



# A Guide to Youth Mental Health



**Central Health Education Bureau**

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# Introduction to Mental Health

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** defines **Mental Health** as the state of well-being where every individual realizes their own potential, manages the normal stresses of life, works productively and fruitfully, and can contribute to their community.

## Mental Health includes two main points. These are as follows:

- **Mental health is a basic human right** - It is crucial to consider overall health, including physical, mental, and emotional well-being, as the main contributors to a healthy individual.
- **Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders** - Mental health is 'more than the absence of mental disorders'; it includes proactively looking after one's well-being to maintain ongoing happiness and a state of wellness.

## Mental Health's Impact on Physical Health:

The relationship between physical and mental health is intertwined, with mental well-being impacting physical health in various ways, as given below:

- **Chronic stress and immune responses** can contribute to **depression and anxiety**. **Prolonged periods of stress** can further lead to other physical symptoms like persistent fatigue, restlessness, increase in heartbeat etc.
- Mental health conditions often coexist with **chronic diseases**, **affect sleep quality**, and can alter **digestive function**.
- Untreated mental health issues increase existing health problems and **weaken the immune system**.



# Understanding Mental Health Concerns

Mental Disorder is characterized by a clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional regulation, or behaviour.

## Types of Mental Disorders

### Neurodevelopmental Disorders

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Specific Learning Disorder

### Anxiety Disorders

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Panic Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

### Mood Disorders

- Depressive Disorders
- Bipolar Disorders

### Psychotic Disorders

- Schizophrenia
- Delusional Disorder

### Eating Disorders

- Anorexia Nervosa
- Bulimia Nervosa
- Binge Eating Disorder

### Personality Disorders

- Paranoid Personality Disorder
- Antisocial Personality Disorder
- Narcissistic Personality Disorder

### Substance Related & Addictive Disorders

- Alcohol-Related Disorders
- Caffeine-Related Disorders
- Tobacco-Related Disorders

### Sleep-Wake Disorders

- Insomnia Disorder
- Breathing-Related Sleep Disorders

Source:  
World Health Organization  
DSM-V TR: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

## Causes of Mental Health Disorders

**Youth** is a crucial period for developing social and emotional habits important for mental well-being. Multiple factors affect mental health. The more risk factors Youths are exposed to, the greater the potential impact on their mental health.

- Mental Health issues in youth are shaped by **genetics, social factors,** and common stressors such as **academic pressure, social challenges, and family conflicts.** It is a period of transition characterized by various challenges.
- Youth stress can stem from **adversity, peer pressure, identity exploration,** and the **impact of media and gender norms** on their aspirations and realities.



Source: WHO: World Health Organization

## Mental Health Stigma

- Young individuals often lack understanding and hold negative attitudes towards mental health, leading to stigma.
- They struggle to recognize mental health issues and may have misconceptions about severe disorders.
- Some youth face higher mental health risks due to living conditions, stigma, and limited access to support services.

## Reducing Stigma of Mental Health

- Talk openly
- Educate yourself and others
- Be Empathetic
- Promote equality between physical and mental health
- Show compassion
- Be honest about treatment
- Promote Self-care



## Warning Signs of Suicide

With mental health concerns widespread amongst youth, suicide rates have increased drastically over time. It's important to understand the warning signs of suicide to work on its prevention. It is not always possible to know when someone is thinking about suicide but some of the possible warning signs include:

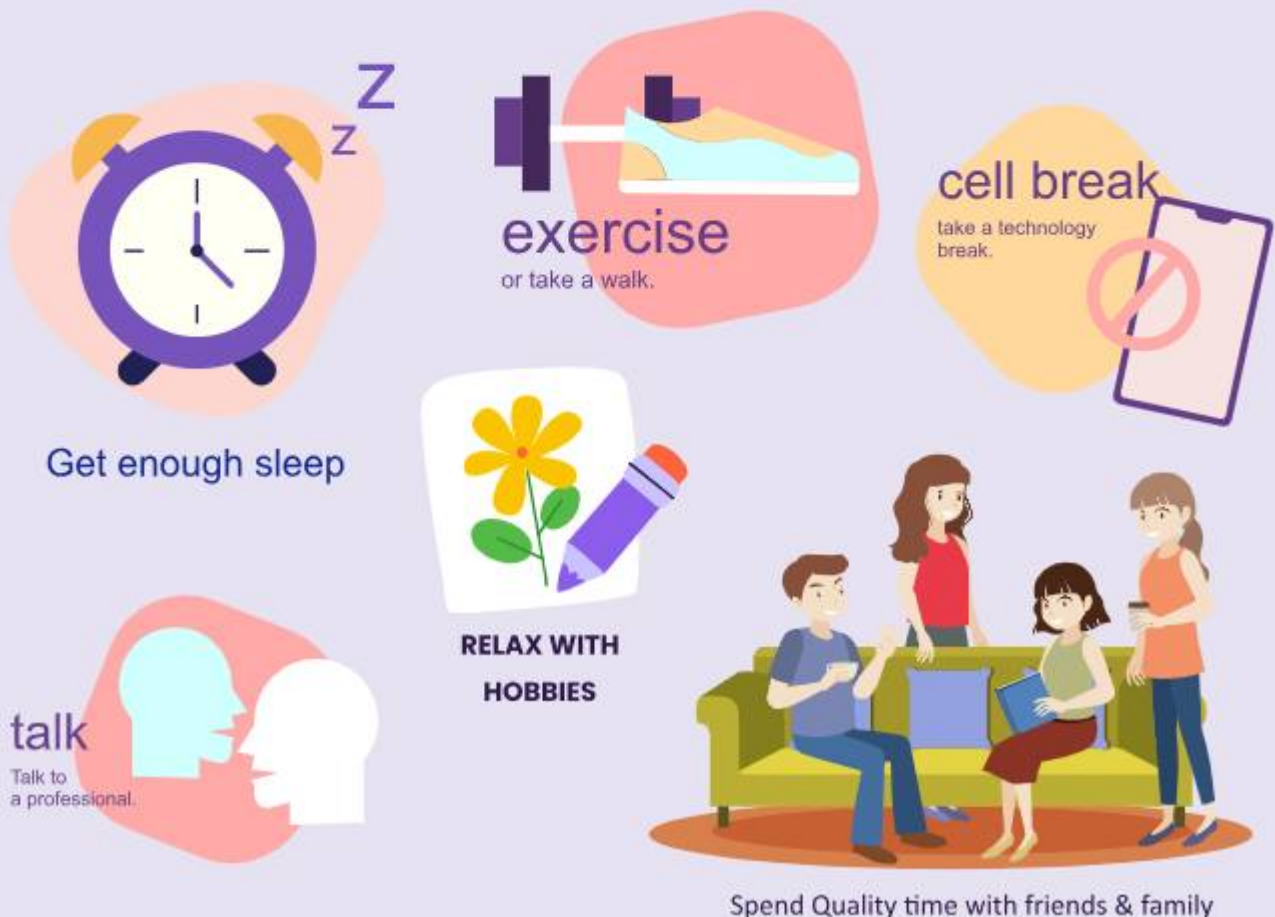
- **Talk or Writing about Death:** Expressing thoughts of death or feeling trapped.
- **Hopelessness & Withdrawal:** Isolating and feeling hopeless.
- **Increased Substance Use:** Escalated drug/alcohol consumption.
- **Giving Away Possessions:** Disposing of belongings.
- **Risky Behaviour:** Engaging in dangerous actions.
- **Delusions/Hallucinations:** False beliefs or sensory experiences.
- **Self-Harm:** Frequent self-destructive actions.
- **Mood Changes:** Sudden, significant mood shifts.

## Steps to consider when helping a person who is feeling suicidal

- Listen and encourage them to talk and show that you are taking their concerns seriously.
- Tell or show the person that you care.
- Acknowledge their fears, despair or sadness.
- Provide reassurance, but do not dismiss the problem.
- Ask them if they have ever had self-harm thoughts in the past
- Ensure they do not have access to lethal weapons or medications.
- Stay with the person if they are at high risk of suicide.
- Immediately tell someone else, preferably an adult.
- Seek help from professionals, and offer to provide support.
- Provide contact numbers and assist them to call if necessary.

# Proactive Steps to Prioritize and Improve your Mental Health

- Talking to someone about your problems and feelings (i.e., a trusted adult or friend)
- Being actively involved in a youth group
- Spend quality time with friends and family.
- Set achievable goals, even for seemingly impossible tasks.
- Maintain a balanced diet and engage in regular exercise.
- Pursue hobbies that bring joy and fulfillment.
- Limit screen time to preserve mental and physical health.
- Ensure to get enough sleep.
- Keep a journal to reflect on thoughts and emotions.
- Learn to assertively say "no" when necessary.
- Seek professional help when facing challenges that require expert guidance.





## Coping Strategies and Stress Busters for Exams

### The 5 "A's" for Controlling the Exam Stress

- **Acknowledge the stress and strain because everyone faces it.** Recognize that stress is a common part of life, especially during exams. Accept its presence rather than trying to avoid or deny it.
- **Appreciating what causes your stress:** Understand the specific reasons behind your stress. Identify the root causes, so you can address them directly instead of blaming yourself.
- **Alleviating:** Utilize stress-reduction techniques. Find calming activities or visuals to escape from stressors. Practice muscle relaxation techniques to ease tension, especially before sleep.
- **Altering:** Embrace long-term stress management practices. Develop healthy habits like regular exercise and proper sleep. Consistently apply stress reduction strategies for lasting benefits.
- **Avoiding:** Make conscious efforts to steer clear of stress-inducing habits and burnout. Avoid activities like smoking and prioritize self-care, including maintaining a balanced diet and regular exercise.



# Mental Health Helpline Numbers in India



## Tele MANAS National Tele Mental Health Programme of India

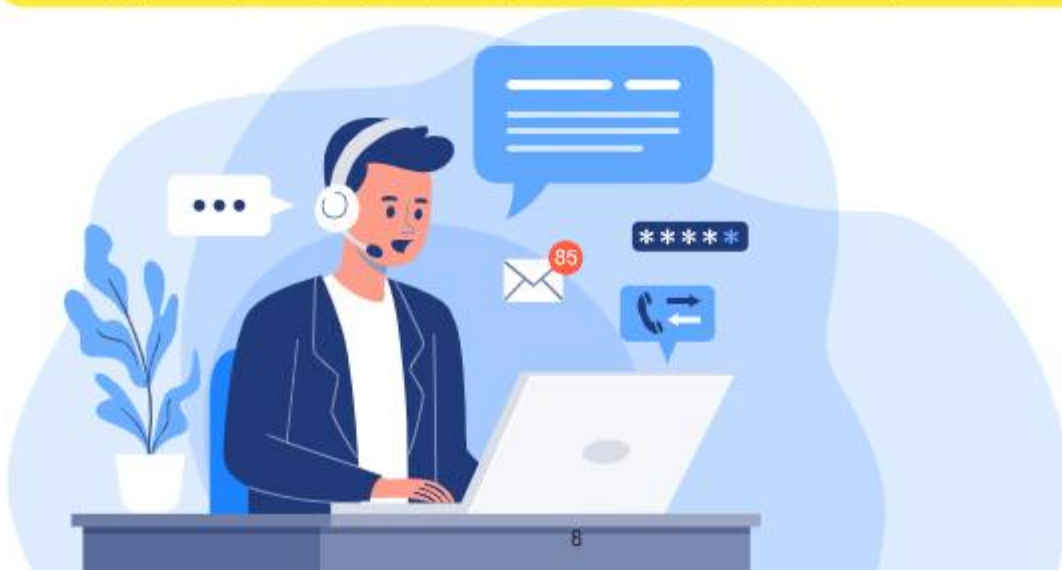
**CALL @ 14416**

- It offers free Tele Mental Health services nationwide, with a focus on remote and underserved areas.
- It includes 38 Tele Mental health centers in 27 States and UTs, offering services in over 20 languages.
- A toll-free number, 24/7 helpline lets callers choose their preferred language for assistance.
- Calls are directed to Tele-MANAS cells in respective states and union territories.
- Referral services connect individuals to other mental health establishments when needed.

## KIRAN Helpline Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

**CALL @ 1800-599-0019**

- It supports those dealing with anxiety, stress, depression, or suicidal thoughts.
- Emergency Available 24/7 via the Ministry of Social Justice.
- The helpline covers 13 languages: Hindi, Assamese, Tamil, Marathi, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, Gujarati, Punjabi, Kannada, Bengali, Urdu, and English.





## एक कदम - स्वास्थ्य संवर्धन की ओर

One Step Towards **Health Promotion**

**Central Health Education Bureau (CHEB)** an apex body for Health Promotion and Health Education, was set up in 1956 as a part of Directorate General of Health Services (Dte.GHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW)

### Mandate of CHEB



### Divisions and Objectives

#### Health Promotion and Education Division

- Render technical help in Health Promotion and Health Education.
- Collaborating with National & International agencies for Health Promotion and Health Education.

#### Training, Research & Evaluation Division

- To train health/allied professionals in the field of Health Promotion and Health Education.

#### Media and Editorial division

- Awareness generation / develop & disseminate Health Education, IEC material for various programs of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

#### School Health Education division

- Help schools and teacher training institutes for Health Education of the school population.



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