

EDUCATE

As a provider, **PCs** may gravitate to you for education on resources, tools, or communication skills. Some methods to **effectively educate** include the need to:

1 Build the capacity to understand

- Provide information to help the **PCs** understand what their **emerging adult** is experiencing. Encourage ongoing education on topics regarding their **emerging adult's** behavioral health challenges. There are better outcomes when a **caregiver** understands.

2 Direct conversation

- **Direct conversation** is a great tool for **PCs** to learn. It gives the **topic perspective** and a **real-world approach** that sometimes lacks in other educational forms.
- **Role-playing** with **PCs** is extremely helpful, such as practicing with them how to have conversations with their **emerging adults** so they are better prepared in the situation.
- Find presentations/events that **include presenters with lived experience**. This can be inspiring for **PCs** and give hope.

3 Provide tangible materials

- Provide brochures, reading materials, or websites that educate **PCs**.
 - When you are able to, **review the materials with them** so you can assist them with understanding and help answer any questions they may have.
 - Examples of resources on the web include the following:
 - **National Alliance on Mental Illness**
 - <https://nami.org>
 - **Mental Health.gov**
 - <https://www.mentalhealth.gov>
 - **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**
 - <https://www.samhsa.gov/>
 - **Missouri Department of Mental Health**
 - <https://dmh.mo.gov/>
 - The book, **Gleam of Hope**, by Sally Desu, a Missouri parent of an **emerging adult**

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Assess abilities

- Be cognizant of the **PCs'** abilities. Ensure that they are able to understand your communication, verbal and written.
- Think about the **PCs as people** and be aware of **other responsibilities** they may have, for example:
 - Do they have **other children** in the home to care for?
 - Does **their schedule allow** them the time to read materials and or do research on their own?
 - Do they have **access to the materials** you suggest (e.g., the internet or a laptop)?
 - Are they **capable of understanding** the suggested materials? Sometimes **PCs** have learning disabilities and/or challenges with reading and comprehension.
- Keep it **simple**, be **realistic**, and **never be condescending** to **PCs by implying that they are unable to understand**.

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Discuss other important topics if they are struggling with behavioral health

- Do not treat their child as **their diagnosis**, but rather **WITH a diagnosis**.
 - Use person first language as discussed in the **SUICIDE PREVENTION** chapter of this playbook.
- Help them to understand and identify the **difference between symptoms and behaviors**. Assist them with understanding symptoms: **what is concerning and what is not?**
- Discuss the option of **medications** and **potential side effects**. If this is not your role and/or if you don't have the knowledge, refer and assist them with connecting with a primary care physician or psychiatrist.
- Assist them with learning to **manage their own emotions** and/or refer them to their own therapist. If necessary, remind them physical violence is never okay.
- Discuss **stigma** with them and identify ways to reduce it.
- Remind them to look for **little wins** and **small victories** in their **emerging adult's** progress.

CHALLENGES

It's common to work with families that need additional **redirection**. Some common challenges you may face include:

Frustration

"[**Emerging adult**] never tries to get better."

Egocentricism

"I'm the parent, I know what's best for my child."

Anger

"I yell because I want [**emerging adult**] to listen."

PCs Behavioral Health Challenges

"I'm too sad to talk to [**emerging adult**]."

Exhaustion

"I never have time do anything for myself."

Remind **PCs** we are all on the **same team**.

Bring the **emerging adult** back to the **main focus** regardless of disagreements.

PCs likely think their actions are for the betterment of their child. It's important to remember that they normally have their child's **best interest at heart** and what they do is usually not out of spite/bad intentions.

Recommend separate resources for **PCs** and remind them that, as the professional you are there for the **emerging adult** and that is the goal.

This can be helped by self-care and reminding **PCs** to take care of themselves (see **page 39** for more info).