

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Talking to Your Child About Mental Health

A Practical Guide for Parents of Teenagers and Young Adults

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



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## Programme Overview

This programme is designed to equip parents with essential knowledge and practical strategies to effectively support their teenagers and young adults' mental well-being. We understand the unique pressures faced by Indian families and aim to foster open communication and resilience in young minds.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the developmental needs of adolescents and young adults, recognizing how these influence their emotional landscape and why this understanding is crucial for effective parenting.
- ✓ Learn effective communication techniques to discuss mental health concerns openly and constructively with your child, fostering trust and preventing alienation.
- ✓ Identify common indicators of emotional distress in young people, understanding when and how to seek appropriate support, and why early intervention is key.
- ✓ Develop strategies to manage parental anxieties surrounding your child's future and academic pressures, promoting a balanced and supportive home environment.
- ✓ Explore ways to navigate the intense academic and career pressures prevalent in India, ensuring your child's emotional safety is prioritized alongside their educational goals.

#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is ideal for parents of children aged 12–25, Parent-Teacher Associations, and those involved in school parent support programmes seeking to enhance their understanding and support of adolescent mental health.

## Programme Content

### 1. What Teenagers and Young Adults Truly Need From Parents

Adolescence and young adulthood are periods of significant change, marked by identity exploration and increasing independence. During this time, young people require validation, consistent emotional availability, and a sense of safety from their parents. Understanding these fundamental needs can transform parental interactions from potentially conflict-ridden to supportive, fostering a stronger parent-child bond. This session will explore evidence-based approaches to provide this crucial support, helping parents create a nurturing environment where their children can thrive emotionally.

 **Activity: Group discussion: Sharing experiences of what helped or hindered support during adolescence.**

### 2. Having Mental Health Conversations Without Pushing Away

Initiating conversations about mental health can be challenging, often leading to defensiveness or avoidance from young people. This section will provide practical, non-confrontational communication strategies tailored for Indian family dynamics. We will explore active listening techniques, empathetic responses, and how to create safe spaces for dialogue. Learning these skills is vital for building trust and ensuring your child feels comfortable sharing their struggles, preventing escalation of issues and promoting early help-seeking behaviours.

 **Activity: Role-playing: Practicing empathetic listening and non-judgmental responses.**

### 3. Recognising Warning Signs and Knowing When to Seek Professional Help

It is essential for parents to be aware of the subtle and overt signs that their child may be experiencing significant emotional difficulties. This session will cover common indicators of distress relevant to the Indian context, such as changes in behaviour, academic performance, or social interactions. Understanding these signals allows for timely intervention, which is critical for a child's well-being. We will discuss when these signs warrant professional guidance and how to approach seeking such support effectively.

 **Activity: Case study analysis: Identifying potential warning signs in anonymized scenarios.**

#### 4. Managing Your Own Anxiety About Your Child's Future

The pressures of academic achievement and future career prospects in India can evoke significant anxiety in parents. This session focuses on self-care strategies and mindset shifts to help parents manage their own worries without projecting them onto their children. By understanding and regulating parental anxiety, you can create a more supportive and less pressured environment for your child. This, in turn, helps foster their resilience and independent decision-making skills, crucial for their long-term well-being.

 **Activity: Mindfulness exercise: Practicing a short guided relaxation technique.**

#### 5. Balancing Academic Pressure with Emotional Safety

The intense focus on board exams, college admissions, and career pathways in India can often overshadow a child's emotional health. This session will explore practical ways parents can help their children navigate these pressures while prioritizing their emotional well-being. We will discuss setting realistic expectations, fostering a growth mindset, and ensuring children have outlets for stress relief. Prioritizing emotional safety alongside academic pursuits is fundamental for building resilient individuals ready to face life's challenges.

 **Activity: Brainstorming: Developing family strategies for managing academic stress.**

#### 6. Building Resilience and Promoting Positive Mental Habits

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity, a skill that can be nurtured in young people. This session will introduce parents to techniques for fostering resilience, such as promoting problem-solving skills, encouraging healthy coping mechanisms, and celebrating effort over just outcomes. By instilling positive mental habits early on, parents empower their children to navigate future challenges with greater confidence and emotional strength, contributing to their lifelong well-being.

 **Activity: Action planning: Creating a personal family plan for building resilience.**

## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Share programme materials and key takeaways with parents via school newsletters.	HR/School Administration	Week 1	Ensure materials are translated into accessible language if necessary for diverse parent groups.
Organize a follow-up Q&A session with parents to address specific concerns.	School Counselor/ Psychologist	Month 1	Prepare a list of frequently asked questions and resources for further support.
Integrate discussions on mental well-being into parent-teacher meetings.	Teachers/Tutors	Week 2	Provide teachers with brief talking points on recognizing signs of distress.
Establish a confidential resource list for parents seeking professional mental health support for their children.	School Administration	Month 1	Include details of local and national helplines and reputable counselling centres.
Encourage parents to practice one new communication technique learned in the programme weekly.	HR/School Administration	Month 2	Send weekly reminders or tips via email to reinforce learning.
Facilitate a workshop for students on stress management and resilience building.	School Counselor/ External Facilitator	Quarter 1	Align student workshop content with parental guidance for consistency.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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**Disclaimer:** This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma – Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance – organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential – prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: [manu@manas365.com](mailto:manu@manas365.com) | +91 99818 13224