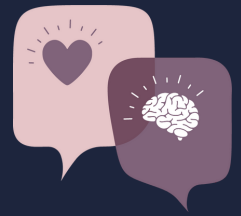


WE ALL NEED SUPPORT

HOW TO EMOTIONALLY SUPPORT YOUR FRIENDS



Young people need to support each other

- Youth are experiencing a mental health crisis that has worsened over the last 10 years.
- In high-stress times, young people are more likely to ask for support from a friend than from adults or mental health professionals.
- However, many young people don't feel fully prepared to provide high-quality support to their friends.

Take action

- Dive into this toolkit and share content on the importance of emotional support.
- Explore ways to put this research into action. Use A.S.K. (Acknowledge, Support, Keep-in-Touch) to help you remember some of these tips.
- Practice having an emotionally supportive conversation: Active Minds' A.S.K. Experience

Key stats



8 in 10

young people reported needing support in the last month

9 in 10

young people have turned to friends for mental health information

98%

of young people have one or more close friends

3.5

-number of hours a week young people spend supporting their friends

Understand the research

Emotional support makes a difference

- Having someone who is willing to listen when you need to talk is linked to better overall brain health.
- Being accepted and validated by friends improves young people's mental health, self-esteem, and ability to manage stress.
- Supportive conversations improve the well-being of the person getting support and the person giving the support.

Quality support focuses on the person sharing

- Focus on the person expressing their emotions by validating their feelings: directly acknowledge what they are feeling and why it makes sense that they feel that way. If their feelings involve other people, help them to explore how their emotions fit into the bigger picture of everyone involved in the situation.
- Repeat back what you hear the person saying. This helps them process the situation and improve how they feel.
- Be encouraging about your friend sharing their emotions and clear about why you support their feelings.
- Avoid minimizing, challenging, and/or ignoring the person's feelings. Don't try to explain their feelings to them or distract them from their feelings.
- When in doubt, remember to A.S.K. – Acknowledge the person's feelings, Support their feelings by validating their emotions and asking what they need, and Keep-in-touch and check-in regularly.

Learn more from our partners

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