

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

Check in on your child's mental health

In today's world, it can be just as hard to be a kid as it is to be the parent of one.

What's certain, though, is the importance of checking in regularly with your child or teen to see how they're doing in all aspects of their life, including mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically.

In 2023, 50% of young adults (ages 18 – 24) reported symptoms of anxiety or depression, while more than 15% of children ages 12 to 17 reported suffering from at least one major depressive episode in the past year.¹

So, while it's common for young people to go through behavioral or emotional challenges as they age, often these issues resolve with time. If not, there might be something deeper going on that requires professional help.

Here are some warning signs to look for if you think your child is struggling with their mental health:

- Persistent sadness, difficulty concentrating

- Decline in school performance and interest
- Changes to sleeping or eating patterns
- Mood episodes that last for days or weeks
- Self-harm or talk of suicide
- Frequent headaches and stomachaches

Ways to stay supportive of your child.

By being candid about mental health from a young age, adults can teach children to feel more comfortable asking for help.

- Be there to listen and make sure they feel safe and supported with their feelings
- Take an active interest in their lives, interests, hobbies, etc.
- Ask open-ended check-in questions, like:
 - How are you feeling?
 - Tell me about your day.
 - What was the best part of the past week for you?
 - What was the hardest part of the past week for you?
 - How can I support you better?



[Join us Thursday, May 16](#) for a **webinar on youth mental health**. For both young people and adults, taking care of your mental health is just as important as taking care of your physical health. Learn more from Florida Blue's very own Dr. Kim Sundling, behavioral health clinical pharmacist, and Debbie Del Rosario, LCSW, senior director of behavioral health clinical programs, as they discuss what we can do to support youth mental health and create a world where young people can thrive.

This free webinar is open to everybody in the community, so share with others you feel may benefit.

[Find out more](#) about factors, signs, and resources for youth mental health.

¹Resource: [kff.org](https://www.kff.org) (Kaiser Family Foundation)

Blood pressure and pregnancy

Did you know that blood pressure affects pregnancy? Preeclampsia, a dangerous blood pressure condition, can begin after 20 weeks of pregnancy and after childbirth. Your blood pressure rises, affecting your kidneys and liver, so they don't work normally. To prevent serious complications, it's important to know the symptoms, see your doctor regularly, and take preventive steps.

Let your doctor know if you have these symptoms:

- A severe headache

- Excessive weight gain, such as 2 pounds in a week
- Unusual swelling of the hands, feet, or face
- Changes in vision, such as blurriness or seeing spots
- Pain in the upper belly

Take preventive steps:

- Go to your prenatal visits which include a blood pressure check
- Gain a healthy amount of weight
- Exercise regularly, if approved by your doctor



- Limit stress and find time to relax
- Avoid smoking

Early detection and medical care will help you and your baby stay healthy. Florida Blue also offers pregnant members a prenatal education program, Healthy Addition®. Simply email healthyaddition@floridablue.com or call 1-800-955-7635, option 6.

Resources: [The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#); [March of Dimes](#)

Kale Salad with Quinoa & Chicken (Serves 2)

Ingredients:

- 4 cups chopped kale
- 1 ½ cups shredded cooked chicken
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- ¼ cup slices jarred roasted red peppers
- ¼ cup Greek salad dressing (see Tip)
- 1 ounce crumbled feta cheese

Directions:

Place kale, chicken, quinoa and roasted peppers in a large bowl. Add dressing and toss to coat. Top with feta, if desired.

Tip:

Look for a store-bought salad dressing that's low in sodium and added sugar.



Recipe courtesy of [Eatingwell.com](#); for nutritional information click [here](#).

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