



Healthy Teen Network



VOLT20 Plan Facilitator Companion

VOLT
20



Healthy Teen Network

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time when individuals begin to think about what they want for their futures—completing school, the type of work or career that best suits them, perhaps forming a long-term relationship, and generally enjoying life. During adolescence, young people are considering their futures through self-reflection, talking with people they trust, and seeking out reliable information on their own.

Volt20 Plan, previously known as Generate My Healthy Future Plan, is an activity with tools for adolescents and young adults ages 13 through 24 to uncover the health and well-being matters of greatest interest to them and then point them to resources for more information or to suggestions for action taking. The activity guides youth to consider their readiness to learn more about or make a change in 20 health topics. The youth's self-assessed readiness for change guides them to a next step, which could be further reflection, gathering more information, or setting a goal and taking action.

Volt20 Plan will help adolescents and young adults think about their lives, decide what they like about their lives right now, what they wish were different, and plan for a healthy future. The resource will help adolescents and young adults focus on what's going on with their bodies, minds, relationships, and the places they live, learn, work, and play. At the conclusion of the *Volt20 Plan* activity, adolescents and young adults will have in their possession a written “game plan” for establishing, maintaining, or sustaining a life of health and well-being.

THE ROLE OF CARING ADULTS

Adults want to, should, and do play a part in guiding adolescents and young adults to their healthy futures. In fact, youth-adult partnerships are a distinguishing feature of a “positive youth development” approach to promoting positive outcomes for young people.

Healthy Teen Network believes that adolescents and young adults will be most successful at generating their healthy futures—and in completing the *Volt20 Plan* activity—if caring adults support them in the activity. This [Facilitator Companion](#) provides instruction for any caring adult seeking to guide an individual adolescents and young adults or group of adolescents and young adults through this health assessment and planning activity.



It is important that caring adults not only serve as guides to adolescents and young adults, but also as models. With that in mind, the [Companion](#) includes resources for adults to learn more about or to take their own action in the 20 health topics covered in *Volt20 Plan*. Often the solutions to the circumstances youth uncover require adult intervention. So again, the [Companion](#) suggests actions that adults may take on behalf of their own young people or all young people in their setting or community.

For purposes of this publication, we have adopted the summary term “caring adult” to signify any one of many players. The term includes parents, legal guardians, older siblings or other relatives, community members, school professionals, community-based organization staff, faith leaders, and health professionals. We are confident that any caring adult will be able to make meaning of the contents of this [Companion](#) for the individual adolescents and young adults or group of adolescents and young adults they select or recruit for the *Volt20 Plan* activity.

SUGGESTED USES

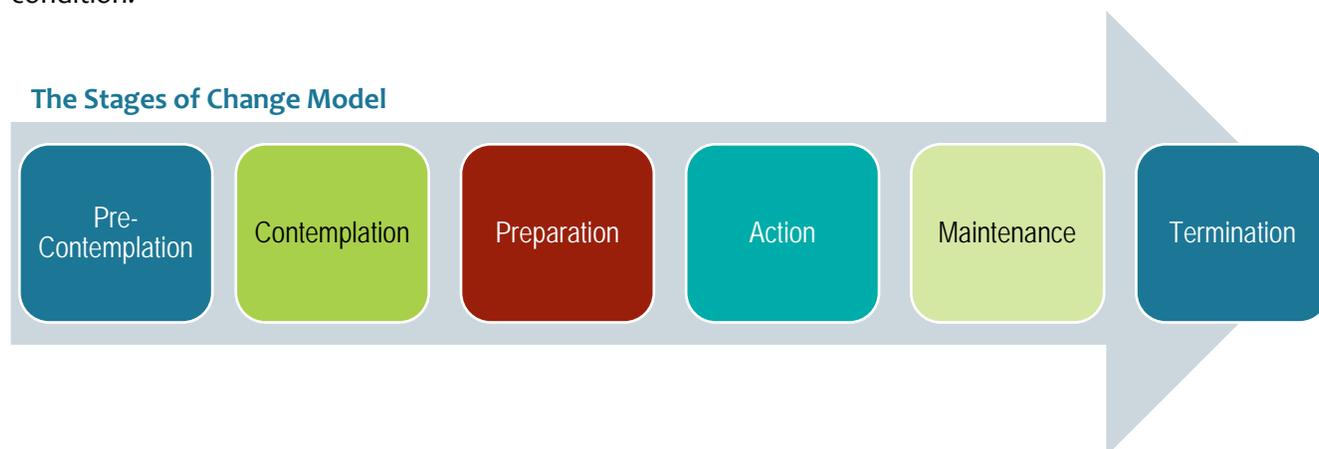
Volt20 Plan is a highly adaptable activity. It is suitable for a single youth-adult pair, one adult supporting multiple adolescents and young adults through a group process, or many youth-adult pairs completing the activity simultaneously. Older adolescents and young adults may desire to complete the activity independently.

Caring adults may implement the activity with any adolescents and young adults between ages 13 and 24. Caring adults may recruit youth from and host the activity in a variety of settings, including family homes, group residential facilities, school classrooms, school-based and community health centers, comprehensive youth development agencies, general population or youth-specific health promotion programs, faith congregations or youth ministries, and neighborhood youth centers and grassroots programs.

Participants may complete the full activity in one session or complete it over multiple sessions. Participants may choose to focus on all health topics or only those of importance for the adolescents and young adults. The activity may be completed one time only or repeatedly throughout the youth's adolescence.

UNDERLYING THEORY

Volt20 Plan is organized around a transtheoretical model for health behavior change called “stages of change.” This model, developed by Prochaska and DiClemente, posits that health behavior change involves progress through six stages: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, and termination. (Prochaska, 2005) *Volt20 Plan* follows this sequence by prompting adolescents and young adults, for each of 20 health topics, to enter into thought or action at the stage of change where they currently rest. The change could be to increase their general knowledge of the subject, reflect on the subject, gather more information, or make a decision to and take action to change a circumstance or condition.



Also, Healthy Teen Network took as its inspiration for *Volt20 Plan* the technique known as “motivational interviewing.” Developed by Miller and Rollnick, (Miller, 2012) motivational interviewing instructs the interviewer (in the case of this activity, the caring adult) to use a conversational style for helping the subject (in the case of this activity, the adolescents and young adults) uncover their own motivation to change. Motivational interviewing and stages of change complement well.

VOLT20 TOPICS

Volt20 Plan guides youth to consider their readiness to learn more about or make a change in 20 health topics: living arrangement, relationships at home, abuse at home, education and employment arrangements, relationships at school and work, violence at school and work, health care arrangement, diseases, eating, body image, personal identity, emotions and moods, physical activity, tobacco and nicotine use, alcohol use, drug use, sexual activity, intimate relationships, media activity, and fun activity.

We identified these areas after analyzing two evidence-based health assessment systems utilized in the adolescent health field and then identifying the similarities between the topics and subject groupings. The first is *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, the product of “a national health promotion and prevention initiative, led by the American Academy of Pediatrics and supported by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration. The *Bright Futures Guidelines* provide theory-based and evidence-driven guidance for all preventive care screenings and well-child visits” (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015). The second is the *HEADSSS* psychosocial interview for adolescents. The *HEADSSS* interview focuses on assessment of the home environment, education and employment, eating, peer-related activities, drugs, sexuality, suicide/depression, and safety from injury and violence (Klein, 2014).

MATERIALS

Completion of the *Volt20 Plan* activity requires three documents, each available at Volt20.com. The documents can be printed and completed manually or downloaded, saved, and typed for completion.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The young person completes this [Questionnaire](#) consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions, one for each *Volt20* health topics. The questions prompt the adolescents and young adults to self-assess their stage of readiness to change knowledge about or take action on each health topic.

GUIDE

The [Guide](#) has more information about each of the 20 health topics:

1. The “101”: Brief introduction to the subject
2. Reflect on This: List of questions for your reflection
3. Learn More: Links to resources to learn more
4. Take Action: Suggested actions to take if you are ready to set a goal, make a plan for future action, or get immediate help

JOURNAL

The young person uses the [Journal](#) to write down and keep track of anything they wish. This could be their answers to the reflection questions, a note about something they read and want to remember, a goal, an action step they will take toward that goal, and/or a reminder to ask a caring adult or healthcare provider for help. The caring adult may also keep their own *Journal* of follow-up reading or reflections.

FACILITATOR COMPANION

The caring adult uses the [Facilitator Companion](#) to lead the interview with the adolescents and young adults. The [Companion](#) includes background information about the activity, instructions for conducting the activity, scripts for delivering information to or prompting dialogue with the adolescents and young adults, and lists of resources for the young people or the caring adult for more information or to get help.

INSTRUCTIONS

1 STEP 1

Familiarize yourself with the Activity.

Review this [Facilitator Companion](#) “cover to cover” to obtain a sense of its flow and to assess your own level of comfort with the health topics. If you spot topics about which you have less information or comfort discussing, do a bit of reading on that subject before meeting with your young person.

2 STEP 2

Plan the Activity.

Set the conditions for the activity. Consider the following:

WHO?

Decide with which individual or group of adolescents and young adults you wish to conduct the *Volt20 Plan* activity. Is it your own child? Is it young people you mentor, coach, or teach? Is it a group of adolescents and young adults who attend a program your organization offers?

WHAT?

Decide whether the young person’s participation in the activity is required or discretionary. For example, a parent might set an expectation that their young person completes the activity, or they may take an approach of suggesting the activity, but allow the young person to choose or decline it as an activity.

Also, if you are not the parent or legal guardian of a minor-aged adolescents and young adults, determine whether you are required by law or by organization policy to obtain parent or guardian permission to conduct this activity with the adolescents and young adults, as it does involve the potential disclosure of personal health information and the discussion of sensitive subject matter.

Additionally, you have the duty to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the adolescents and young adults. The only exceptions are that in the course of your conversation the adolescents and young adults discloses they are a victim of abuse, neglect, or violence, or is considering harming themselves or someone else. You do need to report that to the authorities.

WHERE?

Decide where you will meet with your adolescent(s) and young adult(s). The setting should allow for quiet conversation without interruption or distraction. The activity should take place in a location and setting where the youth may reveal confidential or private information to you without being overheard by others. If you are conducting the activity with a group, you will want to modify the activity so as not to put any adolescents and young adults at risk of disclosing personal health information to their peers.

WHEN?

Choose whether your intent is to complete the activity in one session or multiple sessions. Reserve an appropriate amount of time for the single session or each of the multiple sessions. We suggest you reserve at least 90 minutes, to account for the possibility that the youth may have interest in multiple health topics. Or you could account for that possibility in advance by scheduling this activity over multiple sessions. Choose a time of day where you and the youth can give the activity your full attention.

HOW?

Decide whether your youth will complete the *Questionnaire* and *Journal* on paper, at a computer, or on a mobile device (tablet or smartphone). If you choose paper, be sure to encourage them to consider how they will store their *Journal* in a private manner. If they are using a computer or mobile device, how will you make sure the youth maintains access to their completed *Questionnaire* and *Journal* after the conclusion of the activity? How will you ensure the completed *Questionnaire* and *Journal* are wiped from the computer or stored in a secure location not accessible to others?

3 STEP 3

Invite adolescents and young adults to the Activity.

Describe the activity briefly: indicate when and where it will take place, how much time you estimate it will take, and other pertinent information. You may make the invitation formal or informal, written or oral, depending on your relationship with the adolescents and young adults and whether you are offering the activity as a stand-alone activity or integrating into a larger program or class in which the adolescents and young adults already participates.

4 STEP 4

Introduce adolescents and young adults to the Activity.

Use the following script or adapt it as appropriate:

You're at the time of life when you are thinking about what you want for your future—completing school, the type of work or career that best suits you, perhaps forming a long-term relationship, and generally enjoying life. Sometimes you're thinking about your future, and hopefully you talk with people you trust.

I'm really happy that you have agreed to spend some time with me to talk about your healthy future. We'll be going broader today than just a discussion of disease. "Health" is a whole set of topics that influence your well-being—your body, your mind, your relationships, your environment, and the choices you make.

We are going to use a resource called Volt20 Plan to keep us focused. How it works is that I'm going to give you a Questionnaire with 20 questions. Take your time to complete it; it's not too long. Then, I'm going to skim your responses, and we'll figure out together which topics to talk about first, and what we should cover about those topics. That's going to depend on what you already know about that subject and how much interest you have in it. Also, I'm providing you with a Journal to take notes on anything we talk about that seems important to you. We can also use it to set some goals and commit to some action steps to reach them.

5 **STEP 5**

Assure adolescents' and young adults' voluntariness and confidentiality.
Use the following script or adapt it as appropriate:

Before we begin our discussion, I want to make sure you know that your participation in this activity is voluntary, meaning you do not have to do this if you don't want to. If at any time you find some of the questions uncomfortable, you do not have to answer them, or you do not have to share your answers with me but you could make notes in your Journal. Also, we can stop the activity at any time.

Also, I want to stress that it's my commitment to keep what we talk about to ourselves. I won't share what we talk about with others. The only exceptions are that if, in the course of our conversation, you disclose (that is, share) to me that you are a victim of abuse, neglect, or violence, or are considering harming yourself or someone else, I need that to report that to the authorities, for your safety and others. Are you okay with these ground rules? Ready to start?

6 **STEP 6**

Access the Volt20 Questionnaire.

Access [Volt20 Questionnaire](#) on a computer or mobile device. Ask the adolescents and young adults to answer the 20 Volt20 questions. Allow youth between five and ten minutes to reflect upon the questions. Use the following script or adapt it as appropriate:

The first step of this Volt20 planning activity is to gather information from you about your interest in learning more about or taking some type of action in any of 20 health topic areas. This is a pretty quick step as it's a multiple-choice answer to each of the 20 questions. Select the choice that best matches your answer to the question.

Take about five to ten minutes to complete the Questionnaire. Go with your first response to each question. We just want your first impression. It's not a test and there is no right or wrong answer. Let me know when you have answered all of the questions.

7

STEP 7

Review the Questionnaire Responses.

Ask the adolescents and young adults to print their Survey Responses and share them with you. Take a quick look at their answers to determine which health topics the adolescents and young adults has greater interest in or need for exploration. Use the following script or adapt it as appropriate:

Thanks for completing the Questionnaire. Give me a bit to look it over to determine which of the health topics hold, for you, a greater interest to learn more or desire to explore further.

Decide the number and order of health topics you and the adolescents and young adults will discuss, dependent on time allotted for the activity, the adolescents and young adults and caring adults' attention span, and other factors. For example, adolescents and young adults giving a health topic an answer of "4" indicates their desire to get help. So put your attention to those topics first. Topics receiving an answer of "2" are those where a rich conversation is most possible. Use the following script or adapt it as appropriate:

Okay, based on my quick look at your Questionnaire, it seems to me that we will definitely want to talk about [topic(s)], we may get into [topic (s)] if time permits, and we probably don't need to do much with [(topics)]. Does that sound about right to you? Is there any subject that you absolutely want to talk about? I want to be sure we spend time talking about what's of utmost importance to you.

8

STEP 8

Introduce adolescents and young adults to the Volt20 Journal.

Distribute the *Journal* in paper form or open the *Journal* on a computer or mobile device. Explain the purpose of the *Journal* and encourage adolescents and young adults to record notes, goals, and action steps in the *Journal* throughout the activity. Do so repeatedly throughout the activity. Use the following script as presented or adapt it as appropriate:

One of the key aspects of this activity is that we go beyond simply talking and move toward action. A good plan includes goals and steps to achieve those goals! To help us do that, let's use the Volt20 Journal. You can use the Journal many ways, such as taking notes on something you don't want to forget, or reminding yourself to learn more about a subject, or to ask someone else for more assistance, like your parent or a healthcare professional. And definitely we want to end today with your having identified and written down—as a commitment to yourself—a few healthy future goals and some action steps to take to reach those goals.

This is YOUR Journal. I won't be collecting it at the end of the activity. And I'm not going to grade it either. I do want you to keep it private, as it will have information about yourself that is no one else's business. And it's something I encourage you to follow, but also to look back to from time to time to see the progress you are making toward any of the goals you set for yourself today.

I'm going to be taking some notes myself, not about what you said to me, but rather some reminders to myself about topics I need to learn more about too, or some actions I can take to support your healthy future.

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STEP 9

Complete Activity Modules.

Use the [Facilitator Companion](#) side-by-side with the [Volt20 Guide](#) to deliver information or pose questions to adolescents and young adults on as many of the health topics as you are able to accomplish in the time you have reserved for the activity. Refer to the young person's [Questionnaire](#) when doing so.

1. If the youth has responded to a question with a “1,” read the script in the [Companion](#) or summarize conversationally the content provided in the [Guide](#) at “**1. The 101.**”
2. If the youth has responded to a question with a “2,” read the script in the [Companion](#) and ask the full set of questions or a partial set of questions provided in the [Guide](#) at “**2. Reflect on It.**”
3. If the youth has answered a question with a “3,” review with them the resources in the [Guide](#) at “**3. Learn More.**” There are also resources for you as the caring adult in the [Companion](#).
4. If the youth has responded to a question with a “4,” review with them the resources in the [Guide](#) at “**4. Take Action.**” There are also ways you as the caring adult can take action in the [Companion](#).
5. If the youth has responded to a question with a “5,” skip the module and go to the next question/module.

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR COMPANION LAYOUT

This [Facilitator Companion](#) has been designed to place content for the caring adult directly next to the content replicated from the [Guide](#). Thus, in this [Companion](#) caring, look to the LEFT page for material for you as the caring adult, and to the RIGHT page for material copied directly from the [Guide](#).

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STEP 10

Conclude the Activity.

Congratulate the young person for generating their Volt20 Plan! Agree to a follow-up plan with the adolescents and young adults, such as a biweekly check-in, so that you can support them as they reflect upon and begin to take the action steps they recorded in their *Journal*. Also, do your own follow-up to the actions you committed to taking on behalf of your adolescents and young adults or group of adolescents and young adults. Use the following script or adapt it as appropriate:

You did it! Congratulations! You have the makings of a Volt20 plan!

If you are feeling wiped out from this activity, it's understandable. We covered a lot today... but we had to because “health and well-being” is comprised of many factors, as you have just discovered. Health... it's more

than disease... right? So it's completely understandable if you want to step back from this activity for a day or two and let it all sink in.

But I wouldn't wait too long. You've identified some healthy future goals and several action steps you want to take to reach those goals. Let's review those together now.

I would like to continue to support you in your Volt20 planning. If it's all right, may I check in with you every other week or so to see how it's going? Also, there are some action steps I identified for myself, and I want to have a chance to update you on my activities. It's important that when one makes a commitment to another person that they be accountable for that commitment. So I want to do that for you. Is that okay?

Also, let's spend a few minutes talking about this Volt20 planning activity itself. What did you enjoy about it? What did you not enjoy about it? Would you do it again sometime? Would you recommend it to a friend?

11

STEP 11

Provide Feedback to Healthy Teen Network.

Let us know your opinion about Volt20 Plan so that we can improve it for young people and the adults who support them. Complete the survey each time or as many times as you conduct the exercise with an adolescents

and young adults.



12

STEP 12

Promote the Volt20 Plan.

If you found the activity valuable for adolescents and young adults, please share your experience with your peers and encourage them to undertake it with their adolescents and young adults as well. Direct them to Volt20.com to obtain the *Facilitator Companion* and other *materials*.

1. WHERE I LIVE (LIVING ARRANGEMENT)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about the place you sleep most nights or where you live?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Many youth will call the place they sleep most nights "home." But some youth do not have "home" living arrangements, such as youth who are "couch surfing," living on the street or in a car, or in a custodial facility such as a shelter, detention center, or group home. So let the young person give their own name to the "place they sleep most nights."

Be sensitive with your language because families take many forms. Some families have two parents; others have one parent. Some are headed by a relative other than a parent. Others have a parent absent due to incarceration or deportation. So find out who the young person considers to be the adult responsible for them, and what role they call that person(s).

Be prepared that an older youth may suggest or ask to live independently from their parent or legal guardian.

If a young person living with a foster family or in a custodial facility expresses concerns with the conditions of their living arrangement, you may explore with the youth whether they wish to report that situation, or have you report that situation, to the public custodial agency with responsibility for the living arrangement.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

Let's explore your thoughts about living arrangements a bit. I am going to ask you some questions to get our conversation going. Write in your Journal any thoughts you have about this topic.

Okay, let's write that down in your Journal, so we don't lose track of what we've come up with!

REFLECT**3. LEARN MORE**

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about the characteristics of a healthy living arrangement and safe neighborhood. Use your Journal to note any facts or ideas from your reading that you don't want to forget...

LEARN**RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS***Characteristics of Healthy Homes*

The Green and Healthy Homes Initiative and the National Center for Healthy Housing have resources for families and consumers to learn about the characteristics of a healthy living arrangement and checklists. Find their consumer resources at [Green and Healthy Homes](#) and [National Center for Healthy Housing](#).

Teen Safety Tips

Tips for keeping your teen safe are available through [Safe Kids Worldwide](#).

Safe Gun Storage

Make sure any firearms where your family lives are stored safely so that they can't be used to harm anyone. Gun storage safety [tips](#) are available at.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your living arrangement or surroundings? Let's figure out what your change goal could be and write it in your Journal. Let's also put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. You could take one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Conduct a Living Arrangement Safety Check*

Conduct a safety check of the place your family lives. Get a set of [free household safety checklists](#).

Repair Your Home

Financial assistance for home repair may be available through your local housing agency.

Internet search "home repair" + [name of community] or contact the information and referral service in your community ("2-1-1").

Also, Rebuilding Together is a nonprofit organization that provides low-income homeowners with critical home repairs. Find a [Rebuilding Together chapter](#) near you.

Improve Neighborhood Safety

Contact the crime prevention section of your local law enforcement agency or the school resource officer at your youth's school and find out what activities are underway to improve neighborhood safety. Ask them how you can help bring a safety or crime prevention presentation or initiative to your neighborhood.

Store Guns Safely

If you have decided to keep a gun in your home, make sure it is locked, unloaded, and that its ammunition is locked and stored separately from the firearm.

Obtain a free firearm safety kit, which includes a cable-style gun-locking device and a brochure that discusses safe handling and secure storage guidelines through [Project Child Safe](#).

Get Help if Your Child Has Run Away

If your child has run away from home, there's help for you! Call or chat online with a trained counselor at the [National Runaway Safeline](#) 1-800-Runaway.

Get Help if Your Child is Being Trafficked

If you believe your child is or may be in a trafficking situation, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline toll-free hotline at 1-888-373-7888. Staff are available 24/7 to take reports of potential human trafficking. All reports are confidential and you may remain anonymous. Interpreters are available. To report a missing child or child pornography, submit a report to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678) or through their Cybertipline.



2. RELATIONSHIPS AT HOME

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about the relationships you have with people living at the place you sleep most nights or where you live?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Minor-age youth have little control over who else lives where they live. So, the interview should focus on finding ways for the youth to improve relationships that will persist for some time.

Parenting youth may experience unique stresses associated with their dual role of both youth to their parent, and parent to their child.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

Let's chat a bit about your family life (your relationships with people living where you do).

REFLECT

Okay, let's write that down in your Journal, so we don't lose track of our next step!

3. LEARN MORE

Here is are resource you can read (now or another time) to learn more about healthy relationships at home. Use your Journal to take notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Parent-Child Communications Tips

Read tips from the [American Psychological Association](#) on communications with children.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your relationship with people where you live? What might be a good goal to do that? Let's get that into your Journal. Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. If we don't have our own idea just yet, let's consider this action step...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION

Obtain Family Support Services

Families facing challenges, including relationships among the family, may wish to access "family support services" available in their community. Search online for "family support services" + [community name], or call your local information and referral service ("2-1-1").

Obtain Parent Education

Some communities have organizations that offer parent education programs, which include courses or materials to help parents and youth improve their communication. Internet search "parent education" + [community name] or contact your community's information and referral service ("2-1-1").

Access School-Family Engagement Resources

The school your child attends may have a staff member with family engagement duties, and that person may have some tips or resources to suggest for improving parent-child connectedness.

LEARN
ACT



3. ABUSE AT HOME

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about any violence or abuse at the place where you sleep most nights or the area where you live?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth over the age of majority may not be considered by law to be victims of abuse or neglect. Regardless the violence at home they report experiencing, or are in fear of experiencing, merits intervention, potentially from a law enforcement authority rather than a child protection authority.

Youth living in custodial facilities may have additional avenues for reporting abuse and neglect. But if you don't know, report allegations of abuse and neglect through the same channel that you would report any abuse or neglect case.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

I'm glad you feel like you can talk to me about violence at home (where you are living). I know it's a difficult topic to share.

Before we go further, I need to tell you that I'm required by law to report cases or risk of abuse, neglect, or violence to the authorities. I might have to do that, depending on what you tell me. Do you understand?

[Obtain youth consent, or move to the next subject if she/he does not consent.]

[If the youth reports abuse or neglect:] Okay, let's get moving on this right away; we shouldn't wait! This is serious.

Take a moment to write in your Journal any thoughts you have about this. Since this is really private information, don't write the names of people in your Journal.

3. LEARN MORE

Here is are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about violence and abuse at home. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget...

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Abuse Resources for Parents

Find [Child Help USA's](#) resources for parents.

Tips for Teaching Children about Abuse

Read and apply [strategies](#) for teaching children about child sexual abuse at.

Helping Youth Transition to Adulthood: Guidance for Foster Parents

These [resources](#) provide adults with guidance on how to help youth build a foundation for a successful transition to adult life outside of foster care.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change about violence and abuse in the home? What might be your goal? Let's put that goal into your Journal. Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. Also, you could take one of these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Prevent or Report Child Abuse*

Are you aware of someone else being abused but are unsure what to do about it? Do you have questions about abuse? Call the National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453) then push 1 to talk to a counselor. The [National Child Abuse Hotline](#) is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.



4. WHERE I LEARN & WORK (EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT ARRANGEMENTS)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about how or where you learn or work?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Many youth will call the place they learn "school," but some youth may be disconnected from school or have completed high school. So let the youth give their own name to the "place they learn."

Younger-age youth may not be working age or working yet; for those youth, focus your conversation on education. Be mindful that youth who report poor grades may have or be indicating a learning disorder and are not just being "rebellious."

Don't assume youth who report difficulty attending school or arriving to work on time regularly are "lazy." They may have safety concerns getting to school, family care responsibilities (like caring for a younger child or a disabled or aging adult), or transportation barriers that interfere with their regular school or work attendance. Be mindful that youth have a varying range of educational and career aspirations and not all of them require a college degree.

Youth experiencing homelessness, in foster care, involved in juvenile justice, with limited English proficiency, and expectant and parenting have unique barriers to education, and various federal and state law protections and/or services.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

Getting an education and a source of income are important components of a healthy future. So let's talk about them.

Okay, let's write that down in your Journal so we can follow-up.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about learning and working. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget...

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Resources on Education*

View the [U.S. Department of Education's](#) parent resources.

Conversation Starters on School Success

Read these tips from the [U.S. Office of Adolescent Health](#) on having a conversation with your youth about school successes and challenges.

Guide to Student Success

Read the [National PTA's Parents' Guides to Student Success](#). The guides provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning at each grade level in order to be prepared for college and career.

Parent Engagement in School

Read these tips from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) on being involved in your older child's school activities and the [Countdown to Success guide](#) with the advice, tools, and resources you'll need to help your children have a positive school year.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your learning or work? Let's talk and make a goal, then record it in your Journal. Also, write down what your next action step is going to be. You could take one of these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Get Involved at Your Youth's School*

Visit or call the school office and ask who on staff handles family engagement. Set an appointment with this staff member to find out how you can get involved in school.

Advocate for Special Educational Services

If your youth is experiencing a learning challenge, they may qualify for special educational services. Introduce yourself to the staff member of your youth's school with responsibility for special education. Visit or call the school office and ask for an appointment with this staff member.

Special Education Services

Learn about the special educational system for children with special learning needs by reading [National PTA's special education](#) resources.

Parent Resources on Employment

Find [U.S. Department of Labor resources](#) for parents of young workers.

ACT



5. RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL AND WORK

Is there anything you want to change about your relationships with people at the places where you learn or work?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Younger-age youth may not be of working age or currently working; for those youth, focus your conversation on education.

At the adolescent developmental stage, adolescents are defining their agency and may be pushing against authority. Be prepared to discuss with youth the role of authority figures (such as teachers, school leaders, job supervisors) and expected standards of conduct with authority figures.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

Let's consider the relationships you have with people at the places you learn and work.

REFLECT

Okay, let's record in your Journal some steps you can take to improve relationships with others at your places of learning and work.

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about relationships with people where you learn and work. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget...

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Conversation Starters on Peer Relationships*

Read these tips from the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Adolescent Health](#) on discussing peer relationships with youth.

Friendships at School

View these tips from the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) on supporting your youth in making friends at school.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your relationships with people where you learn or work? Let's puzzle that out a bit and come up with a goal for changing these relationships. We should also come up with your next action step toward that goal. You could take one of these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Intervene on Negative School Peer Relationships*

If your youth is experiencing a negative relationship with a specific peer or group of peers, explore with your youth their level of comfort in your reaching out to that youth's parent to alert them to the negative relationship. That provides the other parent the opportunity to discuss expectations of positive behavior with their youth. Or it might lead to a session with both youths and adults present.

Intervene on Negative School Adult Relationships

If your youth is experiencing a negative relationship with an adult at her/his place of learning, bring that to the school leader's attention with a telephone call or in-person meeting. Ask the leader to investigate the situation and propose a corrective action.

Advice on Negative Workplace Relationships

If your youth is experiencing discrimination or harassment in the workplace, suggest that they report the allegation to the human resources section of their workplace or to a public authority that administers civil rights laws.

ACT



6. VIOLENCE AT SCHOOL & WORK

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about any violence at the places you learn or work?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth may not know that the violence they experience or witness has terms associated with it like "bullying" or "harassment." Don't get caught up on the language, other than to be able to define words if the youth volunteers them.

"Bullying" is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Be mindful not to assume that bullying is limited to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.

"Harassment" is systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions of one party or a group, including threats and demands. Be mindful not to assume that harassment is limited to sexual innuendo or activity.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

I'm glad you feel like you can talk to me about violence at the places you learn or work. I know it's a difficult topic to share.

Before we go further, I need to inform you that I am required by law to report cases or risk of abuse, neglect, or violence to the authorities. I want to be sure you understand that I might have to do that, depending on what you tell me. Do you understand?)

[Obtain youth consent, or move to the next subject if she/he does not consent.]

So, it seems that you have some things you want to think about more. How about we put your questions or thoughts in your Journal so that you can return to them when you are ready.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about violence where you learn or work. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Resources on Bullying*

Learn what you can do to prevent and respond to bullying where your youth goes to learn at [Stop Bullying](#). Here are tips for parents of [LGBTQ youth](#).

Also, download the [smartphone app](#) with conversation starters on bullying.

Parent Resources on Teen Suicide Prevention

Learn about how parents can prevent [youth suicide](#).

Workplace Harassment and Discrimination

Read the guidance that the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) provides to youth for addressing harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in violence at the places you learn or work? Let's talk about that and come up with a goal for you to write in your Journal. We should also identify a next action step to take to reach that goal. Also, we can consider one of these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Discuss Bullying with Your Youth*

Download the [Know Bullying](#) phone app with conversation starters on bullying.

Intervene on Negative School Adult Relationships

If your youth is experiencing violence at his place of learning, bring that to the school leader's attention with a telephone call or in-person meeting. Ask the leader to investigate the situation and propose a corrective action.

Report Violence in Progress

Call 911 for emergency services if your youth is experiencing violence, witnessing violence, or if your youth is at immediate risk of violence.

ACT



7. MY HEALTH CHARE

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about how, where, or from whom you get health care?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Be mindful that not all younger-age youth have an adult responsible for their health care. This could include unaccompanied homeless and emancipated youth. It could also include accompanied youth for whom the adult is not acting upon their responsibility to arrange health care for the family.

Be mindful that not all older-aged youth are responsible for their own health care. Some young adults may be covered under the health insurance of their parent or guardian.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

Health care—knowing how to get it when you need it and having a good experience with who provides and where you receive your health care— is an essential element of a healthy present and a healthy future. So let's take some time together to talk about it.

REFLECT

We should write down your ideas in your Volt20 Journal so that we can follow-up together.

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about health care arrangements. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Resources on Health Care System*

Find [articles](#) about the importance of teaching youth about the healthcare system and tips for giving youth a voice in their health care.

Health Insurance Coverage for Children, Youth, and Young Adults

Visit healthcare.gov for information about how to get health insurance coverage for children and youth under age 26.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your health care? Let's get that down on paper as a goal in your Journal. Also, we should brainstorm the action steps to get to that goal. We could consider one of these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Get Health Insured*

If your family does not have health insurance coverage for your whole family or for your youth, [apply for it](#).

Get Connected to Community Health Care

If your family or youth is not insured or does not have a regular healthcare provider, consider getting your health services through a community health center. Use the [Find-a-Health-Center Tool](#) to locate a community health center by ZIP Code. To locate an [Indian Health Service, Tribal, or Urban Indian Health Program facility](#), enter your location.

Plan Your Health Care Services Transition

Assist your older youth prepare for the time when they are going to be responsible for their own health care by helping them with the health care transition resources at the [Got Transition](#) website of the National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health. Use the questions and answers series.

ACT



8. DISEASES

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about diseases that may affect you or someone else you care about?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

The intent of this module is to provide time and space for youth to think about diseases in general and determine whether they have questions or concerns that they want to learn more about or make known to an adult they trust, or the adult who makes health care decisions for them.

The intent is NOT to have youth disclose a medical condition unless he chooses to do so voluntarily.

DO NOT provide medical advice unless your education, training, and experience so permits.

DO NOT disclose a youth's self-reported disease, illness, or condition to any other person unless the youth grants you consent to do so, or if you are the parent or legal guardian of the youth and have a legal right to disclose your youth's health information.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

I guess it's obvious that a conversation about your healthy future would include some reflection about your physical health or your curiosity about any specific disease, right? So let's talk about it.

But I want us to be careful in this conversation because I don't want you to tell me anything about your own medical condition to me unless you want to do that voluntarily. Also, I want to be clear that I am not qualified to provide medical advice or a diagnosis.

What might be some steps we can take to get you the information or support you're seeking when it comes to how our bodies function, disease, and medical conditions? [Brainstorm].

Let's write down what we are going to do next.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about diseases. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget...

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Parent Resources on Diseases and Health

Visit the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's](#) parents' page to learn how to find resources to guide youth to become healthy and productive adults.

Vaccine Information

Visit this central hub for [vaccine information](#) and get familiar with the vaccines your youth should have by the time they complete young adulthood. Here's the [schedule](#) that covers youth.

Here's the [schedule](#) that covers young adults.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your knowledge about diseases, get examined for the possibility of a disease, or treated for a disease? Let's get those goals in your Journal. Writing them down makes them more "real." Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward those goals. We can consider some of these steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Read Up on Disease*

The National Institutes of [Health's Medline Plus](#) website has reliable and thorough information about over 950 diseases. And the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers a [Diseases A-Z Index](#). Connect your youth to care: if your youth is sick or exhibiting symptoms that cause them and/or you to think they might have a disease, use any online or telephonic medical advice services your health care organization offers, or make an appointment with the youth's healthcare provider.

If your youth or your family is not insured or does not have a regular healthcare provider, consider getting your health services through a community health center. Use the [Find-a-Health-Center Tool](#) to locate a community health center by ZIP Code. To locate an [Indian Health Service, Tribal, or Urban Indian Health Program](#) facility, enter your location.

Get Your Youth Vaccinated

Get your youth caught up on any missed vaccines. Get them vaccinated for human papillomavirus too. This vaccine works better the earlier it is given, so don't wait until your youth becomes sexually active! (There's no evidence that getting youth the HPV vaccine early in their adolescence encourages them to start having sex!) And while you're at it, get an influenza vaccine (flu shot), which you should get annually. You can set a vaccination appointment with your family's healthcare provider. Also, you can find a location to get vaccines using the [vaccine locator service](#).

Get Help in a Physical Emergency

Call 911 if your youth is having a physical emergency.



9. EATING

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about the food you eat or how you manage eating?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth have limited control over the types of food available to them where they live. They may or may not have control over their food choices where they learn or work.

Youth who are unaccompanied by an adult are eligible, independently from their parent or guardian, for [SNAP and school meal benefits](#).

Youth may report an eating disorder (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, or binge-eating disorder) or indicate symptoms of such disorders. Eating disorders are treatable health conditions. You should encourage the youth to seek the support of a healthcare provider for these conditions, or at a minimum talk to an adult they trust, about possibly getting treatment.

Be mindful that young people of any gender may develop eating disorders.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

Let's explore together the topic of food and eating. It's a rather important activity, isn't it?

REFLECT

Let's write down what we've come up in your Journal so that we can follow-up.

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about eating. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget...

LEARN

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Nutrition Information Gateway*

Visit nutrition.gov for access to vetted food and nutrition information from the federal government. Nutrition.gov serves as a gateway to reliable information on nutrition, healthy eating, physical activity, and food safety for consumers.

Parent Resources on Nutrition

[Resources](#) for parents to talk to their youth about food and nutrition are available.

Parent Resources on Youth Healthy Weight

Follow these tips from the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) for helping your youth maintain a healthy weight.

Parent Resources on Diabetes

Visit the parent resources section of the [American Diabetes Association](#) for tips on supporting your youth with diabetes.

Parent Resources on Eating Disorders

The [National Eating Disorders Association](#) has prepared a Parent Tool Kit to help your youth recover from an eating disorder.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your eating? Let's state that change as a goal in your Journal. Also, why don't we consider some action steps to meet that goal? We can consider the suggested action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Access Food Assistance*

If your family is experiencing "food insecurity" or going hungry, explore whether your household is eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Use this pre-screening tool to determine if you may be eligible to receive [SNAP](#) benefits.

Also, you may apply for SNAP benefits at your local SNAP Office. [Find the office](#) that serves your area.

Your school-aged youth may be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Call or visit your youth's school and ask for a school meal application.

Address Food Deserts

Is your family's home located in a "food desert"? (A food desert is a geographic area where residents' access to affordable, healthy food options is restricted or nonexistent due to the absence of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance.) Take action by appealing to food retailers in your geographic area to supply more healthy choices. And get your neighborhood association involved in petitioning a grocery store owner or your local elected officials to locate a store in your neighborhood.

Support your Youth's Healthy Eating

If your youth's weight or eating habits are unhealthy, support them in weight management through safe strategies, including changing the whole family's eating habits, connecting the youth to food and nutritional educational materials and/or a nutritionist, and providing positive reinforcement as the youth strives toward her/his weight management goal.

Consult with your youth's primary care provider and/or a nutritionist or dietician if your youth is seeking or experiencing a significant change in eating, or if you think such a change is necessary for your youth.

If your family does not have health insurance coverage, [apply](#) for health insurance through your state.

Also, a youth organization or mental health organization in your community may offer classes or support groups for youth with eating concerns. Check around yourself or ask a school professional or your family primary care provider for a referral.



10. BODY IMAGE

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about your how you look, your body size, or your body shape?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Know that youth of any gender may have concerns about physical appearance and body image.

Many aspects of a person's physical appearance, body size, or body shape are not alterable (for example, a person with an amputated limb, or a person's skin color.) The appropriate response to people expressing anxiety or stress about "irreversible" situations is to affirm their worth. You may also inquire if the young person wants to talk about their concern with a professional or peer with direct experience with the permanent condition of concern to the youth.

Be mindful that this prompt question may provide youth considering or progressing through a gender identity transition to share on that subject.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

How you feel about your body is a big factor in how you feel about yourself overall and your outlook. So it's important we discuss it.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about body image. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Conversation Starters on Body Image

Read [tips](#) on discussing body image with your youth.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your body size or shape? What is the goal you have in mind? Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. Consider taking one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION

Connect Your Youth to Health Care

Consult with your youth's primary care provider and/or psychologist or therapist if your youth expresses a desire to make a change in their physical appearance, body size or body shape, or if you think such a change is necessary for your youth. It's good to run plans for physical changes by a healthcare provider so that you and your youth understand the risks and alternatives.

If your family does not have health insurance coverage, [apply](#) for health insurance through your state.

Connect Your Youth to Support

A youth organization or mental health organization in your community may offer classes or support groups for youth with body image or self-esteem concerns. Check around yourself or ask a school professional or your family primary care provider for a referral.



11. MY IDENTITY (PERSONAL IDENTITY)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about your sense of self (your identity)?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Use the general term "identity" unless/until the youth claims a specific identity.

Refrain from explicit bias and check against implicit bias toward youth based on their identity.

The appropriate response to people expressing anxiety or stress about their identity is to affirm their worth. You may also inquire if the youth wants to talk about their concern with a professional or peer with direct experience with the identity characteristic or characteristics of concern to the youth.

Be mindful that this prompt question may provide youth considering or progressing through an identity transition to share on that subject.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

A big part of health is being comfortable with and proud about your identity. That's not always the case for everyone, so let's talk about it some.

What is the name you were given by a parent or other adult? Do you know why that person chose that name?

Go on and record your reflections about your identity in your Journal so that we can follow-up if needed.

3. LEARN MORE

Here are online resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about your personal identity. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Understanding Adolescent Identity Development

*Read the chapter on adolescent identity development in [*The Teen Years Explained: A Guide to Healthy Adolescent Development*](#) (You will find the rest of the chapters helpful also!).*

REFLECT
LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your personal identity? Write your goal in your Journal. Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. If you don't know your next action step, talk to a trusted adult and get their advice. Don't let this moment pass! Also, you could take one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Converse with Your Youth about Identity*

Let your youth know that if they are curious about or dislike aspects of their identity, or that they are experiencing bullying, harassment, discrimination, or violence because of their identity, it is safe for them to share that information with you.

Get Emotional Care for Your Youth or Yourself

A good talk to a parent or trusted adult about their feelings about identity may suffice for youth. But if your young person wants to go deeper, or you feel your youth would benefit from professional support, suggest and/or arrange a visit with a healthcare provider. You may also benefit from emotional care if you are having difficulty adjusting to your youth's identity discernment or decisions.

You can set an appointment with your family's healthcare provider. If your family does not have a regular healthcare provider or is uninsured, find [free or low-cost mental health services](#) by ZIP Code and type of service or the [National Helpline](#) at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or online.

Get Help in a Physical Emergency

Call 911 if your youth is having any type of physical emergency, including being harmed physically or being at immediate risk of harm for any circumstance, including an emergency related to his personal identity or others' perceptions of his identity.

Get Help in an Emotional Emergency

Call the toll-free [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or initiate a confidential online chat with a trained counselor if your youth is really sad or is considering harming themselves for any reason, including due to their personal identity or others' perceptions of their identity.



12. HOW I FEEL (EMOTIONS & MOODS)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about how you feel, or your emotions and moods?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth may report an emotional or mental disorder or indicate symptoms of such disorders. Emotional and mental disorders are treatable or manageable health conditions. You should encourage the youth to seek the support of a healthcare provider for these conditions, or minimally to talk to an adult whom they trust about possibly getting treatment.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

We're going to explore another sensitive subject area, your emotional and mental health.

I assure you that I won't make any judgment about your feelings. You can share with me whatever you want, and you can keep private whatever you would rather not share.

I give you my promise that what you share with me won't go anywhere else unless I think you are in harm's way or putting someone else in harm's way. And if that's the case, then I am going to have to get someone else involved, because I don't want you to hurt yourself or others, and I have a duty to speak up. Is it okay that we proceed?

It seems like you have a few questions or observations that are worth pursuing when you're ready to do so. How about we jot down those follow-up actions in your Journal.

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about emotions and moods. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Parent Resources on Mental Health

Visit the parents section of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' mentalhealth.gov site to learn more about spotting mental or emotional hardship in your youth and to find suggestions for conversation starters with your youth.

Parent Resources on Youth Depression

Visit this [National Institutes of Health](http://NationalInstitutesofHealth) website for suggestions for helping your youth manage depression.

REFLECT

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your emotions or moods? How about we get specific and write a goal in your Journal. Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. We can come up with this together. Let's consider one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Connect Your Youth to Emotional Care*

If your youth is expressing or exhibiting symptoms of emotional or mental hardship, support them right away by getting them connected to a mental health services provider.

You can set an appointment with your family's healthcare provider so that the provider can connect your youth to mental health services they offer directly, or by a relationship with another organization in your community. If your youth or your family do not have a regular healthcare provider or are uninsured, find [free or low-cost mental health services](#) by ZIP Code and type of service or the [National Helpline](#) at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

Get Help in a Physical Emergency

Call 911 if your youth is having any type of physical emergency, including being at immediate risk of harming themselves, another person, or a group of people.

Get Help in an Emotional Emergency

Call the toll-free [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or initiate a confidential online chat with a trained counselor if your youth is considering harming themselves for any reason, including due to an emotion or mood.



13. HOW ACTIVE I AM (PHYSICAL ACTIVITY)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about how active you are, or your physical activity?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth have differing access to types, places, and times for physical activity. For example, some in-school youth may have more hours assigned to physical education than others may. Some youth reside in neighborhoods where they do not feel safe to play or exercise outside, or that lack parks or athletic facilities. Still others may not have access to group sports teams.

Be mindful of the young person's environment when discussing physical activity, and be prepared to suggest physical activity options reasonable for their environment.

If youth report an injury due to physical activity and it has not already been addressed, counsel them to consult with a healthcare provider or the caring adult with responsibility for the youth's health care.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

We're going to spend a bit of time now on physical activity—you know exercise, doing something other than sitting on a couch and vegging out—which is okay to do some of the time, but not all the time.

Let's write down what we've come up in your Journal so that we can follow-up.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about physical activity. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Resources on Physical Activity*

Visit the [We Can!](#) section of the U.S. National Institutes of Health for physical activity resources for parents.

Physical Activity Gateway

Visit [Nutrition.gov](#) a gateway to reliable information on nutrition, healthy eating, physical activity, and food safety for consumers.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your physical activity? That's encouraging. How about we put down a specific goal in your Journal. And then we should follow that by selecting some action steps to reach that goal. For starters, we may consider one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Get Physically Active*

Set a positive example for your youth by engaging in regular physical activity yourself. You could also create a plan to pursue physical activities as a family.

Advocate for Physical Activity at School

Your school-aged youth may not be getting enough physical activity at school. Call or visit your youth's school and ask for more information about its wellness policy, and how you as a parent or caregiver can get involved in shaping the school's wellness policy.

Advocate for Physical Activity in the Neighborhood

Is your family's home located in an area without many, or any, community facilities for physical activity? Take action by appealing to the elected officials in your geographic area to supply more places for youth and families to exercise. And get your neighborhood association involved too.

Connect Your Youth to Physical Activity

If your youth's weight is unhealthy or if they are expressing interest in increasing their physical activity, support them including by offering to join them in a physical activity, enrolling your youth in a physical activity of interest to them, providing or arranging for them to get the equipment (including safety equipment) needed for the activity, and providing positive reinforcement to encourage them to stick with the activity.



14. TOBACCO & NICOTINE USE

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about tobacco or nicotine?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Use the general term "tobacco or nicotine product" until the youth specifies a particular type of tobacco product or products as their reference.

E-cigarettes, vaping, and juuling are not tobacco products, per se, but they do contain nicotine, the active ingredient in tobacco, and so are sometimes considered a type of tobacco product.

Youth may report tobacco use. This provides an opportunity for you and the youth to discuss the harmful effects of tobacco, and to explore whether the youth seeks to make a change in their use of tobacco. You should encourage the youth to seek the support of a healthcare provider for tobacco cessation, or minimally to talk to an adult whom they trust about possibly getting treatment.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

I want to hear what you're thinking with regard to tobacco. Since it's a legal product (but not for minors), it's all around us.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here is are resources you can read (now or later) to learn more about tobacco. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Tips on Tobacco Cessation*

Read and follow the [U.S. Office of Adolescent Health's tips](#) for parents on preventing their youth from using tobacco or helping them quit.

Parent Tips on Drug Use

Visit the parents' section of the [U.S. National Institute of Drug Abuse](#) for resources on drug use and abuse, including information about tobacco.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your knowledge about or use of tobacco or nicotine? Great! What do you want to change? Write that down as your goal in your Journal. Also, you could take one of these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Quit Your Tobacco Use*

Children and youth look up to adults as role models. So if you are a tobacco, nicotine, or e-cigarette (or vaping, juuling) user yourself, consider quitting also. A great place to start is by going to [smokefree.gov](#) or making a call to 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Help Your Youth Quit Tobacco Use

If your youth is using tobacco, nicotine, or e-cigarettes and has expressed a readiness to quit or reduce their usage, support them right away by getting them connected to a tobacco cessation program.

Make a call to or set an appointment with your young person's healthcare provider so that the provider can connect your youth to tobacco cessation programs they offer directly, or by a relationship with another organization in your community.

If you or your family does not have health insurance, find [free or low-cost substance abuse services](#) by ZIP Code and type of service or the [National Substance Abuse Helpline](#) 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

You can also check out a local chapter of the American Cancer Society or American Lung Association to see what tobacco cessation services they offer specifically to youth.

Reduce Tobacco Sales to Minors

Tobacco merchants have a key role to play in reducing and preventing underage use of tobacco. If you discover a merchant that is selling tobacco to minors, you could visit with the merchant directly and ask them to stop, or you could contact your local law enforcement authority to report the alleged sales to minors and request them to investigate.

LEARN

ACT



15. ALCOHOL USE

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about alcohol?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Use the general term "alcoholic beverage" unless/until the youth specifies a particular type of alcoholic beverage or beverages as their reference.

Youth may report alcohol use. This provides an opportunity for you and the youth to discuss the extent of their use of alcohol, and the harmful effects of excessive or chronic alcohol use. Explore whether the youth seeks to make a change in their use of alcohol. You should encourage the youth to seek the support of a healthcare provider for alcohol use treatment, or minimally to talk to an adult whom they trust about possibly getting treatment.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

Let's talk about alcohol. For adults, it's socially acceptable to drink alcohol within reason. Hopefully, you know that it's against the law for minors to drink alcohol. Those laws are in place for your protection. But you might have formed opinions about it by now. So let's see.

REFLECT

Okay, let's take a moment to write that down in your Journal so that you can return to what we talked about today.

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or later) to learn more about alcohol. Use your Journal to make notes of anything you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Parent Resources on Underage Drinking

Use the Talk, They Hear You resources of the [U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#), including a smartphone app, to help you start the talk with your youth about underage drinking.

Follow the [U.S. Office of Adolescent Health's tips](#) for parents and caring adults on talking to their youth about alcohol use and misuse.

Visit [SAMHSA](#) for parent resources about talking to youth about alcohol.

Parent resources on youth driver safety, including not drinking and driving, are available at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Parents are the Key](#) website.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your use of alcohol? Okay, commit now by writing a goal in your Journal. And then let's think about the action steps you will want to take to accomplish that goal. Consider these action steps...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION

Drink Responsibly

Youth look up to adults as role models. So if you are an alcohol user yourself, drink responsibly. And NEVER drink and drive. Follow the steps at the [Rethinking Drinking](#) website to assess your use of alcohol.

Help Your Youth Quit or Manage Alcohol Use

If your youth is using alcohol and has expressed a readiness to quit or reduce usage, support them right away by connecting them to an alcohol use treatment program. Make a call to or meet with your youth's healthcare provider so that the provider can connect your youth to alcohol use treatment programs they offer directly, or by a relationship with another organization in your community.

If you or your family do not have health insurance, find free or low-cost substance abuse services by ZIP Code and type of service ([findtreatment.samhsa.gov/](#)) or the [National Substance Abuse Helpline](#) 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

Reduce Alcohol Sales to Minors

Alcohol merchants have a key role to play in reducing and preventing underage use of alcohol. If you discover a merchant who is selling alcohol to minors, you could visit with the merchant directly and ask them to stop, or you could contact your local law enforcement authority to report the alleged sales to minors and request them to investigate.



16. DRUG USE

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about drugs?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Use the general term "drug" unless/until the youth specifies a particular type of drug or drugs as their reference.

Youth may report drug use. This provides an opportunity for you and the youth to discuss the harmful effects of drugs. Explore whether the youth seeks to make a change in their use of drugs. You should encourage the youth to seek the support of a healthcare provider for drug use treatment, or minimally to talk to an adult whom they trust about possibly getting treatment.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

We're going to tread now into a sensitive subject area, and that's drugs. I understand you might not want to say a lot about it. But I want to talk about it because drugs are an issue that youth think about.

I give you my promise that what you share with me won't go anywhere else unless I think you are in harm's way or are putting someone else in harm's way.

What would be some good next steps for us to take for you to learn more about the dangers of drug use, or anything else that's on your mind? [Brainstorm]

Okay, how about we use your Journal to capture your reflections now?

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about drugs. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Resources on Drug Use*

Visit the parents' page of the [National Institute of Drug Abuse \(NIDA\) for Teens](#) website for information about drugs and suggestions for talking to your youth about them.

Follow the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [Office of Adolescent Health's tips](#) for parents and caring adults on talking to their youth about drug use and misuse.

Use the five questions in [Family Checkup: Positive Parenting Prevents Drug Abuse](#) to prevent the initiation and progression of drug use among youth.

Parent Resources on Youth Driver Safety

Parent resources on youth driver safety, including not drugging and driving, are available at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Parents are the Key](#) website.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your use of drugs? What is that change? Let's state that change as a goal in your Journal. Now what steps make sense to take to attain that goal? You may consider one of these steps.

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Quit Your Own Drug Use*

Youth look up to adults as role models. So if you are a drug user yourself, get help to quit. NEVER use drugs with your youth present. Never leave drugs or drug paraphernalia accessible to youth.

Help Your Youth Quit or Reduce Drug Use

If your youth is misusing or becoming dependent on drugs and has expressed a readiness to quit or reduce their usage, support them right away by getting them connected to a drug treatment program.

Make a call or set an appointment with your youth's healthcare provider so that the provider can connect your youth to drug treatment programs they offer directly, or by a relationship with another organization in your community.

If you or your family does not have health insurance, find [free or low-cost substance abuse services](#) by ZIP Code and type of service or the [National Substance Abuse Helpline](#) 1-800-662-HELP (4357) Website:.

Reduce Drug Sales in Your Community

If you discover who is selling, and where drug sales are taking place, contact your local law enforcement authority to report the alleged sales and request them to investigate.



17. SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about your sexual activity?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Use the general term "sexual activity" unless/until the youth specifies a particular type of sexual activity as their reference.

Refrain from explicit bias and check against implicit bias toward youth who you feel have initiated sexual activity "too early," with "too many" partners, or in relationship forms of which you do not personally "approve."

Youth may report sexual activity. This provides an opportunity for you and the youth to discuss the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy sexual activity. Explore whether the youth seeks to make a change in their sexual activity. You should encourage the youth to seek the support of a healthcare provider for a sexual health examination and/or protection (e.g., condoms, contraception) or, at minimum, to talk to an adult whom they trust about initiating protection.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

We really should talk about sex because it is a "hallmark" of adolescence and young adulthood. I understand that some of what I may ask you may feel more private than you may want to share, and that's okay. I promise you that what you share with me about your sexual activity won't go anywhere else unless I think you are in harm's way or are putting someone else in harm's way.

Let's take a moment for you to put into your healthy Journal anything about this conversation that you want to remember for the future.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about sexual activity. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS*Parent Resources on Sexual Activity*

Visit the parents' page of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [Office of Adolescent Health for tips and tools](#) for talking to your youth about sexuality, sexual activity, and healthy sexual behavior.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published suggestions for fathers to support their youths' sexual health—[Ways to Influence Your Teen's Sexual Risk Behavior: What Fathers Can Do](#).

Visit [AMAZE](#) for a library of videos to help youth and parents talk about sexual health topics.

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your sexual activity? Write your goal in your Journal. Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. We can consider one of these suggestions...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Get Tested for STIs, HIV, and Hep*

If you or your youth are sexually active, be sure to get tested regularly for sexually transmitted infections, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and viral hepatitis (Hep). Make an appointment with your healthcare provider or [find a testing location](#) near you.

Get Sexual Disease Prevention or Treatment Service

If your youth has initiated or is considering sexual activity, help them select and support the use of a contraceptive. If your youth has symptoms of a sexual disease or concerns that they may have been exposed to one you should get medical care for them.

Make an appointment with your family healthcare provider. If your youth or your family does not have a regular healthcare provider or does not have health insurance, consider getting your health services through a family planning clinic. Find a [family planning clinic](#) near you and enter your ZIP Code in the "Find a Family Planning Clinic" box. Or you could make an appointment with a community health center. Use the [Find-a-Health-Center Tool](#) to locate a community health center by ZIP Code. To locate an [Indian Health Service, Tribal, or Urban Indian Health Program](#) facility, enter your location.

Get HIV Treatment or Care Services: If you or your youth has HIV disease, get connected to specialized HIV treatment and care services. Find an [HIV treatment and care services provider](#) near you.



18. MY INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about your relationships with people with whom you have romantic or sexual relationships?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Use the general term "intimate relationship" unless/until the youth specifies a particular type of relationship as their reference.

Allow the youth to self-disclose their sexual orientation or general identity. The interview can proceed effectively without the adult having established this information.

Refrain from explicit bias and check against implicit bias toward youth who are in forms of intimate relationships of which you do not personally "approve."

This section of the interview provides an opportunity for you and the youth to discuss the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy intimate relationships.

Youth may report violence within the relationship. If the youth is a minor, you have a duty to report violence or threats of violence to the parent/guardian of the youth or to a law enforcement authority. If the youth has reached the age of majority, you have the duty to encourage them to report the incident to a law enforcement authority or to an adult they trust.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

We are going to turn our attention now to intimate relationships, like dating or being in a couple. Remember, you can share with me what you want, and keep private what you want. Also, I want to remind you that if you share with me that you have been harmed or have harmed another person, I need to report that.

What could we do to get you more information about healthy and unhealthy relationships? [Brainstorm]

How about writing down a few thoughts in your Journal so that we can come back to it.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about intimate relationships. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Parent Resources on Healthy Relationships

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers [recommendations](#) for talking to your youth about healthy relationships.

Read a [Parent's Handbook: How to Talk to Your Children about Developing Healthy Relationships](#).

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your intimate relationships? What are you considering changing? Okay let's get that recorded in your Journal. Also let's identify your next action step on this subject and get that into the Journal too. You could take one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Help Your Youth Get Out of the Violent Situation*

If you or your youth are experiencing violence in an intimate relationship, for their own safety and others, they must pause the relationship until the couple or family gets back on a healthy track. There are several crisis and safety plan resources, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year.

Loveisrespect (the national dating violence hotline) at 1-866-331-9474, text loveis to 22522, or [chat online](#).

The National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or [chat online](#).

The National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or [chat online](#).

Prevent or Stop Youth from Acting Violently

If your youth has considered harming an intimate partner or you are afraid they will lose control of their emotions and could do so, you must address this serious health issue. Arrange an appointment with a healthcare provider or find [free or low-cost mental health services](#) by ZIP Code and type of service or the [National Helpline](#) at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).



19. GOING ONLINE (MEDIA ACTIVITY)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about your online activity?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth have differing access to types, places, and times for media activity. For example, some youth may not have a home computer or a smart phone. Others may have screen time limits placed on them by a parent or guardian. Still others may live in areas with poor Internet access. Be mindful of the youth's situation when discussing media activity.

1. THE "101"



2. REFLECT ON IT

Let's talk about your media activities—the ways you communicate and gather information through social media like Instagram and Snapchat, as well as texting, email, websites, radio, and television.

Let's put the healthy list and the unhealthy list in your Journal so that you can check yourself another time.

REFLECT

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or another time) to learn more about media activity. Use your Journal to make notes of any facts or ideas you uncover from your reading that you don't want to forget.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Teach yourself about the social media platforms that youth are using these days, so you can keep up with your youth and have a more informed conversation about their social media use. Parent guides to various social media platforms are available through [Connect Safely](#).

Read and act upon [suggestions](#) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on talking to youth about online safety.

Read and act upon [suggestions](#) from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on protecting your youth from electronic aggression. (Electronic aggression is any type of harassment or bullying that occurs through e-mail, a chat room, instant messaging, a website [including blogs], or text messaging).

LEARN

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your media activity? Okay what goal do you want to put in your Journal to commit to that change? Also, put down in the Journal what your next action step is going to be toward that goal. You could take one of these action steps...

ACT

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION*Set Limits on Media Time*

Set rules or limits on the allowable content and amount of time your youth spends in front of a screen (computer, tablet, phone, or TV) for leisure. Between 2 and 4 hours daily is the maximum recommended by experts. Set your house rules with your youth and allow them to weigh-in.

Identify Alternatives to Media

Help your youth find leisure alternatives to reduced screen time, such as physical activity, volunteering, spiritual, or religious activity, or safe socializing with friends.

Combat Electronic Aggression

If your youth is being bullied, harassed or stalked online, take [steps](#) for blocking and reporting the electronic aggression.

Help Your Youth Get Treatment for Internet Addiction

If your youth is spending too much time online or engaging in unhealthy activities online and can't stop or control it, they may have an internet addiction. Talk to your youth's healthcare provider about having your youth evaluated for an online addiction. See also this [guide](#) for more information about Internet Addiction Disorder.



20. HOW I SPEND MY FREE TIME (FUN ACTIVITY)

Is there anything more you want to learn about or change about how, where, or with whom you spend your free time?

FACILITATOR CONSIDERATIONS

Youth have differing access to types, places, and times for leisure activity. For example, some youth may have family care responsibilities that prevent them from leisure activities, especially outside the home. Others may be low-resourced and unable to procure the supplies or equipment necessary. Be mindful of the youth's situation when discussing leisure activity.

1. THE "101"

101

2. REFLECT ON IT

Yeah! Now let's focus on fun and relaxation. Nothing wrong about that, is there?

REFLECT

Let's put into your Journal your leisure activity wish list!

3. LEARN MORE

Here are resources you can read (now or later) to learn more. Use your Journal to make notes of anything you uncover from your reading to save for later.

RESOURCES FOR CARING ADULTS

Tips for Helping Youth Identify Leisure Interests

Visit *Tips for Helping Youth Find a Spark* to guide your youth to identifying leisure activities they wish to pursue.

ParentFurther.com

An all-new website from Search Institute, ParentFurther.com, is a great resource for parents. The website features quick quizzes, conversation starters, and activities that bring to life new research on family relationships and youth development. Also, ParentFurther.com offers more than 100 brief, meaningful activities for families that emphasize how kids and parenting adults can learn, grow, and enjoy time together. Each activity focuses on strengthening family relationships and developing attitudes and skills that young people need to overcome challenges and thrive in life.

4. TAKE ACTION

So, you want to make some type of change in your fun activity? Let's spell that out with a goal in your Journal. And how about some next steps? Consider these...

CARING ADULTS: TAKE ACTION

Help Your Youth Identify Fun Activities

Ask your parent/caring adult peers what their youth do for fun, and where they do it. Then suggest to your youth those activities and see if they have interest.

Check the website of or call the parks and recreation agency in your community and see what programs and services they offer to youth. It's not just playgrounds and sports teams! Suggest some of the activities to your youth and see if any appeal to them. If so, help them check it out, or sign-up.

Discover Fun Activity Opportunities in Your Community

Ask a friend, a peer, or some adults what they enjoy doing for fun and why. Probe whether you might join them sometime to see if you would like the activity too. Doing something together once or a few times together doesn't mean you will have to all the time, in case you are concerned about too much mixing of your various social circles.

Don't bypass the fun activities available at your place of learning. School-organized and student-led extracurricular activities abound at high school and at college campuses. Your workplace may organize a sports team, occasional after work social events, or service projects.

There are plenty of people in your community with some need or other, and so there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer. Some communities have "volunteer connector organizations" to match people to volunteer assignments. Or you can go to serve.gov and use the "find a volunteer opportunity" search engine. Places of spiritual and religious practice offer volunteering, learning, and social activities in addition to prayer and worship.