

Wellness Guide at 18 Years Old

Helpful tips to support your child's development at this stage of life.



Becoming a Young Adult

- **Adulting:** "Adulting" is a journey and a process.
- **Goals:** Your previous experiences, resources, opportunities, and choices have contributed to shaping who you are. Take time to reflect on your life. What are your goals?
- **Responsibilities:** Having increased independence can also mean increased responsibility and life stresses. You may be making decisions about your housing, education, employment, health, friendships, and family. You may realize that you have drifted away from some of your old friends. Life can feel hard at times. This is normal and expected during transitions or changes.
- **Balance:** Consider creating a schedule that helps you organize and balance your responsibilities. Think about healthy ways to help cope with stress. Try to find time (even 15 min) to relax: walk (or other form of exercise), journal, meditate, or listen to music.
- **Emotions:** Reach out to someone if you are feeling more than just daily ups and downs or if your feelings or reactions are impacting and interfering with your daily life. Resources can include a friend, family member, clergy, sports coach, tutor, advisor, or your health care provider.

Safety

- Have a list of trusted adults you can call for help when faced with unsafe/uncomfortable situations.
- Wear hearing protection at loud events/concerts/job sites.
- Use protective gear for sports.
- Always wear a seat belt in the car. Avoid multi-tasking and distractions while driving (cell phone, texting, reading, etc.).
- Never drink and drive or get into a vehicle with an impaired driver.

Digital Media Plan & Safety

- Although internet/cell phones are often an essential social and recreational outlet, they may pose risks to privacy and personal safety. Do not give out personal information, share passwords, or physically meet someone you have only "met" on the internet.
- Make safe and respectful decisions about what you post/text/email. Do not text/email/share photos of anything you would not want forwarded to your parents. Remember that a sent text or photo cannot be "taken back". These decisions can affect your reputation, possibilities of future employment, and college opportunities.
- Do not tolerate cyber-bullying. Block the offender and report cyber-bullying to your Internet Service Provider. If you're in school and the offender is a student, you can report cyberbullying to school leaders.
- TV, electronic devices, and cell phones should be turned off an hour before bedtime to help avoid sleep issues.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

POISON CONTROL: (800) 222-1222

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE: 988

**WA MENTAL HEALTH REFERRAL LINE:
(833) 303-5437**

**END OVERDOSE: FREE NALOXONE
TRAINING & TEST KITS**

Self Worth

- Invest in yourself. Make time for yourself. Find ways to value your unique self. Find healthy ways to have fun.
- Do not be afraid to try something new. Keep in mind that everyone makes mistakes. Think about how you respond when you make a mistake. Do you judge yourself? Can you be kind to yourself? Mistakes can be an opportunity to take responsibility and learn.
- Reflect on your support system. Nurture relationships with people that are supportive of you and your choices. Find time to connect with your friends and family. Ask for help when you need it.

Health

- What choices can you make to keep yourself safe and healthy? Eat breakfast every morning. Eat healthy meals with balanced nutrition, and avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine to support your physical and emotional health. Drink plenty of water and include calcium and iron in your diet. Remember that food fuels the body and the brain.
- Daily physical activity and proper sleep (8-10 hours) help you reach your potential.
- At age 18, privacy laws make all information confidential between you and your health care provider. A parent or legal guardian can't access your health information after you turn 18, except in very limited circumstances.
- Begin to plan your transition to a healthcare provider that cares for young adults. Consider on-campus care if in college, or a family practice doctor in the community. If you see a specialist, ask them for advice on transitioning to an adult specialist.

TRANSITIONING TO ADULT CARE

GOT TRANSITION

Relationships

- Healthy relationships are built on respect.
- Support friends who choose not to use drugs, alcohol, tobacco, steroids, or diet pills.
- No one should ever try to force or convince you to be sexually active. Saying "no" is OK. Decide before you are in the moment how you define healthy boundaries for physical relationships. Be aware that substances are often involved in non-consensual sex. If you choose to be sexually active with a trusted partner, talk to your healthcare provider about your plan to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- Do not allow someone to physically or verbally harm you. Always deal with conflict using communication and nonviolence.

Overseas Travel

If your family will be traveling internationally, schedule a virtual eTravel consultation at least 4–6 weeks before departure to review travel health recommendations, vaccines, and medications.

TRAVEL CONSULTATION

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MYIR MOBILE [↗](#)

SCHOOL, SPORTS, & CAMP FORMS [↗](#)

PATIENT EDUCATION [↗](#)