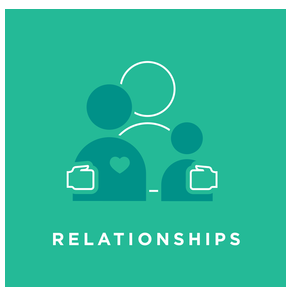
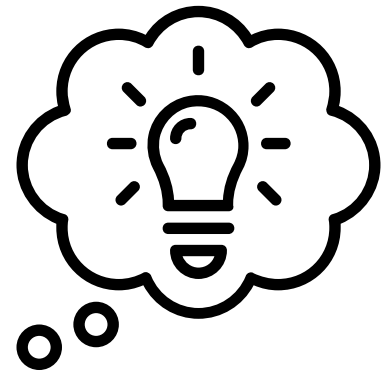


HOPE for Adolescents



Did you know that all experiences affect your brain and body? While you may hear a lot about how negative things can impact you (like drugs, alcohol, and unsafe driving), research shows that certain types of positive experiences can actually help you be a healthier adult.

It's not just about avoiding the bad stuff; it's also about trying to get more of the good stuff! Learn more about the key types of experiences, called the **Four Building Blocks**, that help kids and teenagers grow into healthier adults:



Relationships: Safe and supportive relationships with adults, family members, and friends matter! They protect against substance use, depression, and even poor physical health later in life!



Spend time with the people in your life who help you feel good about yourself.



Stay in touch with family members who support you through texting and video chats.



Be a good friend to others!



Environments: Everyone deserves to have safe places to live, learn, and hang out where you feel physically and emotionally safe AND have access to things like food, water, electricity, clothing, and other basic needs.



Keep a routine going. Having a daily routine can help things feel more predictable.



Help create safe spaces online and in person. Walk away if you sense drama starting. Grab an adult if it feels like things might be getting dangerous for yourself or others.



It's ok to ask for help. If you or your family is having a hard time paying bills, getting enough food, or having a safe space to live, there are people who can help! Talk with a trusted adult- a teacher, coach, doctor, counselor, or family member.



Engagement: Feeling like you belong somewhere, like you're part of a community, helps to create better mental and physical health!



Try out a new hobby.



Help your family with a meal or holiday tradition.



Volunteer somewhere that's meaningful to you.



Join a sports team or art club.



Emotional growth: We're always growing emotionally. Understanding what you're feeling and how to move through emotions are skills that will help you your whole life!



Keep a journal with you, and write things down when you're noticing big feelings. Talk to someone about how you're feeling.



Figure out what it looks like in your body when you're overstimulated, angry, sad, and frustrated. Give yourself permission to take a break when you notice these things happening. Try some deep breathing, moving your body, listening to music, or yelling into a pillow.

You might not always be able to control the hard things in your life, but research shows that these Four Building Blocks can help you be healthier and happier in adulthood, even when you've experienced some hard stuff.



Your doctor can help too! If you want to figure out how to get more of the Four Building Blocks into your life, let your doctor know!