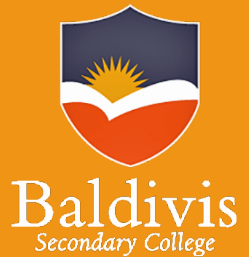
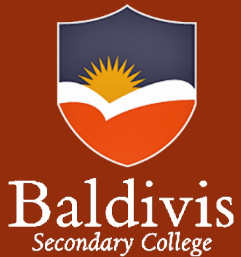




Supporting Your Child's Mental Health

Practical Strategies for Parents of Teenagers

15 October 2024



Presented by Alison Parolo and Rosie Taylor



Our Vision

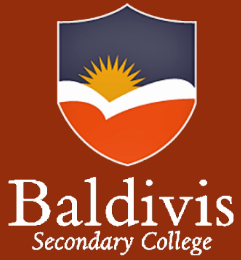
Our vision is to provide a high-quality school experience for each and every student that promotes learning and wellbeing, and equips them with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to achieve personal excellence in all they do and ultimately be the best that they can be.



The Importance of Mental Health



- 1 in 7 Australian children aged 4-17 have experienced a mental health issue.
- Mental health is just as important as physical health, especially during adolescence.
- Adolescence is a critical time for mental development.
- Teenagers face increasing academic, social, and emotional pressures.



Video – What is Mental Health?



<https://vimeo.com/1021192591>



Recognising Signs of Struggle



- Common signs your teenager may be struggling:
 - Withdrawal from social activities or family.
 - Changes in sleep patterns or appetite.
 - Sudden mood swings or irritability.
 - Decline in school performance.
- Parents often notice these signs first.
- Changes in behavior are often a signal that something is wrong.

Communication Strategies



- Open communication is key
 - Create a safe, non-judgmental space.
 - Be an active listener.
 - Ask open-ended questions (e.g., “How have you been feeling lately?”).
 - Avoid jumping to solutions—validate their feelings first.
- Teens often shut down when they feel judged or unheard.
- Encourage them to share by being approachable and patient.

“

Listen earnestly to anything your children want to tell you, no matter what. If you don't listen eagerly to the little stuff when they are little, they won't tell you the big stuff when they are big, because to them all of it has always been big stuff.

Catherine M. Wallace

”



Baldivis
Secondary College

Encouraging Positive Coping Mechanisms

- Promoting Healthy Habits
 - Encourage regular physical activity.
 - Promote healthy sleep routines.
 - Teach relaxation techniques (deep breathing, mindfulness).
 - Engage in hobbies or creative outlets.
- Mental and physical health are interconnected.
- Hobbies provide an outlet for stress and self-expression.

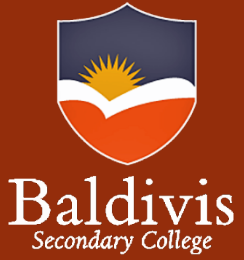


Knowing When to Seek Help



- Professional Support is important.
- When to consider seeing a professional:
 - Persistent low mood for more than two weeks.
 - Severe anxiety or panic attacks.
 - Self-harm or suicidal thoughts.
- Video – Mind Matters





Video – What is Normal Behaviour?



<https://vimeo.com/1021192604>



Knowing When to Seek Help



- Resources: Student Services, GP, psychologist
- Seeking professional help early can prevent issues from worsening.
- There is no shame in getting professional support.



Discussion



- Consider:
 1. What are some ways you can create a safe space for your child?
 2. How can you help them build healthy habits?
 3. How can you model self-care at home?



Supporting Yourself as a Parent



- Don't forget your own wellbeing - you can't pour from an empty cup.
- Supporting yourself helps you support your child.
- Self-care is essential to be a supportive parent.
- Reach out for your own support if needed—parenting teens can be challenging!
- Model healthy emotional management and resilience

Final Thoughts and Resources



- Student Services - baldivis.sc.studentservicesadmin@education.wa.edu.au
- Mind Matters Australia - <https://www.youtube.com/@MindMattersAustralia>
- Beyond Blue: www.beyondblue.org.au
- ReachOut Parents: parents.au.reachout.com
- Kids Helpline: www.kidshelpline.com.au

