

# Members' Digest

## Highlights

Building Confidence Early:  
What the Research Shows

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Member Story:  
A Parent's Journey

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Pride and Parenting  
How Parents Can Support

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Mental Health Check-In



## **Every Child Deserves to Feel Strong and Supported** Confident Parenting in a Complex World

### **What Every Parent Needs to Hear**

Being a parent today is tougher than ever. Between social media, school stress, and growing identity questions, today's kids face challenges we never imagined. But here's the truth:

Confidence isn't inherited, it's built. And it starts how we show up for our kids. At MembersHealth, we don't just offer programs. We deliver peace of mind, tools that work, and support that sticks — because your child's well-being isn't optional. It's essential.

### **Our promise:**

*Personalized, proven, proactive care that puts your family first.*

# How Early Confidence Shapes Mental Health

Adolescence is one of the most formative stages in a child's development, when identity is shaped, confidence is tested, and mental health challenges often emerge for the first time. Research shows that 50% of all mental health conditions begin by age 14, and early support can make a lasting difference in how a young person manages emotions, relationships, and self-worth throughout life.

But while kids grow fast, confidence doesn't. It's built slowly through support, understanding, and everyday moments that reinforce their value. At MembersHealth, we understand that supporting youth mental health starts with supporting the people who care for them most: parents and caregivers.



## That's why our approach includes

### **Access to Licensed Mental Health Professionals**

Parents can connect with therapists who specialize in youth-related challenges such as anxiety, identity concerns, peer pressure, and emotional regulation.

### **Coaching for Caregivers**

We offer guidance to help parents better understand their child's emotional landscape, improve communication, and build safe, affirming home environments.

### **Educational Tools & Webinars**

Through workshops and curated resources, families gain insights on topics like self-esteem development, social media impact, and how to spot early signs of emotional distress.

### **Support for Diverse Needs**

We prioritize care that affirms the identities of LGBTQ+ youth, racialized communities, and neurodiverse individuals, because feeling seen is the first step to feeling strong.

In addition to these supports, simply being present, informed, and willing to grow alongside your child can make a meaningful difference. By engaging with these resources, parents are not only fostering their teen's resilience, they're helping create a safer, more supportive space for every young person to thrive.



# A Parent's Journey

## From Uncertainty to Understanding

When my daughter, Ava, was 14, I noticed she had started to change, but not in the way I expected. She was quieter, more distant, and no longer lit up when talking about the things she used to love. She spent more time alone, avoided friends, and often looked... heavy, not physically, but emotionally.

At first, I thought it was just a phase. Teenagers go through ups and downs, right? But deep down, I knew it was more. One evening, after a long silence at dinner, Ava said, "I don't feel like myself. And I don't know how to explain it to you."

That moment changed everything. It took time and trust, but Ava eventually opened up, she was questioning her identity, overwhelmed at school, and struggling with self-worth from constant online comparisons.

That's when I turned to our EFAP—our Employee and Family Assistance Program. I wasn't sure what to expect, but I knew I needed support, for her, and for me. Through the program, Ava was matched with a therapist who understood what today's teens are facing.

She joined virtual peer sessions where she could talk without fear of judgment. And I was able to attend parent guidance sessions that helped me better understand how to support her journey.

Today, Ava's not "fixed", because she was never broken. But she's stronger. She's more confident in who she is, and she knows she's supported. And me? I'm more present, more informed, and more capable of showing up in the way she needs. We're not perfect, but we're connected. And that makes all the difference.





## How parents can be the source of strength and stability

- 1. Start with Listening, Not Fixing:** When your child shares, respond with empathy, not solutions. Being present without judgment builds trust.
- 2. Use Affirming Language:** Call your child by their chosen name and pronouns. It's respectful, protective, and shows you care. If you're unsure, ask. It's better to be humble and curious than to assume.
- 3. Educate Yourself:** You don't need all the answers, just a willingness to grow. Learning shows their identity matters to you.

## Pride and Parenting

### Showing Up with Love and Understanding

Parenting in today's world means more than providing food, shelter, and education, it's about creating a safe space where children feel fully accepted for who they are. For youth exploring or expressing their gender identity or sexual orientation, that space of acceptance can be the difference between confidence and crisis.

Pride Month celebrates visibility and self-expression, but for many youth, it highlights the struggle to feel understood at home. Research shows that LGBTQIA2S+ youth with family support have significantly lower rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide.

- 4. Spend Time with Your Child:** Spend 20 minutes daily doing something your child enjoys, no commands, no questions, just presence and attention.
- 5. Build a Circle of Support:** You don't have to do it alone. Connect with groups, professionals, or communities that support youth and their mental health.
- 6. Affirm, Reassure, Repeat:** Even confident kids need reassurance. Remind them regularly that they're loved, accepted, and safe to be themselves at home.

## Mental Health Check-In

Empowering your child is rewarding, but it can also feel overwhelming or uncertain. If you're struggling, know you're not alone.

### Tips for Parental Well-Being

- **Pause with Purpose:** Take 5 minutes daily to breathe, reflect, or simply be present, guilt-free.
- **Talk It Out:** Connect with other parents, mentors, or support groups to share challenges and solutions.
- **Create Boundaries:** Set digital, work, or emotional boundaries to protect your peace.
- **Reach Out:** Asking for help is a sign of strength, not failure. Support is just a call away

MembersHealth is here to support you. Contact us anytime at **1-800-484-0152** to speak with one of our certified specialists.

