

The Three C's

for Parents and Guardians

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year. This year, like many others, can be a difficult time for students. NAMI created The Three C's to help you and your child connect around mental health and wellness, know the key "concrete" supports for family well-being, and encourage your child to share with you about the joys and challenges they are experiencing at this time.

1 GET CURIOUS

There may be moments at home when your child may seem disconnected, exhibiting changes in behavior, but communicating that "everything is fine." Because there is often stigma attached to mental health conditions, children can feel ashamed to talk about their anxieties, stress, and depressed feelings.

Use the following conversation starters to talk with your child about what they are experiencing. Remember to listen with curiosity and empathize with them.

- It seems you are sadder during the evenings. So, let's explore, together, why that may be the case.
- I've noticed you seem less interested in some of your favorite activities. What do you think is behind that?
- When was the last time you felt this way? And what was happening around you?

2 GET CONCRETE

Here are some activities you can do with your child to talk about mental health can help normalize mental health symptoms, eliminate stigma, and empower your child to seek the help and support they deserve:

- [10 Questions on a Tuesday](#)
- [A week of Wellness](#)

Use these activities to stay connected with your child, boost their self-confidence, and practice resilience and self-care.

3 STAY COMPASSIONATE

Use compassionate language to ensure your child feels seen, heard, and validated when discussing mental health and wellness. Some language tips:

- It helps to say "Thank you for telling me that" after your child expresses how they feel.
- Engage in active listening by repeating the feelings that your child has shared, saying phrases such as, "what I'm hearing you say is," and "we're in this together."
- Avoid making assumptions about the experiences your child shares or the meaning of those experiences. This is a time for listening and demonstrating your empathy.
- Get comfortable with silence, because most people, your child included, share more when we show we are listening without interjecting.
- Always remain calm as your child learns to understand and share more deeply about their emotions and mental health symptoms. If your child senses you are upset, they will be less likely to share in the future.

YA Mental Health Resources

1. Check-In. Checking in means setting time aside to reflect with yourself on how you are feeling and what you need. Here are some questions you can answer to check in on your mental health
 - a. [YA/Mental Health Check-in Carousel Instagram Post - Instagram Post](#)
2. Everything you do for your mental health are moments of celebration. Swipe to reflect on the everyday decisions to care for your mental health.
 - a. [YA Mental Health Game Plan - Instagram Post](#)
3. Gratitude is showing appreciation to yourself. Join our gratitude challenge and try giving thanks to yourself.
 - a. [YA Gratitude Challenge IG Story](#)