



Mental Health Matters with Amy Deacon

Supporting your kids during challenging times

How do we better support our kids' wellness? Have open and honest dialogues and learn to connect with them in a way that is safe, supportive and curious. As parents we also need to lead by example when it comes to self-care. Here are 3 key takeaways from our session:

1. Studies show that 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence. Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance use disorders than any other age group. In other words, our kids' mental health really matters and learning how to tune into them emotionally as early as possible can be incredibly beneficial.
2. Our children's reality can feel so different from what parents experienced when they were kids. This is completely normal! However, understand that this place of confusion is your starting place, not your ending place. Let your kids teach you about their world and their reality. This allows our kids to feel a sense of control, empowerment and confidence. Keep in mind that even if you cannot fully connect with their world – you can learn to connect with the underlying emotion.
3. Prioritize having meals or uninterrupted time with them, where we cannot be interrupted by phones, emails or social media channels. Learn to engage with children in a consistent manner so that we teach them that there is space for them, as well as their highs and their lows. Remember one of the biggest buffers to mental health challenges is strong, healthy, consistent relationships. Be that relationship for your children!

Ask yourself:

1. How are you connecting with your children?
2. How do you make space for your kids' challenging emotions?
3. If you are concerned about your child's mental health, what actionable steps need to be put in place to ensure their health and wellness?

Amy Deacon, MSW, RSW is the Founder and CEO of Toronto Wellness Counselling. Beyond running this inclusive and full-service therapy clinic, Amy is also a Registered Social Worker and Clinical Traumatologist.



Insurance

Disclaimer: The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you have mental health related questions, experience symptoms or in need of assistance, always seek the advice of your general physician, health care or mental health provider regarding your condition.

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