

הקשר היהודי שלך

Your Jewish Connection

Brought to you by the Lifelong Learning Committee – *Written by Linda S Trapasso*

How's Your Child's Mental Health?

This column is a bit different from most of my columns, and has no Jewish focus. However, it does focus on the mental health issues facing late adolescents (15-18 year olds) and young adults (ages 18-24). These groups have high levels of stress not seen previously in these age groups (see [Psychology Today](#)). Research shows that anxiety or depression affects nearly 1 in 5 students. But why are these disorders so prevalent? Social media and technology are factors, as well as mobile phone addiction (yes, this is real). In addition, there is a certain competition between real life and virtual life, thanks mostly to social media (see [The Conversation](#)).

As a parent, you are familiar with the emotional ups and downs many young adults experience in college and high school. Colleges are overwhelmed by the numbers of students seeking mental health services. [The Washington Post](#) reported "...students have been taking action themselves through peer-run mental-health clubs and organizations." This step appears to be working for students. If your child has an ongoing mental health condition, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offers [tips on managing the condition](#) in college, with ideas on what to do to prepare for college and after arrival.

What can parents do? First, [Parent Wellness Promotes College Student Wellness](#). It may surprise you to know that college students think about their parents often and are

impacted by their wellness. Students feel stressed out when their parents experience problems. So get on board and check out four areas where you can take action.

Second, [How Parents Can Help When Anxiety Hurts Academic Performance at College](#). This article provides questions to ask your child about anxiety and steps you can take to help them control or overcome it.

Third, [One Small Change](#) in your life can actually make all the difference in the world. Suggestions in this article are learning to say "No", showing more kindness, ditching tobacco, eating fruits and veggies, reading more, eating healthy, drinking more water, moving more and sitting less, and expressing gratitude. These are great ideas for everyone, not just students.

There are resources available to you, as parents, and to your child.

[College Wellness](#) is a resource page for promoting happiness and health in the college years.

[Grown & Flown, Parenting Never Ends](#) is a web site covering a range of issues relating to raising children ages 15-25.

[Three Essential College Wellness Guides for](#)

[Parents](#) describes three books: *The Campus Cure* by Marcia Morris, M.D.; *Your Kid's Gonna Be Okay* by Michael Delman, M.Ed.; and *Prepare to Leave the Nest* by Debby Fogelman, M.A., PsyD.

[Critical Mental Health Resources for College Students](#) from the Center for Online Education is a list of resources available online and state by state.

Instead of keeping quiet about mental health challenges, we should talk about them and share our experiences. I know if I had some of these resources on hand years ago, things would have been smoother during the college transition. Here's wishing you and yours a smooth ride!



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