

Healthy Teens

January 2019 Parent Newsletter



Articles

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Relaxation and Your Teen

Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall

Whose health is the fairest of them all?

Looking into your mouth can tell you a lot about your health and well-being. We're familiar with signs of tooth decay and gum disease. But did you know that your mouth can reflect concerns in other parts of your body too? A dentist can spot signs of diseases like diabetes, poor nutrition, and unhealthy habits such as using tobacco and tobacco-like products, and drinking alcohol.

Make regular visits to a dental professional part of caring for your health. Here are a few tips to help your teen keep

their mouth healthy:

- Brush twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste and floss daily.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables, and limit foods and drinks with added sugars.
- Avoid tobacco and tobacco-like products.
- Choose not to drink or limit the amount of alcohol consumed when of legal drinking age.
- Look in the mirror for any changes in their mouth.

➤ For more information about oral health and oral health services, visit www.ahs.ca/oralhealth

In Alberta, Alberta Health Care covers the cost of eye exams by a Doctor of Optometry for all children until they turn 19. Many vision and eye health conditions have no symptoms and can only be detected through an eye exam. For more information about childhood eye examinations and to find an optometrist in your area, please visit www.optometrists.ab.ca



Relaxation and Your Teen

Relaxation is a great way to reduce your teen's stress levels. When relaxed, the brain produces chemicals called endorphins, which can help make us feel good and promote positive mental health.

PMR – A Powerful Relaxation Tool

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) is designed to reduce anxiety and stress, as well as physical problems such as stomachaches and headaches. It can even help your teen sleep better. Take time to learn this technique with your teen when you're able to focus and not under stress. When you're good at it, you can use it anytime you feel like it.

The exercise focuses on different muscle groups – first, tightening your muscles and then letting them relax. Follow these step-by-step instructions:

1. Take a breath in.
2. Begin at your feet. Tighten and hold the muscles in your feet and hold your breath for 5-10 seconds. Then relax your muscles and breathe



3. Repeat with your legs.
4. Repeat with your hands.
5. Repeat with your stomach.
6. Repeat with your back.
7. Repeat with your neck.
8. Repeat with your face muscles.
9. Finish with tightening your whole body and relax and breathe slowly.
10. Repeat the steps as many times as you need to notice a difference in your muscles as they begin to relax.
11. When you feel your muscles are relaxed, lay still and breathe slowly and evenly for five minutes.

out. Take a breath in. Here are some other tips for adding relaxation into your teen's life – and yours too!

Be active. Get outside for a walk.

Get creative: Draw, dance, make or build something.

Listen to music.

Unplug: Take breaks from texting and talking on social media.

Plug in: Use apps with guided meditations.

Be mindful: It's hard to be anxious when you're focused on the present moment.