

mental health activities for high school students...

Organization:

- Learn more
 - [Peer Health Exchange](#)'s mission is to empower young people with the knowledge, skills, and resources to make healthy decisions.
 - Peer Health Exchange is launching a website **just** for teens to share advice, tips, resources

Technical Guidelines:

- Read before writing: [PHE SEO Technical Guidelines](#)

Audience (Tone & Voice)

- Primary: Teens (High School + Middle School)

*When completed, please update the status on your dashboard to **Editing/Revision**.*

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| | |
|---|--|
| # of tables (aim for at least 2 tables) | 2 |
| # of lists (aim for at least 3 numbered lists) | 3 |
| # of bullet points (aim for at least 3 bulleted lists) | 15 bullets, 3 lists |
| Did you bold a sentence in each H2? (H2s are your subheads; please bold a sentence in each section) | Yes |
| # of internal links | 13 |
| # of external links | 40 |
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| Main keyword | mental health activities for high school students |
| Keyword variation | mental health activities for high school students, mental health awareness activities for high school students, mental health activities for students, |
| Meta description : ~160 characters. Include the main keyword. Should feel natural and have a compelling description of the piece. | Read this guide to learn about activities to challenge negative emotions, track and improve your mental health, and support others to do the same! |

Your Guide to Mental Health Activities for High School Students



Image source: unsplash.com

Life as a teenager, especially a teenager living through a pandemic, can be overwhelming. Social isolation, COVID-19 anxiety, and online learning have all created new mental health challenges for students.

Many teens feel like they're alone when they struggle with their mental health, but it's a shockingly common experience. [The need](#) for mental health support is also widespread: among teens experiencing mental health struggles, at least [70%](#) don't receive the necessary assistance.

Thankfully, there are steps you can take to improve your mental health and the mental health of others. By learning about and practicing mental health activities for students, you can enhance your own wellbeing. And by advocating for others with mental health awareness activities for high school students, you can ensure that all your peers feel safe and supported.

Why Mental Health Activities for Students Are Important

Although [stigma](#) around mental illness has decreased over time, many people continue to think that mental health issues are not serious or prevalent. Research from the American Psychological Association indicates that [87%](#) of Americans think that “having a mental health disorder is nothing to be ashamed of.” The same study also found, though, that 33% of Americans don’t think anxiety is a mental illness, and 22% don’t think depression is a mental illness, indicating that people underestimate the severity of mental health struggles.

The reality is that many people struggle with their mental health, and many people start struggling during their adolescence:

- [20%](#) of Americans experience a mental illness.
- [10%](#) of young people experience a period of major depression every year.
- [50%](#) of chronic mental health disorders start by the age of 14, and **75%** start by the age of 24.
- [32%](#) of teens will meet the criteria for an anxiety disorder by age 18.

These mental health problems can also have serious impacts:

- Globally, depression is the [primary cause](#) of disability.
- In the US, serious mental illness leads to [\\$193.2 billion](#) in lost earnings every year.
- Mental illness [impacts](#) **the education system, the criminal justice system, the healthcare system, and more.**

And on an individual level, poor mental health doesn’t only affect your mental wellbeing. It has other [consequences](#), too:

1. Your mental health impacts your **relationships**, creating stress and affecting your ability to interact with friends and family.
2. Your mental health impacts your **education**, affecting your grades and ability to focus.
3. Your mental health impacts your **physical health**, affecting the prevalence and progression of chronic disease.

Even if someone doesn’t meet the criteria for a mental illness, they will still experience periods of sadness, anxiety, and stress. For all of these reasons, prioritizing your mental health is crucial. Taking the time to [take care of yourself emotionally](#) doesn’t make you lazy or weird; instead, it’s necessary if you want to have a happy, healthy life and engage fully with your community.

But how can you do that?

Activities to Support Your Mental Health

Depending on the type and intensity of someone's mental health problems, they may benefit from different mental health activities for students. For instance, someone who feels stressed right before a test would probably want to learn about [stress management techniques for students](#), but they might not need long-term therapy or mental health care. Conversely, someone who regularly struggles with severe anxiety or depression might need the support of a counselor or therapist.

That's why there are a variety of mental health activities for a variety of people.

| Type of Activity | Definition | Examples |
|------------------|---|---|
| Stress-relieving | These are activities to calm the nerves, reduce anxiety, and relax the body. | Yoga, exercise, drawing, and listening to music |
| Reflection | These are activities that help you monitor and improve your mental wellbeing. | Mood trackers, gratitude journals, mindfulness techniques, and journaling |
| Communication | These are activities to help you share your experiences with others. | Talking to a friend or adult, online mental health supports, and therapy |

Stress-relieving Activities

[Three-quarters of high school students and half of middle school students](#) often or always feel stressed by schoolwork. During the school year, the average teenager says their stress is a [5.8 out of 10](#). Both of these statistics highlight the need for stress-relieving activities.

Once again, there are dozens of techniques that can reduce stress for high school students. Research has proven that all of the following help lower teen stress levels:

- Exercise
- Sleep
- Socializing
- Spending time outside
- Playing an instrument
- Listening to music
- Reading

- Creating art

Doing anything relaxing, from taking a bubble bath to walking your dog, can reduce stress in the short term. If you're nervous about an upcoming assignment or presentation you may have the impulse to over-prepare: you might want to practice nonstop and never quit working. Taking even a short break can help you reset, allowing you to come back to your work feeling relaxed and fresh.

These activities can also help with feelings other than stress. For example, spending time talking with close friends can alleviate sadness and loneliness. Reading and listening to music are helpful strategies to deal with anxiety.

In the long term, you can try to build these stress-relieving activities into your schedule. Achieving balance is key: consistently finding the time to work out, go outside, or spend time with friends is just as important as devoting time to schoolwork. Setting a regular time for these stress-relieving activities, or simply resolving to prioritize your mental health, can help prevent chronic stress. If you need more, try following these [six tips for having a healthy work-life balance](#).

[Getting enough sleep](#) is especially crucial and especially difficult for many teenagers. Although teenagers [naturally tend to fall asleep later](#), they also need a full eight to ten hours of sleep each night. Without enough sleep, adolescents' academic performance, physical health, and mental wellbeing all suffer. This makes sleep one of the best mental health activities for high school students.

Reflection Activities

While stress-relieving activities can help address the symptoms of mental health problems, they might not address the source. To build a healthier relationship with yourself, it may be necessary to engage in reflective activities that help you notice and change your thought patterns. These strategies can help you pay attention to different aspects of your mental health.

- 1. Mood trackers:** It may sound simple, but keeping track of your mood can be a very rewarding experience. Doing so [helps](#) you identify the triggers of negative emotions, reflect on how you felt throughout the day, and [notice](#) patterns and shifts in your life. Mood trackers can also be useful if you want to figure out whether certain behaviors or mental health activities impact your mood. They can take a variety of forms; you could keep track of your mood in a daily journal, a visual tracker like a chart, or a [mobile app](#). This is a flexible and low-commitment activity, requiring only a few minutes to write about your mood throughout the day.
- 2. Gratitude journals:** After having a bad day, many people would rather do anything other

than think about what they're grateful for. But [research](#) shows that regularly writing about your gratitude can make you more optimistic, healthy, and satisfied. [Gratitude journals](#) lead us to focus on the positive in our lives, making us pay more attention to daily sources of joy. There are plenty of [tips](#) for gratitude journaling, but the most important thing is to get started: every week, try writing down five specific things you feel grateful for.

3. **Journaling:** Daily journaling requires a bit more commitment than the first two strategies, but it also offers big rewards. Writing daily allows you to practice positive self-talk and reflect on your day. This [reduces](#) anxiety, stress, and depression. Although the prospect of writing every day may daunt you, there's no wrong way to journal: you could use these [reflection prompts to support your mental health](#), download these [journal prompts](#) for wellness, or simply write about your day.
4. **Mindfulness:** If you're not into writing, you can also practice reflection and mindfulness in other ways. Meditation is one way to practice mindfulness, but you can also [reflect throughout the day](#) by taking a few minutes to notice your surroundings, live in the moment, and focus on your breathing. Practicing mindfulness daily can prevent you from worrying too much about the future and remind you to celebrate the present. It also helps you get more in touch with your mind and body, lowering stress.

All of these mental health activities for high school students demonstrate that positive thinking is a powerful stress management technique for teens.

Communication Activities

Talking with others about your mental health is necessary if you want to find support. Whether you rely on a friend, parent, or other trusted adult, talking with someone about your emotions is key to processing them.

If you're unsure of how to discuss your mental health with those around you, explore [tips for talking about your mental health](#) or try working on your [communication](#), [decision-making](#), and [healthy relationship](#) skills.

You can also learn to [prioritize your mental health during social distancing](#) by reaching out to people online. This could mean interacting with friends you already know via FaceTime and social media, reconnecting with old friends who you haven't spoken to in a while, or even meeting other teens online using websites like [TrevorSpace](#) (for LGBTQ+ teens) or other [support groups](#). This [support mapping](#) activity can help you identify who to talk to in various situations, from moments when you need a judgment-free zone to times when you need to feel safe and supported.

And if you need immediate assistance, reach out to a crisis hotline by texting HOME to 741741 or

calling 1-800-273-8255.

Therapy

While talking to friends and parents is often helpful, sometimes you need the support of a trained professional. If you regularly experience mental health problems or negative emotions, you might benefit from therapy. There are many types of therapy, but all good therapists should help you explore your emotions, develop coping strategies, and improve your outlook on life.

Going to therapy is also a very common activity — about [10%](#) of Americans receive counseling every year. However, finding the right therapist can take a while: it's important to find a therapist with whom you feel comfortable talking openly.

These resources can help you find and receive affordable, accessible therapy:

1. If you think your parents will be supportive, try talking to them about your desire to see a therapist; these [tips for talking about your mental health](#) might help.
2. Read this [advice if you think your parents won't help you find a therapist](#).
3. Use these [ideas for finding low-cost mental health care](#) if you are on a tight budget.
4. If you're a BIPOC student, listen to the [Therapy for Black Girls podcast](#) or visit the [Therapy for Latinx](#) website.

Activities to Support the Mental Health of Others

Even if you don't personally struggle with your mental health, it's important to create a safe and supportive environment for students who do. **Participating in mental health awareness activities for high school students can make a huge difference in the lives of your peers.**

Still, it can be hard to know where to start. Prioritizing your own mental health might seem like a big enough challenge; how can you do that same for tens or hundreds of other students? Depending on your capacity and commitment, there are many different ways to get started.

| Awareness Activity | Why It's Important | Ways to Get Started |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Combat Stigma | 98% of Americans think that people with mental illnesses are stigmatized and | Speak openly about your own experiences with mental illness. Let your friends and |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| | discriminated against. This stigma makes people ashamed of their struggles and unwilling to seek help. | peers know that you will care for them no matter what they're going through. Educate yourself about mental health, starting with this advice from the National Alliance on Mental Illness. |
| Advocate for Curriculum | Teaching students about mental health can reduce conflict, improve coping strategies, and help teenagers notice the signs of mental illness in themselves and others. | Share these teacher resources or another mental health curriculum with your teachers and administrators, and ask them to implement mental health education in your school. |
| Create Safe Spaces | Safe spaces and support groups allow students to express vulnerability, find peers with similar experiences, build resilience, and practice self-care. | Start a mental health awareness club, gay-straight alliance, Black student union, or another group in your school. Use these resources to get started. |

By combining activities to support your own mental health with activities to support the mental health of others, you can work to sustain yourself and your community.

Mental health activities for students are essential to your health and wellness. So what are you waiting for? Try a new mental health activity for high school students, and encourage your friends to do the same.

Outline

- 1) Outline the research sources and backlinks you'll be using in the blog:
 - a) <https://www.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMI-Media/Infographics/Children-MH-Facts-NAMI.pdf>
 - b) <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page13367.aspx>
 - c) <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/What-Can-I-Do/Become-a-Leader-in-the-Mental-Health-Movement>
 - d) https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/gratitude_journal
 - e) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5977660/>
 - f) Feel free to add more...
- 2) Provide a rough outline of the structure of your blog piece:
 - a) Intro thought-starters
 - i) Many people feel like they're alone in struggling with their mental health, but it's a shockingly common experience.
 - b) Why are mental health activities important?
 - i) Statistics on prevalence of mental health issues
 - ii) Importance of prioritizing mental health
 - iii) Meaning, origins, and importance of self-care
 - c) Activities to support your mental health
 - i) Stress-relieving activities: exercise, relaxation, art, etc.
 - ii) Mental health activities: mood trackers, gratitude journals, journaling, mindfulness
 - (1) Good place to practice positive self-talk
 - iii) Communication activities: talking with others/ways to find support
 - iv) Therapy -- what it is, who might benefit, how to access it
 - d) Activities to Raise Mental Health Awareness
 - i) Address stigma: be open about your own experiences, supportive, etc.
 - ii) Advocate for a mental health curriculum and social-emotional learning
 - iii) Create safe spaces, clubs, and support groups
 - e) Conclusion thought-starters
 - i) Importance of treating yourself and others with care
 - ii) Call for readers to advocate for mental health supports, creating a safer and healthier environment for everyone

3) Identify PHE resources you can use as backlinks:

- a) https://docs.google.com/document/d/1psuu-Mr2XrqZVX_ocQ12N3DQHSismwKv_wlgFYuTyKus/edit?usp=sharing (LGBTQ mental health)
- b) <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1guNoZa3esKSF3QwrnIGlttjbLbDnI76XwdHTz29RApc/edit?usp=sharing> (How to take care of yourself emotionally)
- c) <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1t7IGCyQs2kQ1-Bn-MuzhojzabGypSuiNA0Vpd2oRxo/edit?usp=sharing> (stress management techniques for students)
- d) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/our-solution/the-need>
- e) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/resources>
- f) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/lets-talk-teacher-resources>
- g) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/peer-health-exchange-health-educators-share-experiences-on-youtube>
- h) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/lets-talk-healthy-relationships>
- i) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/lets-talk-covid-19-and-accessing-resources>
- j) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/lets-talk-covid-and-your-health>
- k) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/lets-talk-covid-19-and-your-mental-health>
- l) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/reflection-prompts-to-support-your-mental-health>
- m) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/skill-building-communication>
- n) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/lets-talk-covid-19-and-decision-making>
- o) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/when-home-becomes-the-office-6-tips-for-having-a-healthy-work-life-balance>
- p) <https://www.peerhealthexchange.org/blog/social-distancing-learn-to-prioritize-your-mental-health>

Tab 2

Tab 3

Transitional housing **provides temporary, supportive shelter for individuals and families transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing**. It aims to provide a safe and stable environment while individuals work on regaining stability, addressing underlying issues, and developing support networks. This interim period can range from a few months to up to two years, depending on the program. [\[1, 2, 3\]](#)

Key Features of Transitional Housing:

- **Temporary Shelter:** Transitional housing offers a place to live for a limited time, typically while individuals work on achieving permanent housing goals. [\[1, 1, 4, 4\]](#)
- **Supportive Services:** Programs often include case management, job training, substance abuse counseling, and other services to help individuals gain stability. [\[2, 2, 5, 5\]](#)
- **Focus on Independence:** Transitional housing aims to help individuals develop the skills and resources they need to live independently in the future. [\[1, 1, 5, 6, 6\]](#)
- **Bridge to Permanent Housing:** It serves as a bridge between emergency shelters and permanent housing, helping individuals find suitable and sustainable housing options. [\[1, 1, 7, 7\]](#)

How it Works:

- **Eligibility:** Transitional housing programs typically have eligibility requirements, such as experiencing homelessness or being at risk of homelessness, meeting income thresholds, and willingness to participate in services. [\[6\]](#)
- **Referral and Intake:** Individuals are often referred to transitional housing programs by other support services or through the Continuum of Care (CoC) system. [\[2, 8\]](#)
- **Program Structure:** Transitional housing programs vary in structure, with some programs providing congregate living arrangements and others offering scattered-site housing or rent subsidies. [\[9\]](#)
- **Support Services:** During their stay, individuals receive case management, support services, and other assistance to help them address their individual needs and challenges. [\[2, 5\]](#)
- **Exit Planning:** Transitional housing programs emphasize exit planning to ensure individuals successfully transition to permanent housing. [\[2, 5\]](#)

Benefits of Transitional Housing:

- **Provides Stability:** Transitional housing offers a stable and secure environment, which can help individuals stabilize their lives and address underlying issues. [\[1, 1, 7, 7\]](#)
- **Enables Service Access:** The supportive services offered through transitional housing can help individuals access resources they need to achieve their goals. [\[2, 2, 5, 5\]](#)
- **Increases Housing Stability:** Transitional housing programs have been shown to increase the likelihood of individuals remaining stably housed after leaving the program. [\[10, 10\]](#)
- **Reduces Costs:** Transitional housing can be a cost-effective approach to addressing homelessness, as it can reduce the need for longer-term emergency shelter stays. [\[7, 11, 11, 12\]](#)

Examples of Transitional Housing Programs:

- **The Salvation Army:** Offers transitional housing programs for individuals and families, providing shelter and supportive services. [5, 13]
- **Children's Home Society of WV:** Provides transitional living programs for homeless youth. [14]
- **U.S.VETS:** Offers transitional housing programs for veterans, providing support and resources to help them transition to independent living. [15]

All responses may include mistakes.

- [1] <https://www.planstreet.com/ending-chronic-homelessness-how-transitional-and-supportive-housing-help>
- [2] <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-program-components/transitional-housing/>
- [3] <https://unitedtoendhomelessness.org/blog/types-of-housing-support-for-the-homeless/>
- [4] <https://caseworthy.com/articles/differences-between-transitional-and-supportive-housing/>
- [5] <https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/homelessness/>
- [6] <https://www.exponentcasemanagement.com/2023/03/28/transitional-housing-providing-stability-and-support-for-homeless-individuals/>
- [7] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGR5HG74sLI>
- [8] <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-program-eligibility-requirements/>
- [9] <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/the-role-of-long-term-congregate-transitional-housing/>
- [10] <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/pdf/lifeaftertransition.pdf>
- [11] <https://www.lfhtoledo.org/journey-from-homelessness-to-permanent-housing>
- [12] <https://guide.denverdonate.com/get/knowledge/the-criminalization-of-homelessness-in-the-united-states>
- [13] <https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/usc/provide-housing/>
- [14] <https://www.facebook.com/parkersburgsleepout/>
- [15] <https://usvets.org/how-we-serve/housing/>