

## 4 Simple Ways to Promote Optimal Mental Health for Youth Ages 12 - 18

### Nurture Relationship Building

- Let them know that any subject or concern is safe to discuss.
- Let them know you are thinking about them. A note on the bedroom door or a gift card – small acts go a long way!

### Normalize Mental Health

- Ask questions about your child's emotions: "You seem down, would you like to talk about it?"
- Talk about your own mental health: "I am feeling nervous for my presentation, does that ever happen to you?"
- Know it's okay to take breaks and revisit tough conversations later.
- Model self-care: "I am going for a run to help with my stress."

### Support Identity & Community Development

- If your child comes out to you about being LGBTQIA+, recognize the courage it takes to share this. Thank them for telling you and ask how you can support!
- Help connect them to organizations and activities they are passionate about and engage in volunteer opportunities together.

### Communicate Boundaries and Limits

- Have gentle but firm limits so your teen will know home is a safe refuge with predictable routines and expectations.
- Be mindful of screen time and engage in a variety of activities like cooking, music and games. Ask for your child's ideas.