



MENTAL HEALTH TIPS FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS AT RICE



WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as ‘a state of well-being in which the individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.’

A **young person with good mental health** will feel **in control of their emotions** and will have **good cognitive functioning** and **positive interactions with people around them**. This state allows a child or youth to do well in school and enjoy family and other social relationships.

WHAT ARE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES?

Mental illnesses are diagnosable health conditions involving **changes in emotion, thinking, or behavior** (or a combination of these). Mental illnesses are associated with **distress and/or problems functioning** in social, work, or family activities. The various types of diagnosable mental illnesses are called mental disorders.

Mental disorders in children and youth are serious changes in the way children and youth typically learn, behave, or handle their emotions, which cause distress and problems getting through the day.

HOW COMMON ARE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN YOUTH?

National studies of the prevalence of mental health challenges in children have estimated that **12.8% of children have a diagnosable mental disorder** in any given year. **Mental disorders usually begin in childhood or adolescence**. The median age of onset for anxiety disorders is age 6, the median age of onset for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and behavior disorders is age 11, and the median age of onset for mood disorders is age 13 (Child Mind Institute, 2015). Some mental health challenges are mild and may only last for a short period, and others may last a lifetime.

For any general questions regarding Youth Programs at Rice, please contact the Youth Protection Manager at 713-348-5068 or youthprotection@rice.edu





SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Problems with concentration, memory, or the ability to think clearly
- Changes in appetite
- Feeling sad, empty, hopeless, or worthless
- Loss of interest in things they used to enjoy
- Excessive worry
- Irritability or restlessness
- changes in sleep
- Angry outbursts
- not wanting to be around people or take part in activities

LOCAL CLINICS

**UTHealth: Harris County
Psychiatric Center**
Child & Adolescent Program
713-741-5000

<https://hcpc.uth.edu/pages/inpatient-services/imp-child-serv.htm>

**Mental Health Crisis Clinic in
Meyerland**
4850 W. Bellfort St, Houston,
TX 77035
(713) 338-6422

<https://memorialhermann.org/services/specialties/mental-health>

HELPLINES TO CONTACT

Texas Youth Helpline:
1-800-989-6884

The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD
(Intellectual or Developmental Disability) 24/7 Crisis Line:
713-970-7000

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Greater Houston:
713-970-4483

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND TRAININGS

[National Council for Mental Wellbeing Resources](#)

[Youth Mental Health First Aid Course](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Illness Resources](#)

[Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center Community Resources](#)

In the event of a life-threatening emergency that requires immediate medical or law enforcement attention, go to the nearest hospital emergency room and/or call the Rice University Police Department or REMS at x6000.

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