

COVER STORY

Mental health crisis in children: A Reality



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As the world approaches 2 full years of the COVID-19 pandemic, mental illness and the demand for psychological services are at all-time highs especially among children. While some children benefited from changes like remote learning, others are facing a mental health crisis. Prior to COVID-19, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data found 1 in 5 children had a mental disorder, but only about 20% of those children received care from a mental health provider. Whether kids are facing trauma because of child abuse or loss of a family member or everyday

anxiety about the virus and unpredictable routines, they need even more support now—all amid a more significant shortage of children's mental health resources.

The uncertainty, isolation and loss around COVID 19 are profoundly impacting children everywhere. Over the last six months, parents, teachers and childcare providers around the world have asked so much of children: to stay home, to wait, to wash their hands and wear masks and be brave in the face of crisis.

None of these pressures come without consequences- all of

them together could impact the social and emotional development, and well-being of an entire generation.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. First and foremost, we must understand that. If a child has a fever or a persistent cough, parents react — they pay attention and reach out for help. But if a child seems sad or irritable, or less interested in activities they used to enjoy, they tend to think of it as a phase, or teen angst, or something else that can be ignored. The mental health of our children is crucial. Not only does mental health affect physical health, but untreated mental health problems interfere with learning, socialization, self-esteem, and other

important aspects of child development that can have lifelong repercussions. And for some children, untreated mental health problems lead to suicide.

Our free Discord Helpline: One Tiny Step to Help



Our small step to help with the mental health and well-being of little ones is our free discord helpline. With our anonymous helpline, children from all over the world will have access to talk to a medical professional round the clock. We provide an ear to listen and a shoulder to lean on, while gently helping children to stand their ground in

the testing times of today's world. The anonymity of our helpline provides a safe space for children to truly express themselves, and seek support in times of need.

All of our volunteers are medical professionals from around the world, who have undergone training with a clinical psychiatrist in basic therapy, listening and guiding techniques. In times of acute crisis, we are equipped with global helplines to adequately help the child in need.

Who are we & what do we do?

We believe in a world where every child has access to free mental health support. We believe in a world where mental health is de-stigmatized, and every child is free to

talk about their problems without fears of repercussions. We believe in free and easy accessibility of resources and helplines for mental health, globally.

While the COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted violence, racism, poverty and humanitarian crises as significant risk factors for child and adolescent mental health, the topic remains largely untouched. Children seeking help often face stigma and struggle to access basic mental

health services and care.

We are a team of 40+ doctors from all around the world, gathered in one team with one mission – making mental health resources more accessible to all children and adolescents worldwide.

This is what The Safe Space stands for, and this is what we aim to achieve with our free 24/7 online support line.

The Safe Space: A free 24/7 online support helpline, for

children and adolescents globally.

Mental health can be a tough thing to deal with while growing up. Stress, Anxiety. Bullying, Sex, Depression, Pubertal changes, Peer Pressure, All of this, while navigating through the maze of school life seems challenging, doesn't it? That's why we the doctors here, at Team Safe Space, have started this non-profit initiative to help out young ones to take care of their mental health on a day to day basis.