

# Coping with Academic Pressure

This playbook outlines a strategy for helping teenagers manage the stresses associated with academic pressure. It emphasizes the balance between striving for academic excellence and maintaining mental health.

## Step 1: **Acknowledge Stress**

Recognize and validate the teenager's feelings of stress. Ensure they understand that experiencing pressure is common and that it's okay to feel overwhelmed at times.

## Step 2: **Set Realistic Goals**

Work together with the teen to set achievable academic goals. Emphasize the importance of setting goals that are realistic, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

## Step 3: **Time Management**

Teach the teenager effective time management skills. This can include creating a schedule, prioritizing tasks, and taking regular, short breaks to avoid burnout.

## Step 4: **Support Network**

Encourage the teenager to develop a support network, which may include friends, family, teachers, or counselors. Having people to talk to can alleviate feelings of isolation and stress.

## Step 5: **Healthy Habits**

Promote the development of healthy habits such as regular exercise, adequate sleep, and a balanced diet, as these can improve overall well-being and enhance academic performance.

## Step 6: **Professional Help**

Consider seeking professional help if the teenager's stress levels are causing significant distress or affecting their daily functioning. This could include talking to a school counselor or consulting a mental health professional.

## Step 7: **Evaluate Progress**

Regularly review and evaluate the teenager's progress towards their goals, adjusting strategies as necessary to continue supporting their academic and mental health needs.

# **General Notes**

## **Flexibility**

Be responsive to the teen's changing needs, and be willing to adjust goals and strategies as those needs evolve.

## **Normalize Conversations**

Encourage open dialogue about mental health to normalize conversations around stress and to remove the stigma associated with seeking help.