



CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

May 3-9, 2026

wired for belonging

Everyone can promote youth belonging!

Belonging is the feeling of being welcomed, accepted, respected, and valued within one's social environment, including family, friends, school, and community.

Belonging is important because:

- It is critical to both physical and mental health.
- It is foundational to child well-being.



3 Things **ADULTS** Can Do to Promote Youth Belonging

- 1** Have a 40-second positive interaction with a young person.

 - ▶ Doctors were able to substantially reduce anxiety by having a less than 40-second compassionate interaction with their patient. ([source](#))
- 2** Make eye contact and smile at young people.

 - ▶ With younger children, get down to their level.
 - ▶ With teens, smile even if they don't!
- 3** Just listen.

 - ▶ Sometimes youth just want an adult to listen and not offer advice.
 - ▶ Supportive adults listen without judgment.



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