from Chicago deal with trauma exposure and histories. An example of this is losing friends and/or a family member to gun violence.
- Black teen girls deal with adultification from society, from a young age black girls are always looked at as older than they are or less innocent compared to other races.
- Some of the main mental illnesses that show up in teens are generalized anxiety disorder and depressive disorder.
- Social media is a significant part of teens' everyday life and socialization that can be a contributing factor to mental health concerns.
- As a caregiver, your mental health is also important. It can be beneficial for you to seek therapy as well- so you and your child can take steps towards healing together.