

Take a Day Time Break to Support Your Teen's Mental Wellness



DEAR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS.

When a child has a physical illness, there are usually signs, and we know what to do. But mental health concerns can be more challenging to detect. Sometimes warning signs can even be mistaken for typical changes teens experience. Young people don't wear their thoughts on their sleeves, so we have to check-in and have conversations to understand how they are feeling.

The On Our Sleeves Movement For Children's Mental Health is on a mission to give expert-created resources to all U.S. communities so everyone can understand and promote mental health for children. Working with the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired, they have created a mental wellness program called *Take a Day Time Break*. This resource focuses on normalizing emotions and building empathy. It also provides teens with some practical strategies to improve self-care, including taking day time breaks to reduce stress.

Continue the Conversation

Helping teens talk about their thoughts, feelings and experiences can provide a safe opportunity for them to work through things they are having a hard time handling or that are upsetting them. Getting teens to share may be a challenge. Build the habit of daily conversations with your teen and let them know they're supported.

- Ask them about their day and their friends.
- Share your own experiences about challenges you faced during your day or things that make you angry or stressed and how you feel about them. Ask if they ever feel the same way.
- Show your child healthy ways you manage feelings, such as deep breathing, taking a walk, etc.
- Check in with your teen if they have a big event coming up, like a test, sporting event, job interview, college application, etc. Ask them how it's going and if they need help. Remember not to trigger feelings of anxiety by asking things like, "Are you worried about the test?", instead ask open ended questions like, "How are you feeling about the test?"
- Share stories about mental health that you hear in the news and ask your teen what they think about the story.

For more conversation starters, visit OnOurSleeves.org/Conversation.

Meet The Days

The On Our Sleeves *Take a Day Time Break* mental wellness program is an ongoing mission of Christina and Ryan Day, strong advocates for On Our Sleeves, to help start conversations around children's mental health. The Day Family's commitment extends their social mission to one of the most significant issues facing children and young adults by increasing education, advocacy and fundraising. To learn more, please visit OnOurSleeves.org/take-action/champions/day-family-fund.



Take a Day Time Break

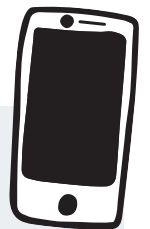
As a family, try taking day time breaks for mental wellness and to help reduce stress. These breaks might include enjoying your favorite music together, taking a walk outdoors, or turning the refrigerator door into a gratitude wall with sticky notes. Generate your own ideas together!

Additional Resources

Social Media and Kids' Mental Health:
OnOurSleeves.org/OnlineSafety

Mental Health Resources for Your Child:
OnOurSleeves.org/mental-health-resources

Videos featuring behavioral health experts:
YouTube.com/OnOurSleeves



If you or your child need immediate help due to suicidal thoughts, go to your local emergency room immediately. Or you can call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or text "START" to 741-741.

