

Strong Minds make for Strong Kids

**50**

## **Mental Health Promotion Strategies for Infants, Children and Teens**

### For Babies & Toddlers:

1.

#### **Sing Together**

Hold your baby, sing, and make eye contact to foster a loving bond.

2.

#### **Respond with Care**

Comfort your baby when they cry.  
It builds trust and safety.

3.

#### **Play Together**

Let your toddler explore everyday objects  
and follow their lead in play.

4.

#### **Stay Calm**

Practice deep breathing to stay calm  
when your baby is upset.

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## **Mental Health Promotion Strategies for Infants, Children and Teens**

### For Young Children:

5.

#### **Feeling Charades**

Act out emotions and guess them to build emotional awareness.

6.

#### **Draw a Happy Place**

Encourage kids to draw their “happy place” and refer to it when stressed.

7.

#### **Mindful Eating**

Have kids eat a favorite snack slowly, focusing on taste and texture.

8.

#### **Dance Out Emotions**

Let kids create dances to express how different emotions feel.

9.

#### **Mirror Emotions**

Make faces that show emotions and guess what they represent.

10.

#### **Emotion Thermometer**

Help kids rate their emotions from 1 to 5 using a visual thermometer.

11.

#### **What If Game**

Ask “What if” questions and brainstorm creative solutions to problems.

12.

#### **Stress Stoplight**

Talk about stress like a stoplight from bad (red), okay (yellow), to good (green).

13.

#### **Stretch & Reach**

Pretend to push clouds back into the sky as a stretching exercise.

14.

#### **Belly Breathing**

Teach deep breathing to calm down when feeling stressed or angry.

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## **Mental Health Promotion Strategies for Infants, Children and Teens**

### For School-Age Children:

15.

#### **Name Emotions**

Teach words for different emotions to help them communicate feelings.

16.

#### **Gratitude Collage**

Create a collage of things they're grateful for.

17.

#### **Finger Breathing**

Trace fingers while taking deep breaths to calm down.

18.

#### **Animal Pack**

Imagine how animals deal with stress and how a "pack" can help.

19.

#### **Focus Eyes**

Encourage them to focus their eyes on one spot to calm racing thoughts.

20.

#### **Excitement Over Worry**

Shift nervousness into excitement by reframing the feeling.

21.

#### **Inner Buddy vs. Bully**

Name their positive (buddy) and negative (bully) inner voices.

22.

#### **Invisible String**

Write names of supportive people on notes to show their invisible support network.

23.

#### **Daily Reflection**

Have them journal or draw about their day and how it made them feel.

24.

#### **Calm Jar**

Create a jar of calming activity ideas to use when stressed.

25.

#### **Mindful Walks**

Go for a walk and focus on what they see, hear, and smell to be present.

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## **Mental Health Promotion Strategies for Infants, Children and Teens**

### For Preteens:

26.

#### **Active Play**

Encourage daily physical activity like skipping, running, or jumping.

27.

#### **Recognize Stress**

Talk about how stress feels in their body.

28.

#### **Muscle Relaxation**

Practice tensing and relaxing muscles to release stress.

29.

#### **Express Emotions**

Draw how they think their face looks when feeling different emotions.

30.

#### **Quick Calming**

Brainstorm 9-second calming activities, like petting an animal or counting.

31.

#### **Stress Plan**

Write down stressors and brainstorm ways to cope.

32.

#### **Worry Box**

Create a box for storing written worries until they're ready to discuss them.

33.

#### **Count to 10**

When emotions run high, encourage them to count to 10 before reacting.

34.

#### **Happy Place**

Close eyes, breathe deeply, and imagine a calm, happy place.

35.

#### **Creative Outlets**

Express feelings through art, music, or dancing.

36.

#### **Growth Mindset**

Think about how they can improve, even in areas where they're skilled.

37.

#### **Three Good Things**

Before bed, write down three positive things from their day.

38.

#### **Best/Worst Outcomes:**

Think about the best and worst possible outcomes of a situation.

39.

#### **Practice Apologizing**

Reflect on times they've apologized and how it improved relationships.

40.

#### **Stress Scale**

Ask them to rate their stress level from 1 (most stressed) to 10 (least stressed).

41.

#### **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding**

Name 5 things they see, 4 things they feel, 3 sounds, 2 smells, and 1 taste.

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## **Mental Health Promotion Strategies for Infants, Children and Teens**

### For Teens:

42.

#### **Positive Affirmations**

Write down 10 positive affirmations and refer to them when stressed.

43.

#### **Stress Reflection**

Regularly reflect on signs of stress and how to manage them.

44.

#### **Focus on Values**

Use their values to guide decisions and behaviors when overwhelmed.

45.

#### **Create a Stress Kit**

Make a kit with items that help relieve stress.

46.

#### **Laughter**

Watch something funny or spend time with people who make them laugh.

47.

#### **Healthy Habits**

Encourage sleep, nutritious food, and regular physical activity.

48.

#### **Journaling**

Write down thoughts and feelings to identify patterns.

49.

#### **Relaxing Music**

Create a playlist of calming music or sounds.

50.

#### **Get Organized**

Use to-do lists and calendars to stay on top of tasks and reduce stress.