

Summary of the movie

Introduction

The teenage years can be an incredible time in people's lives, with partying, friends and great plans for the future. There are however also many things that can stress young people during this time in their lives. Search for identity, peer pressure, achievements in school, societal norms and constant internet connection. In this movie, we are going to take a closer look at stress and at what you as a parent can do to support your teenager when he or she feels stressed. But we start off with a few words about what stress actually is, what happens in the body when we feel stressed and how stress affects us.

What is stress? What happens in the body? How can you as a parent know if your teenager suffers from an unhealthy kind of stress?

Stress is a normal physiological reaction, which is important to our survival. Farther back in time we were often likely to end up in situations where the body needed to mobilize strength and energy in order to resort to either fight or flight to avoid danger. The basic thing that happens when a stress reaction starts is that our ability to focus increase. That is a positive thing there and then, but it becomes negative if the stress reaction continues over time, without breaks or opportunities for recovery and rest. Signs that indicate that your teenager suffers from negative or unhealthy stress can be that he or she is restless, anxious, irritable, struggle to think of two things at the same time or struggle with remembering things. Unhealthy stress can however also be recognized in other ways. It is common to get stomach problems or muscle tension in the neck and shoulders. It can also happen that you get depressed, avoid social interactions and withdraw from things that you usually enjoy doing. In summary, the various signs of unhealthy stress paints a very faceted picture.

Advice from a school doctor and a school psychologist to parents when it comes to supporting their teenagers to deal with stress:

- Help them to establish routines when it comes to eating, sleeping and their various activities. Exercise and physical activity reduces stress.
- Be present and try not to be stressed as a parent. Take a break and spend time with your child.
- Get involved in your children's life; help them to put their feelings and experiences into words.
- Don't ponder about the problems, confront them, talk about the feelings you have and learn from mistakes.
- Keep calm as a parent. Don't transfer your own stress to your teenager.
- Listen and talk to your children about what it is that makes them stressed.

Advice from teenagers to parents:

- Encourage your teenager
- Help them to create a structure and give advice about how to get an everyday life without stress
- Ask questions in a curious way but don't demand answers
- Do fun things together with your teenager
- Trust your teenager