



# Make waves

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COMMUNITY EDUCATION DAY



**BREAK  
THE SILENCE.**

Lindner Center  
of HOPE

UW Health

# How to parent for children's good mental health

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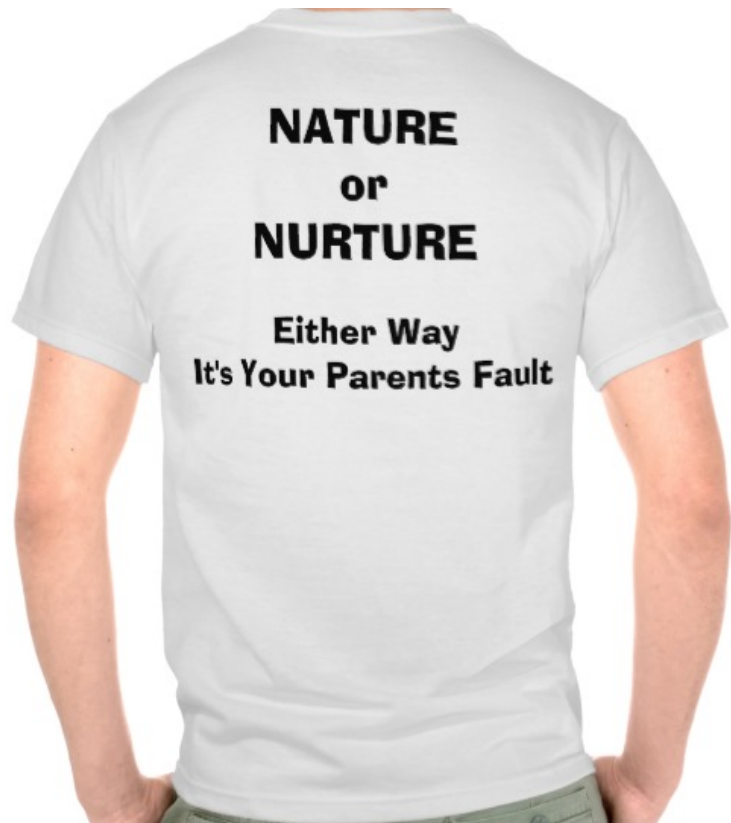


# Talk overview

1. Nature vs. Nurture
2. Parenting Styles
3. Childhood mental illness
4. Family Wellness- SAFE
5. Parenting with mental illness

discipline  
laughter  
love  
decisions  
fun  
responsibility  
advice  
parenting  
patience  
joy  
struggle  
choices  
exhaustion  
pain

# Nature vs. Nurture



- 50 years of research summarized data from 14.5 million sets of twins (2015)
- On average, about 50% of individual differences are genetic and 50% are environmental

Polderman TJC, Benyamin B, de Leeuw CA, van Bochoven A, Visscher PM, Posthuma D. Meta-Analysis of the Heritability of Human Traits based on Fifty Years of Twin Studies. *Nature Genetics*. 2015.

- **Nature**

Recognizing mental illness in children

How to get help

Overarching general ideas for **family wellness**

- **Nurture**

Parenting styles

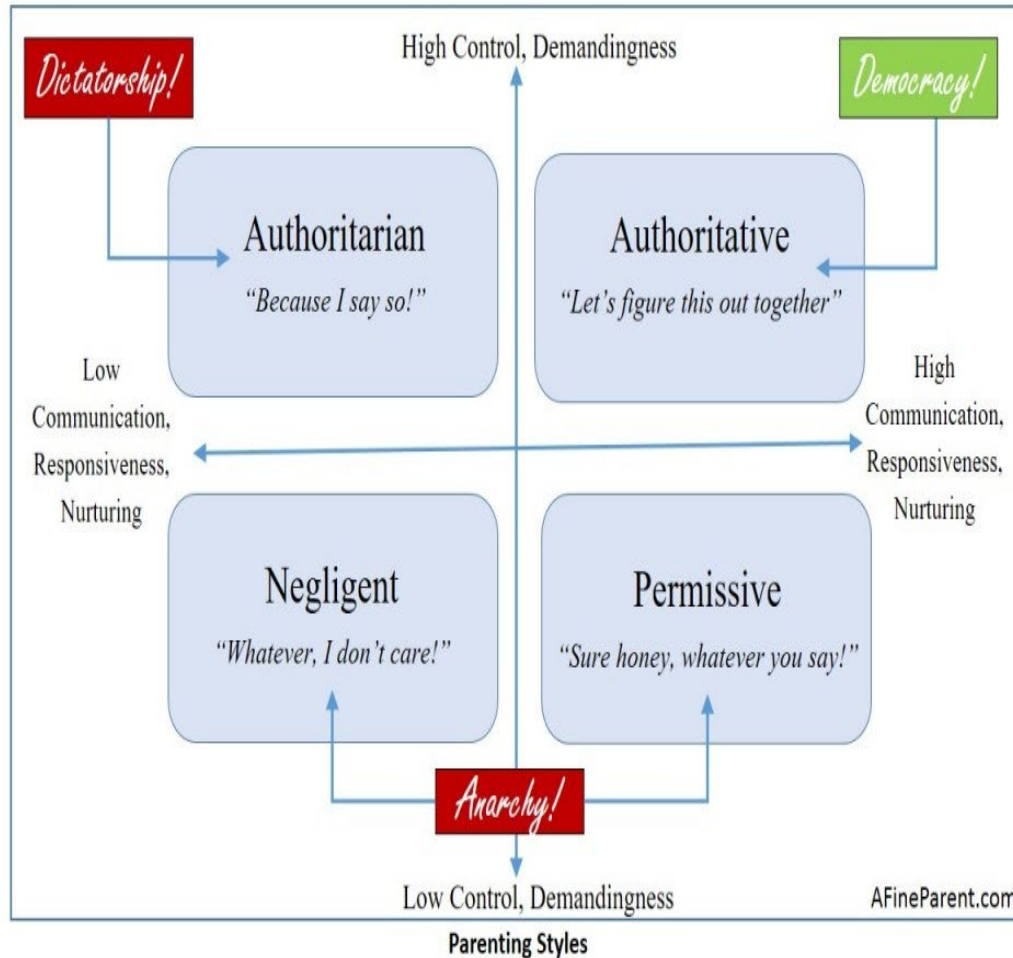


# Parenting as a verb

- Being a parent vs “to parent”
- Helicopter, snow-plough, free-range, attachment, survivalist or cotton wool?
- Laid-back Swedish approach, the tightly controlled French or the seat-of-your-pants Mediterranean?
- Elephant moms?
- Dolphin moms?
- Tiger moms?

# Parenting styles

Rebelling due to the imposed discipline leading to low social competence and low self-esteem in Western cultures



Unavailable for their children, do not use any form of discipline- worst outcomes in all categories

Encouragement, explaining the reasoning behind actions and decisions, and setting standards of conduct - high psychosocial competence, higher aspirations, greater academic success and low measures of psychological and behavioral dysfunction

Do not want to repress their children in any manner- high social competence and self-esteem, but relatively low achievement and school engagement alongside high rates of problem behaviors and drug use



# Let's take a quiz

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xz6flsxH\\_0o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xz6flsxH_0o)

**Which style is the best?**

# What can we do?

- Be mindful of different parenting styles/strategies. Avoid comparisons (Social media)
- Be flexible while checking current family dynamic
- Solicit help if it feels like you are “loosing it” more often
- Knowledge is power- check out some good books on the particular issue you think you are struggling with

# Genetics of Mental illness (Nature)

- Up to 90% - Autism
- 79-85% - Schizophrenia
- 30-40% - Depression
- 70-80% - ADHD
- 60%- Alcohol dependence
- 55-60%- Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa
- 60-70% - Obsessive compulsive disorder

Nat Rev Genet. 2008 Jul;9(7):527-40. Psychiatric genetics: progress amid controversy. Burmeister M, McInnis MG, Zöllner S.

# FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



**29.8%**

OF YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18 TO 25 REPORTED HAVING EXPERIENCED A MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, OR EMOTIONAL DISORDER IN THE PAST YEAR

**\$247  
BILLION**

SPENT ANNUALLY ON MENTAL, EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS AMONG YOUTH INCLUDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, LOST PRODUCTIVITY AND CRIME

**1 in 5**

U.S. CHILDREN AND TEENS HAVE A DIAGNOSABLE PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER

**1/2**

OF ALL LIFETIME CASES OF MENTAL ILLNESS BEGIN BY AGE 14

**1 in 4**

PARENTS FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR THEIR CHILD



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
CHILD & ADOLESCENT  
PSYCHIATRY  
WWW.AACAP.ORG

# Mental and Physical health check ups

- Regular physicals (for middle/highschoolers as well)
- Regular dental check ups (every 6 months)
- Attention to **changes** in habits/attitudes/behaviors

Moods – Sleeping habits- Eating habits- Friends/Motivation

What is a “normal” change and what should worry me?

# Er on the side of caution

- If **your gut** says something is wrong- listen to it
- **Family history of mental illness**, even if not clear/not officially diagnosed should be considered as seriously as one would consider family history of cancer, high blood pressure or heart disease
- **Persevere** in getting to the right treatment team / place/ diagnosis/ treatment modality
- Do your homework and spend the time to **educate** yourself and your child

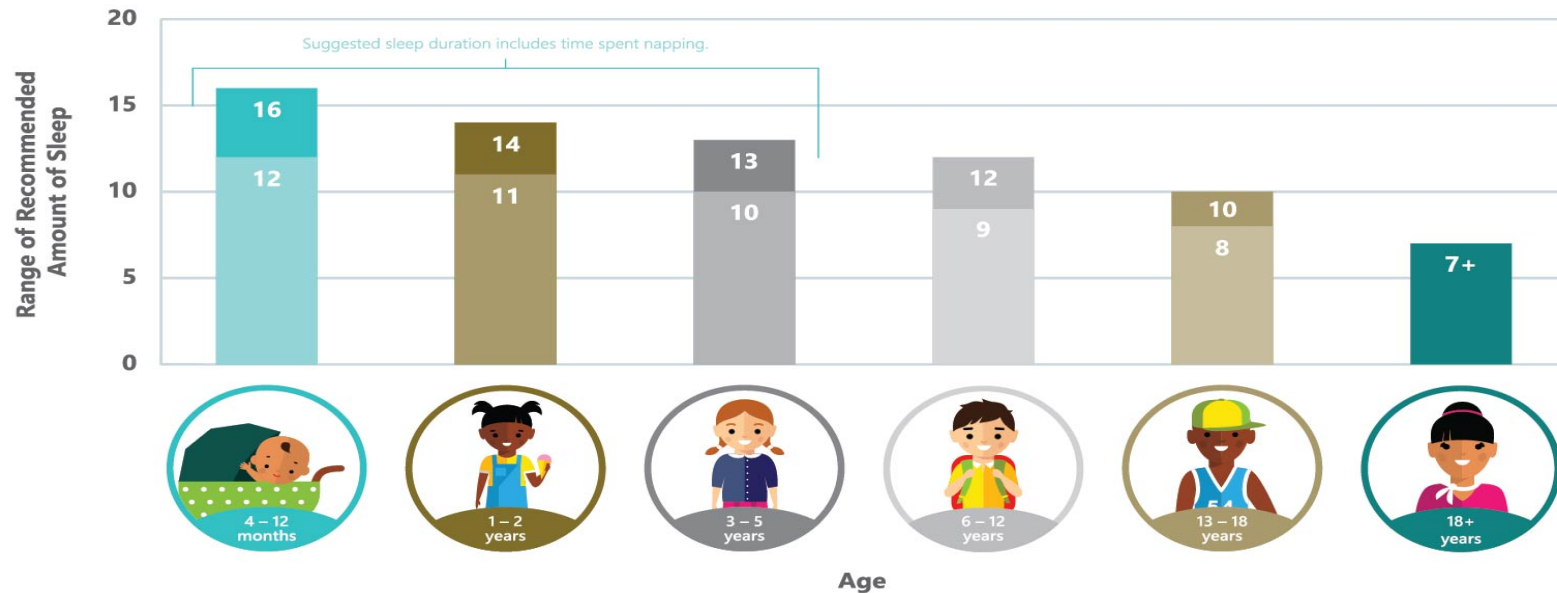
# Overarching general ideas for family wellness - SAFE

- Sleep
- Activity
- Food
- Electronics



# Healthy Sleep Duration

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that you get the following hours of sleep on a regular basis for optimal health at each stage of life.



[SleepEducation.org](https://www.sleepeducation.org)

A sleep health information resource by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine





# On importance of sleep

<b>ACUTE EFFECTS SLEEP LOSS</b>	<b>CHRONIC EFFECTS SLEEP LOSS</b>
Tired, lethargic	High blood pressure
Bags under eyes	Obesity
Loss of dexterity	Obstructive sleep apnea
Insulin insensitivity	Cardiovascular disease
Leptin insensitivity	Psychiatric disorders-depression
Increased Ghrelin secretion	Overtraining
Weight gain	Illness/Injury
	ADD
	Insomnia
	Fall asleep at in appropriate times
	Strength loss
	Muscle loss

# Sleep Hygiene

- It is a family affair
- Fixed bedtime and an awakening time through the week
- Sleep rituals, sleep diary, comfortable bedding, moderate room temperature, limited excess noise and a well ventilated room.
- No naps, no caffeine 4-6 hours before bedtime, no exercise before bed.
- No clock-watching and no electronics in the bedroom. Using a cell phone at night can increase depression and lower self-esteem, especially in teenagers.
- **90% of kids get less sleep than recommended (2015)**

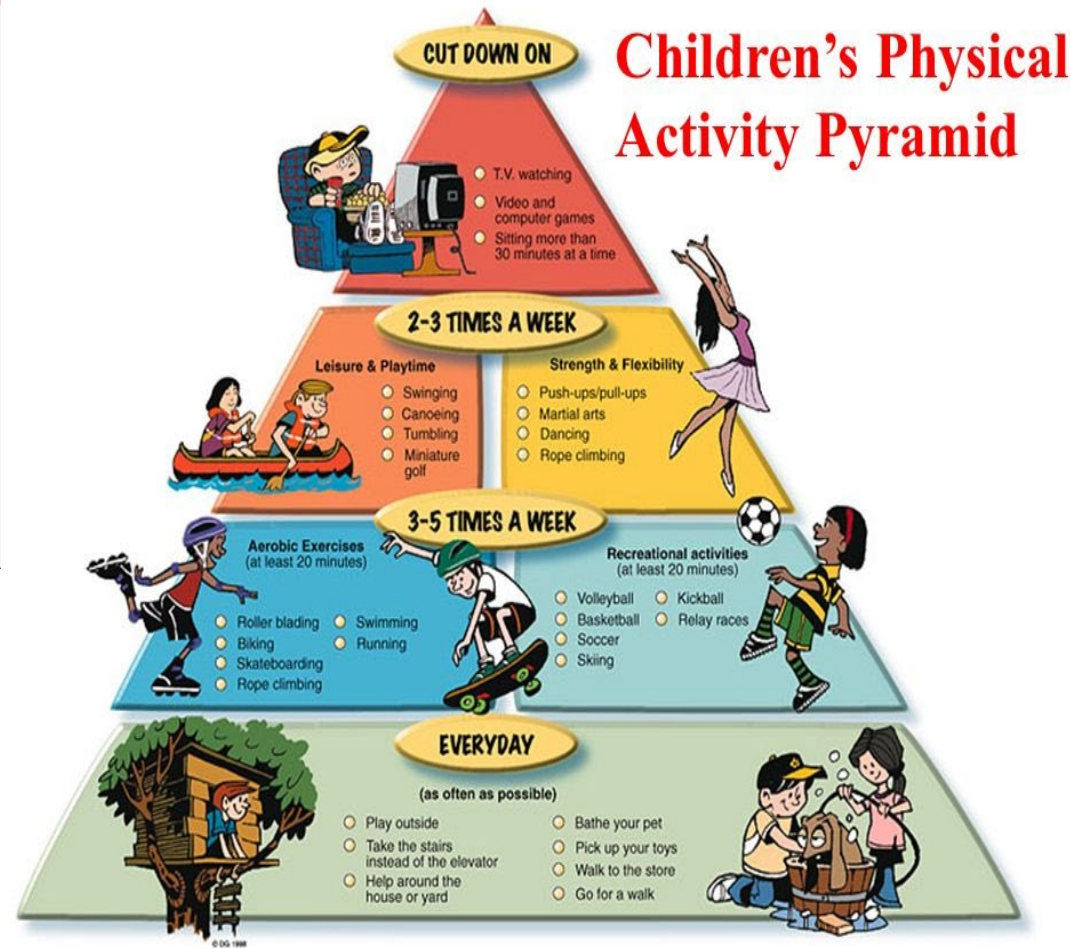
Sleep Health. 2015 May 1;1(1):15-27. Sleep in the modern family: protective family routines for child and adolescent sleep. Buxton OM<sup>1</sup>, Chang AM<sup>2</sup>, Spilsbury JC<sup>3</sup>, Bos T, Emsellem H, Knutson KL<sup>5</sup>.

# The American Heart Association Recommendations for Physical Activity in Kids

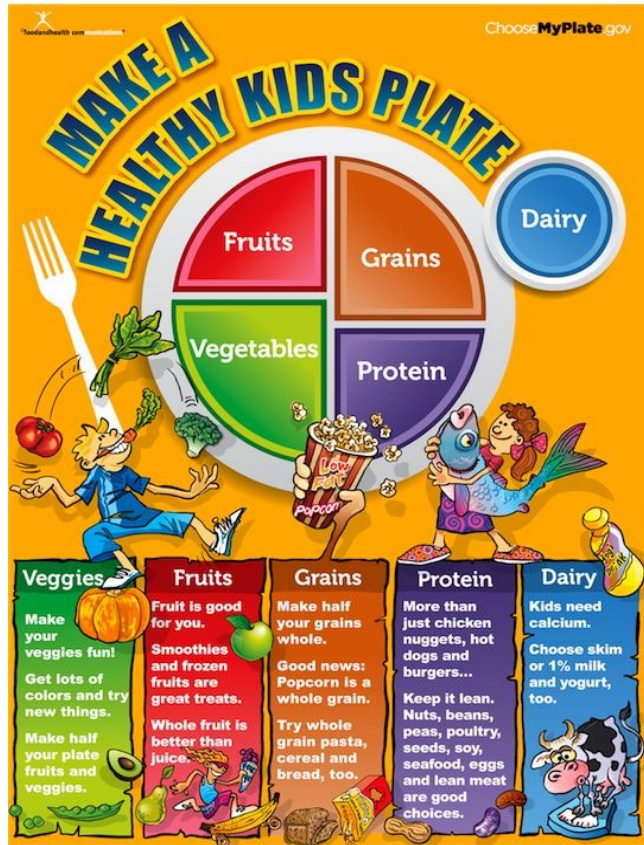
At least **60** minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic activity **Every** day



© 2014 Learn more at [heart.org/KidsActivityRecommendations](http://heart.org/KidsActivityRecommendations).

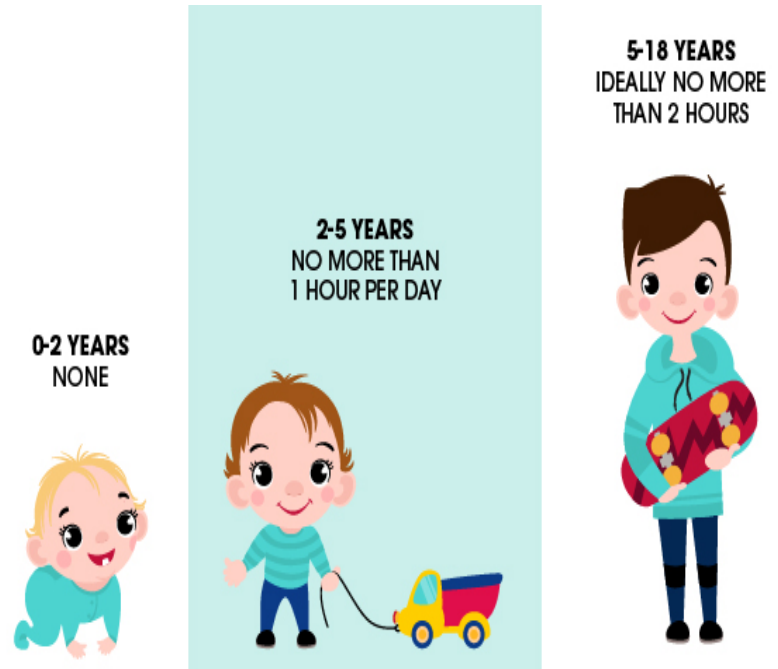


# The importance of family meals



# Screen time

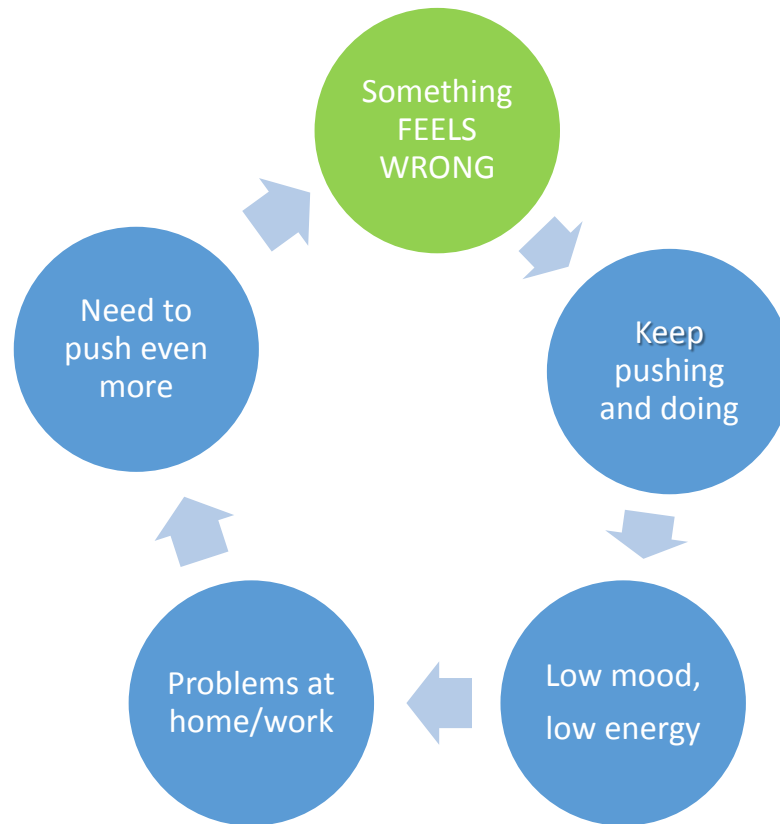
1. Sedentary activity
2. Isolation – minimum human interaction involved
3. Limited ability to develop healthy coping strategies
4. Commonly inappropriate content
5. Can compromise sleep and can increase irritability



# Parenting with mental illness

- 68% of women and 55% of men with mental illnesses in the United States are parents
- Often depression or anxiety disorder can go undiagnosed for a long time
- Stress (e.g. parenthood) aggravates mental illness
- Parenting ,especially children under 5 y.of age, is one of top 10 stressors from biological standpoint

# Vicious circle of parenting with mental illness



Irritability, mood swings, insomnia, anxiety, lack of interest/motivation, changes in appetite/weight, isolation, sadness, panic, guilt, fatigue

# Child's perspective

- Kids are scared of the unknown
- Kids often know more than we think they do
- Kids don't blame but they need to understand
- Kids need to be given age appropriate tools on how to handle mental illness in parents
- Kids will not love less because the parent is sick
- Kids catch lies quickly and lose trust
- Kids need to be reassured that parental illness is not their fault



# Unless the child is properly informed, they:

- Can think it is their fault the parent is sick
- Can blame the other parent
- Can learn how to protect the sick parent in a dysfunctional way (lie, take on more than age appropriate)
- Can develop unhealthy defense mechanisms (passive aggression, acting out, displacement)

# Look for answers / ask for help

“Something is off” can be a diagnosable illness requiring help/treatment

This is very difficult to do when one is sick.

Support of other parent/relatives. No blame and judgment (~brain tumor?)

# Take home-message

- Parenting is very hard even for a healthy person
- Family wellness is a true family affair
- Parenting with a sick brain makes is even more difficult
- Acknowledge the problem, get informed, seek help, recruit support
- Be kind to yourself!

Take good care of yourself for  
the sake  
of your kids



# Your committed action

- What will you do to strengthen your mental health?



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ru69U\\_kqGw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ru69U_kqGw)

