

Take It Offline: Mental Health Conversation Guide for Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers

Today more than ever, it's crucial for adults to step in and offer real-world support to young people to supplement the mental health support and answers they are seeking online.

Start by expressing your intention to have an open and honest conversation about mental health and wellbeing. It's essential to create a safe, non-judgmental space where the young person feels comfortable expressing their thoughts and feelings.

**TAKE IT
OFFLINE**

CREATING REAL-WORLD SUPPORT
FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

1. Initiating the Conversation:

- **For Parents:** "I've noticed you've been spending a lot of time online. I'm here if you ever want to talk about anything you see or feel, whether it's good or bad."
- **For Teachers:** "In class, we often focus on academic achievements, but I want you to know that your mental health is just as important. If there's anything on your mind, I'm here to listen."
- **For Caregivers:** "As someone who cares about you, I want to make sure you know that I'm here for you, especially if you're feeling down or overwhelmed by anything, online or offline."

2. Discussing Online Experiences:

- "What are some things you like about spending time online? Are there things that worry or upset you?"
- "Have you ever come across anything online that made you feel uncomfortable or unsure about who to talk to?"

3. Addressing Mental Health:

- "It's okay to feel not okay sometimes. Do you ever feel that what you see online affects how you feel about yourself or the world around you?"
- "Mental health is something we all have to look after, just like our physical health. What are some ways you take care of your mental health?"

4. Encouraging Real-World Connections:

- "Who are the people you feel you can talk to when you're feeling down or have questions about growing up?"
- "Apart from the internet, what are some activities or hobbies that make you feel good or help you relax?"

5. Offering Support:

- "Remember, it's perfectly fine to seek help from trusted adults, friends, or professionals when things get tough."
- "How can I support you better? Are there topics you wish we could talk about more openly?"

6. Concluding the Conversation:

- "I'm proud of you for having this conversation with me. Remember, I'm always here for you, no matter what."
- "Let's keep this dialogue open. You can always come to me if you need to talk, seek advice, or just share how your day went."

Additional Tips:

- Listen more than you speak. Give the young person space to share their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment.
- Avoid dismissing or trivializing their experiences. Validate their feelings and show empathy.
- Provide resources and information about where they can seek professional help if needed.
- Follow up on the conversation. Let them know that your support is ongoing and that they are not alone.