

# Positive Parenting Toolkit (Ages 13-17)

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**Growing Minds.**  
Helping families with children's mental health.



Arkansas  
**BlueCross BlueShield**

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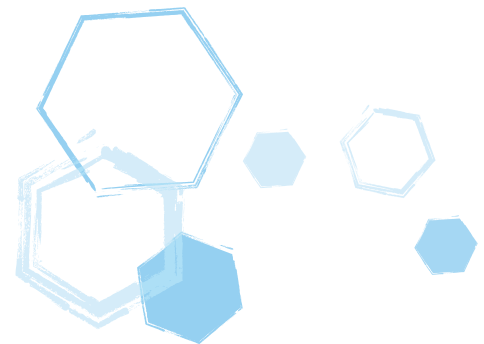
Raising a child takes a village, and you are not alone.  
There are resources available.



If you are an Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield member, scan code to view benefits and programs on your health plan with Blueprint Portal at [blueprintportal.com](https://blueprintportal.com).



At Arkansas Blue Cross, we have created a website with self-guided help and resources. For more information, visit [mymindhelp.com](https://mymindhelp.com).



# Parenting can be rewarding but challenging.

The Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield Behavioral Health Team has curated the Positive Parenting Toolkit to help you support your child's healthy development, use positive parenting practices, practice self-care techniques and encourage positive childhood experiences. In these materials you will find:

- Activities you can do with your child at home
- Self-care tips and strategies for parents and caregivers
- Information specific to your child's age and developmental stage
- Mental and behavioral health information and resources
- Information to help with the use of your health insurance

## Positive parenting begins with four key elements:

1. **Safety**
2. **Relationships**
3. **Community**
4. **Parental Well-being**



# Safety

**Create a safe environment for teens.** As your child's independence increases and peer circles widen, thoughtful boundaries can support healthy decision-making and provide a foundation for navigating new challenges.

## Questions to consider:

- Are you aware of the social platforms your teen uses and who they interact with online?
- Have you set clear boundaries around driving privileges such as where, when and with whom your teen can drive?
- Are you checking in regularly with your teen about their plans and the people they spend time with, both in person and online, to help them make safe and responsible choices?

## How can parents help?

### Be an upstander: responding to cyberbullying (Ages 13-15)

1. Write each scenario on a slip of paper and have your teen pick one:
  - A friend shares a funny but embarrassing video of another friend in a group chat without their permission.
  - A classmate is teased at school and similar hurtful comments start showing up on their social media posts.
2. Explain that an **upstander** is someone who takes action to support others who are being hurt or bullied. Ask your teen to decide how they would respond as an upstander.
3. Talk about what might make it hard to respond and brainstorm ways to make it easier.
4. Discuss how a small action, like supporting the friend privately or reporting a social media post, can make a difference.

# Parent-Teen Driving Agreement (Ages 15-17)

Create a parent-teen driving agreement to outline your family's driving rules, set clear expectations and set clear limits. Keep the contract on the refrigerator and update it as your teen gains experience and earns more driving privileges.

Include items in your contract that will help establish expectations, rules to follow and consequences for not following the agreement.

- Establish rules of the road such as wearing a seatbelt, obeying traffic signs and lights, abiding by speed limits and never giving rides to people they don't know.
- Include rules for focused driving - cell phone use, eating and drinking, driving while emotional or using headphones/earbuds to listen to music.
- Address expectations around drug and alcohol use and related laws.
- Include who can ride with your teen and when your teen can have passengers along with who can or can not drive your vehicle.
- Responsible driving includes making sure your teen knows when they can drive and when they cannot drive, especially someone else's vehicle. It also includes paying for any traffic citations, parking tickets and costs associated with driving like gas, vehicle maintenance and insurance.



Scan code  
or [click here](#)  
to view or  
download  
agreement.



## Relationships

**The relationship you have with your teen influences the connections they develop with others.** As they grow, teens spend more time with friends, but trust and open communication with parents is essential. Allowing them space to make mistakes and learn from them builds confidence and resilience. Engaging in honest conversations helps them develop social and emotional skills they'll rely on as they mature.

### Questions to consider:

- Is your teen able to talk about what's going well, what's difficult and what they're working toward?
- How can you help your teen feel comfortable sharing their feelings or asking for help?
- Is your teen building healthy friendships that are supportive and respectful?

## How can parents help?

### Lead by example: it's okay to express emotions (Ages 13-17)

1. Briefly talk about something you have experienced – a win, a frustration or a tough moment. For example, "Today, I felt really overwhelmed with work." (Tip: see "Emotions, feelings and moods" on page 12.)
2. Share how you handled the situation. For example, "I took a quick walk outside to clear my head. It helped me feel better."
3. Talk to your teen about what they would do in your shoes. "What would you have done?" or "Have you ever felt the same way?"

# Healthy Relationships (Ages 13-17)

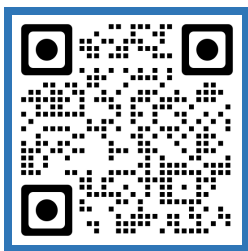
What makes a relationship healthy? Every relationship is unique, but certain qualities help it grow. This guide is to help you and your teen explore relationship strengths and areas for growth that apply to relationships at school, with family and when dating. Use this as a chance to have a meaningful conversation together. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers!

Read each statement below and check all that are true for your relationship. You can apply this to any relationship in your teen's life. Discuss results with your teen - which ones did you both check off and why?

- You are both able to be yourself. You do not feel like you need to change your personality for the relationship.**
- You both have similar core values like honesty, respect and trust.**
- You do nice things for each other and offer emotional support when times are hard.**
- You both communicate honestly with a willingness to improve the relationship.**
- You celebrate one another's accomplishments and encourage each other to grow and succeed.**
- You are both willing to have difficult conversations. You feel safe to disagree while still appreciating your similarities.**
- You both take responsibility for your mistakes and try to do better.**
- Your relationship is a two-way street. You share decision-making power and responsibility.**
- You listen to each other in conversation with a goal to understand rather than to be right.**
- You spend quality time together but also make time for other important relationships in your lives.**

## Ideas to guide discussion:

- Reflect on different relationships. Are some friendships easier than others? Why or why not?
- If your teen does not check a box, try asking gentle, open-ended questions:
  - Is there a way to bring more honesty or trust into that relationship?
  - If honest conversations with friends are hard, is there some we could practice together to make it easier?
  - How can you tell if a friend will be supportive or trustworthy?



Scan the code or [click here](#) to explore more ideas, tips and activities to help build healthy, supportive relationships.



# Community

**Feeling connected to a community becomes essential as teens navigate adolescence.** Teens who see themselves as part of something bigger feel more supported and motivated. As a parent, you can encourage their involvement in community projects, music, the arts, sports or other team activities.

## Questions to consider:

- Does your teen have mentors or role models who inspire career interests?
- Have you encouraged your teen to explore their interests through volunteering or community work?
- Is your teen involved in activities that make them feel valued and connected to others?

## Community connections map (Ages 13-17)

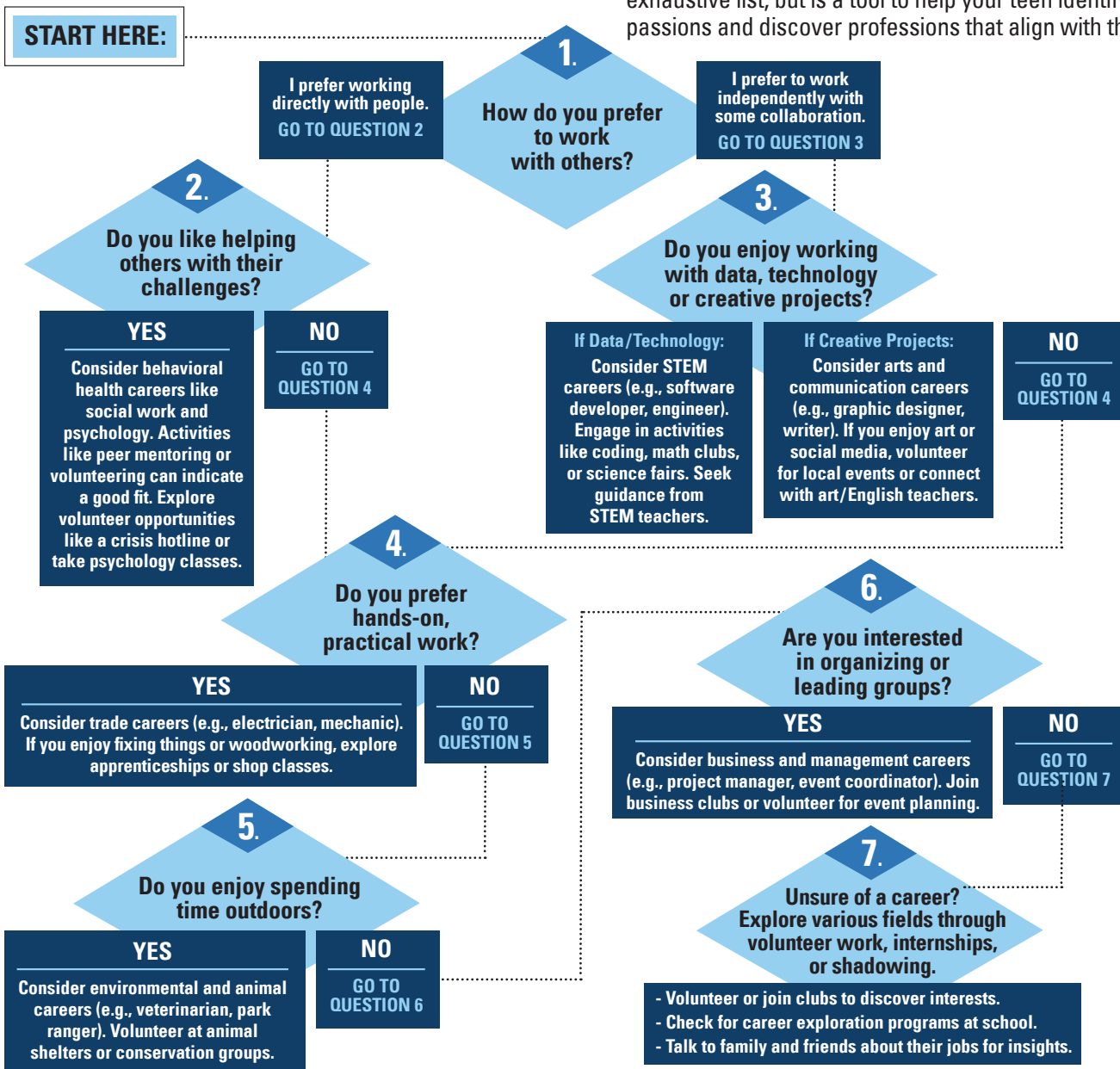
### Materials: paper and pens/markers

1. Write "My Community" in the center.
2. Draw circles for areas like school, your neighborhood and local non-profits
3. List issues that your teen cares about near those areas.
4. Once you have completed your map, discuss it together. Ask questions like, "What interests matter most to you?" or "What groups would you like to explore?"
5. Decide on an action your teen can do
  - Volunteer (help at a local shelter)
  - Join (attend a club meeting)
  - Family Project (create care packages for a charity)



# Exploring Career Paths (Ages 15-17)

This activity can help your teen explore potential care paths with you based on their interests. It's not an exhaustive list, but is a tool to help your teen identify passions and discover professions that align with them.



# Parental Well-being



## **Your health and wellness is just as important as your child's.**

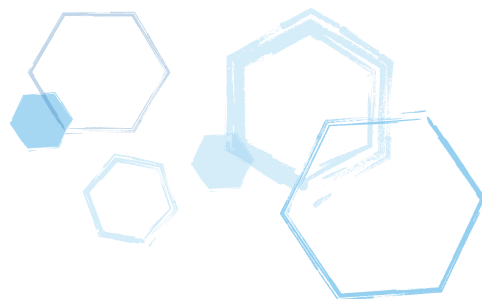
It is important for you to take time for yourself to be an effective parent. Taking time for yourself or using self-care techniques is not selfish. A healthy you is a better parent for your child.

### **Questions to consider:**

- Are you finding ways to manage feelings of worry, sadness or emotional ups and downs?
- Are you able to maintain interest in daily activities like eating, bathing and caring for yourself and your child?
- Are you staying connected with friends, family and loved ones?

If you find yourself in crisis or feeling hopeless, **call or text to 9-8-8** for help or go to the nearest emergency room.

*Always contact your doctor with any questions or concerns you may have about your behavioral or mental health or if you feel you need assistance from a mental health provider.*



# How can parents help themselves?

## Make a date for yourself.

1. Take a moment to sit by yourself in a quiet space. Let go of any expectations you have for yourself. Now, think about what would truly make you feel cared for. Is it time alone? Connecting with a friend? Getting extra rest? Or maybe simply enjoying a hot cup of tea or coffee?
2. Decide on self care and commit to it. Once you've identified what you need, put it on your calendar and follow through with the activity or "date." Make it non-negotiable.
3. Use the calendar tool to the right to help prioritize time for yourself, just like you would a doctor's appointment or an important event.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Be gentle and patient with yourself.
- Celebrate small acts of compassion.
- Stay consistent, even with just a few minutes of "me" time.
- Seek support if needed.

### What makes me feel cared for?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

SUN

AM

PM

MON

AM

PM

TUE

AM

PM

WED

AM

PM

THU

AM

PM

FRI

AM

PM

SAT

AM

PM

# Emotions, feelings and moods: what's the difference?

Understanding how emotions, feelings and moods connect can help you and your teen make sense of your experiences and reactions. Think of emotions and feelings like **weather** – shorter, changing frequently, and influenced by specific situations. In contrast, mood is more like **climate** – a longer-lasting emotional state that sets the tone for how we feel and act over time.



By exploring these connections, you can model healthy emotional awareness and coping strategies for your teen. This shared understanding can improve communication, strengthen emotional skills and build resilience for both of you.



	<b>EMOTION</b>	<b>FEELING</b>	<b>MOOD</b>
<b>Duration</b>	Short (minutes)	Moderate (minutes)	Longer (hours)
<b>Definition</b>	Strong, short-lived reactions to specific events or situations.	The personal experiences that come from emotions, shaped by how we think about and interpret what's happening to us.	Longer lasting emotional states that are less intense than emotions but affect how we feel and act over time.
<b>Challenging Example</b>	Disappointment (think sudden rainstorm) – Not getting picked for the sports team.	Frustration (think cloudy skies) – Feeling like they didn't perform their best.	Discouragement (think stretch of gloomy days) – leads to a down mood, making it hard to feel motivated or positive.
<b>Your actions act like tools to either adapt to the "weather" (emotions) or gradually improve your "climate" (mood).</b>			
Personal actions that can help (coping strategies)	<b>Step away from the situation</b> to cool off and gain perspective.	<b>Focus on the effort,</b> not just the outcome.	<b>Engage in a relaxing activity</b> to help reset your mood.
What's been a challenging situation for you or your teen recently?			
What actions could you take to improve your emotional "weather" or reset your mood "climate"?			
How can you remind yourself that your actions have the power to shift your feelings and mood?			

# Sleep Tracker (Ages 13-17)

Getting enough sleep is essential for teens' health, mood and success in school, sports and other activities. During the teen years, natural sleep patterns shift, making it harder to fall asleep early. Teens need 8-10 hours of sleep each night. Many teens get 7 hours or less due to busy schedules, social activities and homework.

Without enough sleep, teens may experience:



- Mood swings and irritability



- Lower academic and athletic performance



- Difficulty focusing and memory problems



- Increased risky behaviors and drowsy driving

DATE	BEDTIME	WAKE TIME	TOTAL SLEEP (Hours)	SLEEP QUALITY (1-5)	HOW DID YOU FEEL?
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

**Avoid these in the 2 hours before bed:**

- Caffeine
- Screen Time
- Heavy Metals or Late Snacks
- Intense Experience or Stressful Tasks

**Aim to do these things daily:**

- Go to bed and get up at the same time
- Read, listen to music or stretch 30 minutes before bed
- Keep your sleep space cool, dark and quiet
- Get sunlight and physical activity during the day

# Understanding Health Insurance

Understanding your health insurance and what's available to your family is important to get the best care for your family's needs. If you have insurance through your employer or are the one who purchases the insurance, you are both the policyholder and the *subscriber* of your health plan. If you have a child or children on your health plan, they are considered *dependents*.

## So, how does it work?

Health insurance works by splitting the cost of healthcare between you and your health plan to pay your provider (doctor, for example). Prior to receiving healthcare for you or your child, you will show *proof of insurance* (your member ID card) to your provider. This will tell the clinic what type of coverage you have and how to bill (charge) for your visit. The amount billed will depend on your plan type, your deductible amount and whether your provider is in-network or out-of-network.

## What is a deductible?

A *deductible* is the amount you pay for medical costs before your health insurance begins to make payments to providers for services. Example: Your deductible is \$1,000. You will pay for services until you meet your \$1,000 deductible. After that, your health plan will help share costs any time you see a provider. To find your deductible information, check your ID card.

## What is a copay (copayment)?

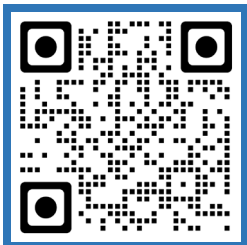
A *copay* is the fixed amount you pay, usually at the time of a medical service or for prescriptions at the pharmacy. Some plans do not have a copay. If there is a copay, it is usually separate from your deductible. A copayment does not count toward your deductible amount or your out-of-pocket maximum. It can also vary depending on the type of services received (a primary care provider and a specialist may be different copay amounts).

# What's on your ID card?

Arkansas BlueCross BlueShield	
Member Name: <b>JOHN L DOE</b>	
<b>1</b>	Member ID: <b>ZZZ123456789</b>
<b>2</b>	RxBIN: <b>123456</b> RxPCN: <b>ADV</b> RxGRP: <b>RX0000</b>
<b>3</b>	RxDED: <b>NONE</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>\$4/\$4/\$8/\$8</b>
	Group #: <b>GG987654321</b>
	Deductible: <b>NONE</b>
	CoPay: <b>\$8 PCP / \$10 SPEC</b>
	<b>Silver</b>
<i>True</i> <b>BLUE</b> PPO	

- 1. Member ID number** – Helps us identify who you are, the type of plan you have and how your claims are paid
- 2. Rx categories** – Used by the pharmacy to determine what's covered, apply your discount and file your claims
- 3. Rx deductible** – The amount you pay for prescriptions before your health insurance begins to pay
- 4. Rx copay** – How much you pay for your prescriptions depending on their type
- 5. Group number** – Used to check your plan's benefits
- 6. Deductible** – The amount you pay for healthcare services before your health insurance begins to pay
- 7. Copay** – How much you pay for a doctor visit, depending on the type
- 8. Type of plan** – Lets you know what kind of coverage you have

*Your card may look slightly different than the example above, depending on the health plan you have.*



Scan code to learn more about health insurance or [click here](#).



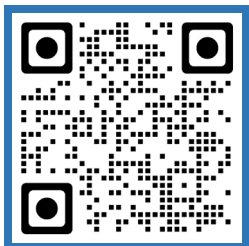
# We are your village too.

## Reach out for assistance.

Our dedicated Behavioral Health Team is here to help Arkansas Blue Cross members navigate care.

Call 800-225-1891 to speak to a behavioral health case manager if you have questions or need additional support. If you or your family member is having an urgent mental health crisis, call 9-8-8 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Helpful resources and behavioral health information can be found at **[Mymindhelp.com](https://www.mymindhelp.com)**



To view benefits and programs available on your Arkansas Blue Cross health plan, sign in or register for [blueprintportal.com](https://blueprintportal.com).

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