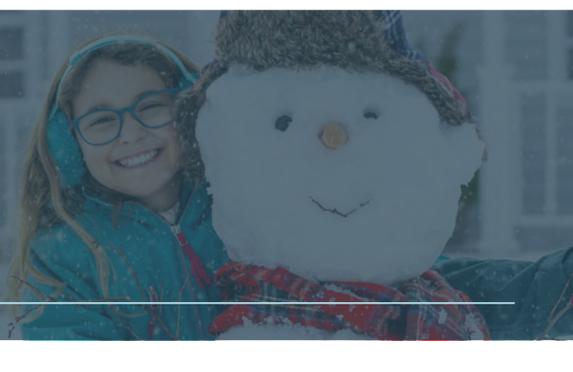


# Parent Talk

DECEMBER 2022



## Mental Health Around the Holidays

The holidays are generally a positive and happy time for kids and teens, but the reality of the situation for many is that this season brings a spike in anxiety and depression. Particularly for LGBTQ+ youth, family gatherings around the holidays can be incredibly difficult. Certain members of the family may not know about, or worse yet, may not accept a youth's LGBTQ+ identity which can lead to conflict. Below, we've put together a series of tips for youth and parents to make sure everyone has a safe holiday season.



### Provide Alone Time

One of the best ways youths can preserve their mental health is to make sure they have alone time. If a parent senses their child may be uncomfortable or sad during a family gathering, they should make sure to set up a safe space for them away from the rest of the family. Allowing the child to be alone for a set period with something they enjoy like a video game or a book can do wonders for their mental health and give them a much-needed break.

### Set Boundaries

In more extreme cases, if a parent knows a problematic family member may attempt to engage with their child during the holidays, a good thing to do is set a hard boundary with that person. Explain to them that they are welcome at the gathering, but only under specific conditions and if they don't adhere to those conditions, they must leave.



### Avoid Triggers

Another good tactic is to have each member of the family agree to not discuss topics that may be hurtful or triggering to the child. Come up with a list of more neutral and positive topics of conversation for the family to engage in that won't end up hurting someone's feelings or causing them distress.



### Establish A Support System

If things at your family gathering do go wrong, make sure you have a plan in place to support your child. If there's an argument or things get out of hand, plan to shower your child with affirmation and love. Gather any other members of the family who support your child, and make sure they feel validated and respected.



### Plan An Exit Strategy

If things really go south and there's a significant incident that disrupts your child's mental well-being, always plan your getaway. If you're visiting family members away from home, make sure you're able to remove your child from the situation at any point. If the incident occurs at home, set expectations with the problematic family members that if they cannot respect your child and the rules of your home, they must leave.

## Need more help?

Resources at The Baker Center are just a click away



### Therapy & Treatment Services

**CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE THERAPY** →



### Special Education

**MANVILLE SCHOOL** →



### Therapeutic Summer Camp

**CAMP BAKER** →



### College Preparation

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## Featured Resources



### A Parent & Caregiver Guide to Helping Your Family Before, During, and After a Crisis

Caring for a child in crisis can be frightening, a confusing, and sometimes more than a caregiver/ family can handle alone. Asking for help doesn't mean you've done anything wrong and being prepared doesn't mean there will be a crisis.

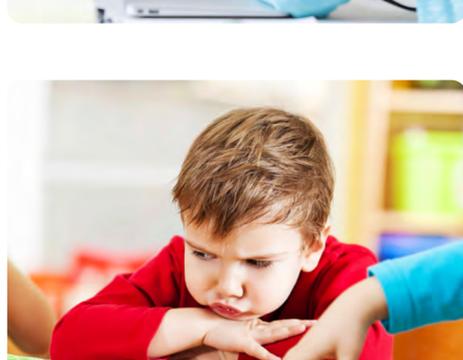
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### A Parent & Caregiver Guide to Helping Your Family Before, During, and After a Crisis – EN ESPAÑOL

Cuidar a un niño en crisis puede ser aterrador, confuso, y a veces más que un cuidador/la familia puede manejar a solas. Pedir ayuda no significa que hayas hecho algo malo, y estar preparado no quiere decir que habrá una crisis.

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### Symptoms & Conditions Kids May Experience

Certain mental health conditions are more common in children and teens than in adults. At our outpatient clinic, we treat these disorders and more and can provide additional information on how you child may receive a diagnosis.

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