



Raising Mentally Healthy Children This School Year

Message from Milly

Greetings to all,

This time of year, I'd usually compose a newsletter on how to keep children's immune systems strong during the school year (and I will do one later this year!). However, I've been very concerned about what I've been hearing in the news, and from clients, about the rise in mental health issues in kids and teens.

Despite what some experts may want us to believe, this is not and *should not* be accepted as the "new normal". Childhood should be a sacred time for joy, exploration, discovery, some hard knocks, and wonder. Not a time for depression, anxiety, hopelessness, adult-size worries, and emotional struggles.

I want to be clear. The pandemic may have set this off for a large portion of the population, but unexplained mental health issues in children and youth has been a growing problem for decades.

When I say "unexplained" I'm referring to issues not related to obvious cases of trauma or abuse. Where the cause is a mystery.

What's also interesting (and timely), is new evidence is circulating that [depression is not caused by a chemical imbalance.](#)

What's *really* interesting, is pioneering holistic psychologists like Dr. Kelly Brogan (New York Times best-selling author of "[A Mind Of Your Own](#)") and others have been



aware of this for decades. And they were heavily scrutinized and censored for sharing this now widely-accepted information.

So, what is going on? Why are some children more susceptible to this than others? And what can we do to help safeguard them against mental health issues now and in the future?

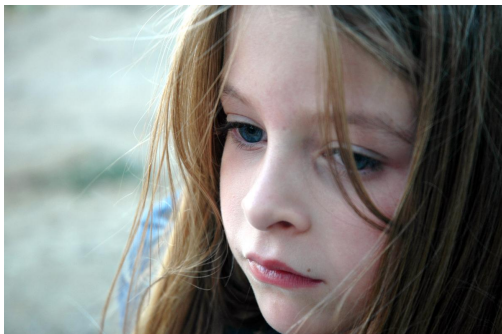
Firstly, we must remember that the body and the mind are not disconnected. Therefore, a healthy body will set the stage for better mental and emotional health... and vice versa.

This is a massive topic that cannot be tackled in one newsletter. However, let's start by exploring some basics on how to utilize nutrition, homeopathy, and lifestyle changes to protect our kiddos.

Blessings to all,

-Milly

P.S. As you likely know, I am not a psychologist or a parent (although I am a very proud and involved Aunt!). So, the advice I'm offering is from a holistic health perspective based on years of working with children and their families, and partnering with a local special education center.



Tip # 1: Keep An Eye On These Key Nutrients And Additives

Few people are aware of how nutrient deficiencies and specific food additives affect children's (and adult's) mental and emotional well-being.

Here's a short-list of common nutrients associated with mental and emotional health issues:

- **B-vitamins**, especially vitamin B12, B6, and folate. These are all involved in neurotransmitter production, gut health (the second brain), and various other bodily functions. Deficiencies or sub-optimal levels have been associated with anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, insomnia, mood disorders, and a host of other issues.^[1] B12 deficiency is especially common these days (even in meat eaters), and can be exacerbated by

genetic mutations, diet, poor gut health, and birth control pills.[ii]

- If a genetic mutation is suspected, methylated B-vitamins are essential for proper absorption.
- **Magnesium** deficiency is also common. This is mostly due to a lack of magnesium-rich foods in the standard American diet. Deficiency or insufficiency is linked to agitation, apathy, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, hormonal imbalance, PMS symptoms, and others. [iii], [iv]
 - Magnesium glycinate is the best supplemental source, and increasing leafy greens, nuts, seeds, avocado, gluten-free whole grains (for those who tolerate grains), and legumes in the diet can also be helpful.
- **Vitamin D**, or more specifically Calcitriol---the active vitamin D hormone, is critical to proper nervous system function and the production of hormones and neurotransmitters. Sub-optimal levels been associated with a variety of mental health disorders including depression, sleep disorders (which can cause, contribute to or exacerbate mental health issues), mood disorders, anxiety, and autism. [v], [vi]
 - Regular sunshine exposure is the best source of Vitamin D (and mood-boosting natural light). For supplementation, look for a D3/K2 supplement to maximize absorption and proper transport.
- **Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs)** are sorely lacking in the modern diet. This is due to an absence of EFAs in the diet *and* an excess of pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids. EFAs are critical to hormone and neurotransmitter function and play a role in the assimilation and absorption of B-vitamins. Lack of EFAs has been linked to several mental health issues including: depression, anxiety, and neurodevelopmental disorders including ADD, ADHD, and autism.[vii], [viii], [ix]
 - There are a variety of EFA supplements available. I like either plant-based

supplements or fish oil supplements tested free of mercury and other contaminants. Foods like wild-caught Alaskan salmon, sardines, mackerel, pastured egg yolks, walnuts, chia, hemp, and flaxseeds, and grass-fed beef are good food sources.

I have barely scratched the surface of how nutrients impact our mental and emotional health.

However, I hope this illustrates the need for nutrient-dense foods and high-quality supplements for optimal childhood health and development.

Insofar as food additives are concerned, please see our [June 2022 newsletter: How To Avoid Fake Natural Foods](#), which explains the impacts of excitotoxins (especially MSG and glutamate-producing products) on brain health.

Children's developing brains are especially vulnerable to these insidious food additives. So it's important that parents are aware and vigilant.

References:

- [i] <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/expert-answers/vitamin-b12-and-depression/faq-20058077>
- [ii] <https://www.townsendletter.com/article/451-2-oral-contraceptives-deplete-nutrients/>
- [iii] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27910808/>
- [iv] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23321048/>
- [v] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20800506/>
- [vi] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2908269/>
- [vii] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2248201/>
- [viii] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16650900/>
- [ix] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16777670/>

handy for times of stress, change, or sorrow

As much as we'd love to protect our children from all sorrow, it is important they have the tools to deal with life's stressful circumstances.

Homeopathy can be a wonderful tool to complement other healthy coping skills like talking it out, mindfulness, journaling, prayer, etc.

This is where homeopathic flower essences (aka: the Bach Flower Essences) shine!

For convenience, I love recommending Energetix' Fields of Flowers and Calm 5.

The Fields of Flowers contains 37 of the original flower essences in one bottle.

The Calm 5 is specific for acute events such as receiving bad news, having an emotional outburst, a traumatic event, etc.

If you prefer to use single flower essences, the following are especially helpful during school:

- New school or other life changes: **Walnut**
- Excess day dreaming/lack of interest in learning: **Clematis**
- Unexplained sadness: **Mustard**
- Shyness/separation anxiety: **Minimulus**
- Impatience: **Impatiens**
- Hopelessly bored teenagers: **Olive**
- Over-achievers: **Rock water**
- Discouragement/test anxiety/fear of failure with schoolwork: **Gentian**
- Fear of the unknown: **Aspen**
- Being bullied/overly submissive: **Centaury**
- Self-esteem issues: **Lark**
- Worries/Trouble sleeping: **White Chestnut**
- Lack of direction in life/teens: **Wild Oat**

It is worth noting that Bach Flowers have been studied and found helpful in reducing test anxiety across the board.[i]

To learn more about Dr. Bach and how Flower Essences work, check out Bachremedies.com.

To order Energetix Rescue or Fields of Flowers, email: info@quintessentialhealth.com

Reference:

[i] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11474820/>





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Give Them Space To Breathe And Be Kids

It is not easy being a parent these days. Especially with so much pressure to raise successful, sensitive, competitive, go-getters who are out to change the world (whatever that means).

However, as parents and caregivers it is our responsibility to protect our children from lifestyle/social “norms” and habits that can harm them.

Some examples include:

- **Limit screen time.** Especially social media which has been directly linked to poor mental health in kids.[i]
- **Give them time to just "be".** This means resisting the urge to over-schedule them so they have appropriate down-time for their age. The space to just day dream and play is critical to proper brain development.
- **Provide opportunities for purposeful work.** This could mean contributing to the family household by doing chores, volunteering in the community, caring for a pet, etc. Research has shown that giving children age-appropriate responsibility enhances their self-esteem and happiness.[ii]
- **Kick them outside every day.** Fresh air, sunshine, and time spent in green space has numerous benefits including enhancing focus and attention, promoting happiness, better sleep, better eye sight, better microbiome health and immunity...I could do a whole newsletter on this.[iii]
- **Connect with them.** We all know the studies on how sitting down to dinner as a family enhances a child's success and overall well-being. They need to know they are loved, valued, and cared for. So spend meaningful time with them every day, talk to them, and show them they are valued.
- **Exercise daily!** This used to be a given, but these days too many children lack enough exercise which

can wear down physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Sports, taking the dog for a walk, playing in the yard, hiking, biking, playing tag, etc. aim to have them active for at least an hour or two a day.

If you're interested in learning more about lifestyle habits that can positively influence childhood mental health, development, and behavior, I'll recommend a book a close friend and father of 3 boys, swears by: [Simplicity Parenting by Kim John Payne.](#)

References:

[i] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29093037/>

[ii]

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/inside-out-outside-in/201908/why-chores-are-important-kids>

[iii] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28882650/>

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