



## Fostering Good Mental Health for the Future

Good mental health is crucial for thriving in the future—it helps you cope with daily stresses and stay focused on achieving personal goals. While various factors such as trauma, stress, and sleep disruptions can impact your mental well-being, you can take proactive steps to protect and nurture your mental health over time. It's not always possible to prevent mental health challenges, but there are strategies that can help support a healthier, more resilient mind.

### Here are a few steps to get you started:

- 1. Eat Well for Mental Clarity.** What you eat can directly affect your mood and energy. Focus on a balanced diet with plenty of fiber, water, and nutrient-rich foods. Avoid sugary, processed foods that cause energy crashes, and limit alcohol and caffeine, especially before bed. These simple changes help maintain stable energy levels and support a healthy mind.
- 2. Get Moving for a Healthy Mind.** Regular physical activity boosts mood by releasing endorphins and helps you sleep better. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise each day—something as simple as walking can make a big difference in both your mental and physical health.
- 3. Protect Your Mental Health as You Age.** As you age, stressors like financial pressures or health changes can affect mental health. Staying active, eating well, and managing stress can help you navigate these challenges and support your future mental well-being.

**4. Care for Your Body, Support Your Mind.** Chronic conditions like diabetes or heart disease can increase the risk of depression or anxiety. Healthy habits—like eating well and staying active—benefit both physical and mental health, helping you prevent future struggles.

**5. Avoid Harmful Habits.** Substances like smoking, alcohol, or drugs can negatively affect brain chemistry and mental health. Avoiding or reducing these habits now can prevent future mental health issues.

**6. Heal from the Past.** Traumatic or negative childhood experiences can have lasting effects on your mental health. Seek support if needed, and focus on healing, as this will help you maintain a healthier mindset in the future.

Your mental health is a lifelong journey. By making positive choices now, whether it's through nutrition, physical activity, or emotional care, you are building a strong foundation for the future. Taking action today will help you not just cope with challenges but thrive and reach your fullest potential. And remember, if you're struggling, you're not alone—help is available, and taking steps to care for your mental health is an essential part of a brighter tomorrow.

**BHS provides referrals to qualified mental health professionals that can help. Call BHS at 800-245-1150 to speak to your designated Care Coordinator about your benefits and options for support.**