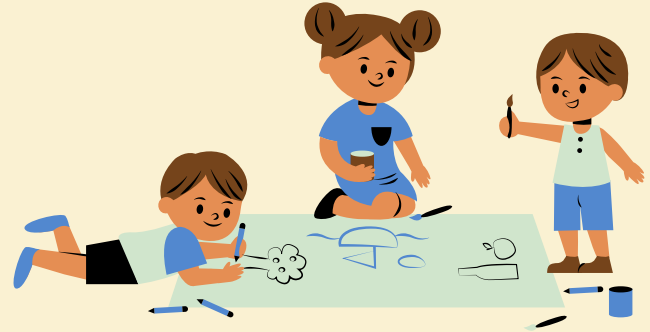


CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH (from birth to age 5)

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT IN YOUNG CHILDREN?

A child's mental health can affect how a child **plays**, **learns**, **speaks**, makes **friends**, acts at **school**, **home**, in the **community**, and how the child processes their **feelings**.

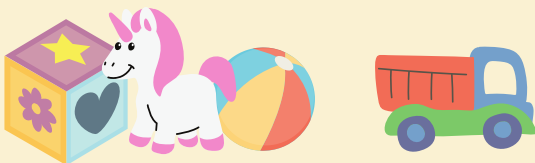


Infants can be affected by **stress** and **trauma**. Mental health symptoms present differently in each child and change over time as a child grows. ^{1, 2, 3}



SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR ^{1, 2, 3}

- Persistent fears, sadness, or worries that disrupt their daily activities, play, and social situations.
- Delay in meeting developmental milestones.
- Difficulty with attention, impulsive behaviors.
- Separation anxiety that persists over time
- Change in appetite, weight, sleep or energy.
- Emotional distress, distressing memories, nightmares and/or anger outbursts.
- Increased tantrums or clinging behaviors.
- Loss of bladder/bowel control.
- Difficulties with transitions.
- Hurting themselves.



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH ^{1, 2, 3}

- Listen first. Be engaged and attentive.
- Respond calmly during elevated emotions.
- Regularly encourage, support, and praise your child.
- Encourage learning by reading, singing, painting, building, playing, and more.
- Create home routines and have scheduled family time together.
- Teach and talk to your child about how to name, cope and manage feelings.
- Provide a safe in home environment for your child.
- Model healthy behavior, encourage play, provide healthy foods and snacks.



1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). www.cdc.gov

2. Zero to Three. www.zerotothree.org

3. American Psychological Association (APA). <https://www.apa.org/pi/families/children-mental-health>



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.



For 24/7 Help, please
call our Help Line at
(800) 854-7771



<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/>



<https://www.zerotothree.org/>