



HEALTH CHECK

TOP 5 REASONS WHY YOUR TEEN NEEDS A YEARLY CHECK-UP

WYOMING OFFICE OF
MEDICAID

Volume 1, Issue 2

September, 2004



5. Because your teen is enrolled in an EqualityCare program and it's FREE!
4. Problems can be found early and treated before they get worse.
3. Many problems begin before your teen looks or feels sick.
2. Annual check-ups are for ALL teens and not just those involved in sports activities.

1. Find out if your teen is HEALTHY!!

Special points of interest:

- ☺ Annual Check-Ups for Teens
- ☺ Teen Mental Health
- ☺ Discussion Topics at Teen Yearly Check-ups
- ☺ Important telephone numbers

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WHAT IS INCLUDED IN A YEARLY HEALTH CHECK-UP?

A complete Head to Toe physical Exam
 Immunizations (Shots)
 Lab tests as needed
 Nutrition check (eating habits)
 Dental and Vision Screening
 Pap smear (if sexually active)
 Screening for sexually transmitted diseases (if sexually active)

Examples of Common Problems seen during the physical exam:

- Acne
- Weight Problems
- High Blood Pressure
- Family History

MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUR TEEN

Mental Health Disorders are More Common in Young People than Many Realize!

Many children experience mental health problems that are real and painful and can be severe. Mental health problems affect at least one in every five young people, at any given time. At least 1 in 10 children may have a serious emotional disturbance that severely disrupts his or her ability to function.

Tragically, an estimated two-thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not getting the help they need. Mental health problems can lead to school failure, alcohol or other drug abuse, family discord, violence, or even suicide.

The Causes Are Complicated

Mental health disorders in children and adolescents are caused mostly by biology and environment. Examples of biological causes are genetics, chemical imbalances in the body, or damage to the central nervous system, such as a head injury. Many environmental factors also put young people at risk for developing mental health disorders. Examples include:

Exposure to environmental toxins, such as high levels of lead; exposure to violence, such as witnessing or being the victim of physical or sexual abuse, drive-by shootings, muggings, or other disasters; stress related to chronic poverty, discrimination, or other serious hardships; and the loss of important people through death, divorce, or broken relationships.

The teen years can be tough for both parent and child. Adolescents are under stress to be liked, do well in school, get along with their family and make important life decisions. Most of these pressures are unavoidable and worrying about them is natural. But if your teen is feeling extremely sad, hopeless or worthless, these could be warning signs of a mental health problem. If you are a parent or other caregiver of a teenager, pay attention if your teen:

Is troubled by feeling:

- √ Very angry most of the time, cries a lot or overreacts to things;
- √ Worthless or guilty a lot;
- √ Anxious or worried a lot more than other young people;
- √ Grief for a long time after a loss or death;
- √ Extremely fearful-has unexplained fears or more fears than most kids;
- √ Constantly concerned about physical problems or appearance;
- √ Frightened that his/her mind is controlled or is out of control.

Experiences big changes, for example:

- √ Does much worse in school;
- √ Loses interest in things usually enjoyed;
- √ Has unexplained changes in sleeping or eating habits;
- √ Avoids friends or family and wants to be alone all the time;
- √ Daydreams too much and can't get things done;
- √ Feels life is too hard to handle or talks about suicide;
- √ Hears voices that cannot be explained.

Is limited by:

- √ Poor concentration, can't make decisions;
- √ Inability to sit still or focus attention;
- √ Worry about being harmed, hurting others, or about doing something "bad";
- √ The need to wash, clean things, or perform certain routines dozens of times a day;
- √ Thoughts that race almost too fast to follow;
- √ Persistent nightmares.

Behaves in ways that cause problems, for example:

- √ Uses alcohol or other drugs;
- √ Eats large amounts of food and then forces vomiting, abuses laxatives, or takes enemas to avoid weight gain;
- √ Continues to diet or exercise obsessively although bone-thin;
- √ Often hurts other people, destroys property, or breaks the law;
- √ Does things that can be life threatening.

To find help, discuss your concerns with your teen's teacher, school counselor or others such as a family doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, religious counselor or nurse. It is critical that people who are not satisfied with the mental health care they receive discuss their concerns with providers, ask for information, and seek help from other sources. **See the enclosed Mental Health Resources list for web addresses which provide further information about mental health.**



Be sure to discuss any issues of concern with your doctor during your yearly check-up.

HEALTH INFORMATION DISCUSSED DURING A TEEN CHECK-UP

General Areas:

- ⇒ Relationships with Parents
- ⇒ Need for physical activity
- ⇒ Limit TV & video games
- ⇒ Injury & violence prevention
- ⇒ Sleep & nutrition needs
- ⇒ School Issues
- ⇒ Sexuality (Answer any questions your teen has)

High Risk Behaviors:

- ⇒ Drug & alcohol issues
- ⇒ Cigarettes & smokeless tobacco
- ⇒ Dealing with peer pressure
- ⇒ Driving safety

Mental Health:

- ⇒ Dealing with stress
- ⇒ Identifying signs of depression
- ⇒ How to feel good about themselves

MAKING APPOINTMENTS

- * You may make an appointment directly with your doctor, dentist, a clinic, or a community health center.
- * It is best to establish a "medical home" in your community - a place where the doctors/providers know your teen's history.
- * It is important for you to keep your appointment. Your doctor and dentist reserve time especially for you. If you cannot keep your appointment, call your doctor and/or dentist and tell them as soon as possible.
- * When you go for your appointment, take your teen's EqualityCare card, their immunization record, and a list of questions you or your teen have.

*PARENT/TEEN RELATIONSHIPS ARE VITAL TO

Relationships: Teens who have warm, involved, and satisfying relationships with their parents are more likely to do well in school, be academically motivated, have better social skills, and have lower rates of risky sexual behavior than their peers.

Monitoring/Awareness: Parents who know about their children's activities, friends, and behaviors, and monitor them in age-appropriate ways, have teens with lower rates of risky physical and sexual behaviors, as well as lower rates of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use than their peers.

Modeling: Teens whose parents demonstrate positive behaviors are more likely to engage in those behaviors themselves.

Approach to Parenting: Research shows that teens whose parents are supportive and caring, but who also consistently monitor and enforce family rules, are more likely to be motivated and successful in school, as well as mentally and physically healthy. In contrast, teens whose parents are overly strict and do not give them any independence are more likely to engage in risky behaviors.

*Child Trends Research Brief—Publication #2002-57

WHO SHOULD I CALL?



- If you have any questions on your EqualityCare benefits, please contact ACS at 1-800-251-1269.
- For Children's Special Health (CSH) eligibility, call your local Public Health Nursing (PHN) office. For information on services and limitations for the CSH programs, call (307) 777-7941, or 1-800-438-5795.
- To apply for assistance in purchasing nutritional food items (i.e. formula, juice, milk, eggs, etc.) through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, contact your local WIC office.
- * **For children enrolled in Kid Care CHIP:**
 - If you have any questions on your Kid Care CHIP health or vision benefits, please contact Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming at 1-800-209-9720.
 - If you have any questions on your Kid Care CHIP dental benefits, please contact Delta Dental at 1-800-735-3379.

* Kid Care CHIP is not an EqualityCare Program



YOUR HEALTH CHECK NEWSLETTER

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Our mission is to promote, protect and enhance the health of all Wyoming citizens.

The Wyoming Department of Health is the primary State agency for providing health and human services. It administers programs maintaining the health and safety of all citizens of Wyoming.

Mission

We envision a Wyoming in which all citizens are able to achieve their maximum health potential; a Wyoming in which early intervention, wellness, health promotion, and health maintenance programs are the primary approach for solving health problems; a Wyoming in which all citizens have regular access to basic health care; a Wyoming in which at-risk citizens receive culturally appropriate and sensitive services; a Wyoming in which we and future generations are healthy, vital, and productive so as to seize the opportunity to live our individual dreams and enjoy the benefits of our bountiful resources and natural beauty.