

How do I as a parent know when behaviors are normal teen moods vs something wrong? Are there warning signs?

06:38

The first thing that I'll say is that if you are communicating with your child, you know, you know the differences, you know, when their mood turns dark, they're not having an outburst. They're not reacting

Does media play a role?

09:39

I also think that it's important to limit what children are exposed to, especially when they're really young. They often don't see the full context of different behaviors, whether that's on a movie, or in a meme, or something. The way that kids typically interpret things is different it's out of context than the way older youth, adolescents and adults interpret them. So having those open lines of communication, answering their questions as straightforward as possible, but really helping them navigate through the negative feelings on what we can do to help ourselves feel better. And then if those things aren't effective, talking with their pediatrician as soon as possible.

What issues can arise involving young children and cellphone access?

10:24

Often what we see is kids get access to a cell phone, without any associated rules. And now they are clicking and clicking and clicking, and getting to places of information that they're not ready to handle. Or they're staying up all night long on these phones, that's disrupting their sleep and then predisposing them to anxiety or depression related illness later. It's really important to decide as a family and every child is different. At what point is my child? Or is it important to our family, for my child to have access to the cell phone? And what will the rules be around that?

What happens when you don't plan ahead for cellphone access?

11:06

What happens when we don't set those ahead of time, is that kids, the phone becomes a lifeline for kids, they can text their friends, they can chat, they enter these worlds of social media that can make them feel bad, they can also make them feel great. And if they're throwing a tantrum, and immediately, the parent takes away the phone, it can be another blow to the child, I've lost ac

utilize some of these techniques I learned in therapy, maybe I could remember to take my medicine, you know, whatever it is, it can remind them to do the coping strategies that can be healthy for them.

Why is the pandemic crisis a good opportunity to discuss mental health with your child/teen?

13:22

You know, I spoke with some colleagues of mine who are a pediatric emergency physicians. And at the beginning of the pandemic, they actually saw a huge decrease in kids presenting to the emergency room with suicidal ideation for three or four months. And then it was like the dam broke. And they're seeing more kids exactly like what you're saying here, more children more youth in worse distress than they've ever seen. And, you know, part of that may be that there's been a build up, that there was a time period where people weren't seeking care, there is part that they've been additionally distressed from the pandemic. And then because of the pandemic, maybe not seeking the care that was helpful for them in the past. I think that it's always a good opportunity. It's always a good time to talk about mental health, and how we can support our mental health. But the pandemic has truly highlighted that highlighted the crisis that we've been in, in our nation for quite some time.

Anything else to add?

14:35

My hope is that this pandemic, in its spotlight on mental health distress, will help us move this needle and really make a difference.