



# 10 WAYS TEENS EXPERIENCED TRAUMA THIS YEAR (AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT)

TEEN  LIFE

# TRAUMA



## *TRAUMA: AN EVENT THAT OVERWHELMS*

Can we all agree that this past year has been overwhelming? Now imagine going through traumatic experiences as a teenager...no thanks! Teen Life believes that teenagers already have what it takes to face and overcome challenges,

but we need your help to empower the teens in your life! Trauma can take many forms, and we need to be aware of the trauma teens are going through so we can help them utilize their strengths to thrive in the future!

# #1 COVID-19 PANDEMIC

2020 brought a new challenge for everyone - a global pandemic. For teens, their life changed overnight. Suddenly they were forced to stay home, grocery stores were empty, masks were the new normal, and fear was widely spread.

# PANDEMIC



# TOOLHS

## #2 VIRTUAL LEARNING

School is a constant in nearly every teenager's life. Last year, our teenagers went home for Spring Break and that constant disappeared. They were forced to learn a new way to learn. They could no longer see teachers or get the help they needed in person.



# ATHLETICS

## #3 CHANGES TO ATHLETICS

Athletic seasons were cancelled or looked drastically different this year. Masks, social distancing, quarantining and empty stands are just a few differences. Teens use sports as a way to connect, cope, and get scholarships. That was taken away for many.

## #4 CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL EVENTS

For our seniors, they lost the last few months of High School, including graduation and prom. But all teenagers lost out on trips, celebrations, award ceremonies, and more! The events that they had been looking forward to all year were taken away.

# GRADUATION



## #5 LOSS OF LOVED ONES

With the coronavirus came loss for our entire country. Many teenagers lost family members, friends, or acquaintances. Social distancing meant that families did not receive the support and love needed. It is an incredibly lonely time to lose someone.

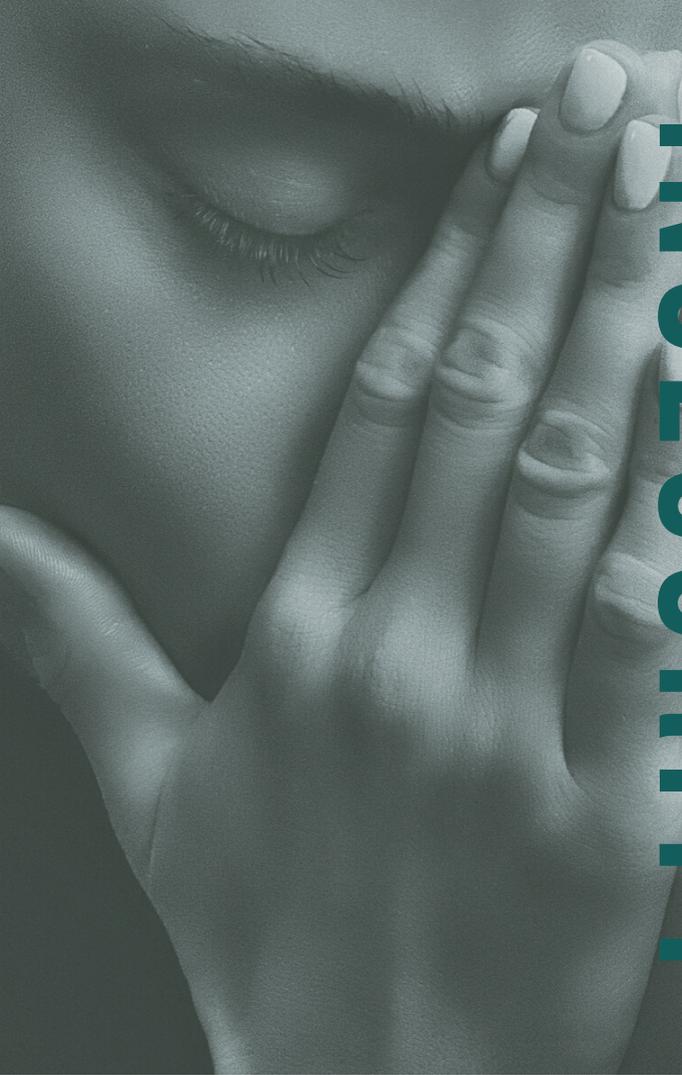
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# INJUSTICE

## #6 RACIAL INJUSTICE

In 2020, racial injustice made headlines as our country fought for the rights and lives of the BIPOC community. No matter the race, teenagers are aware of the climate of our country. From marches to social media campaigns, it was a pivotal season for America.



# INSECURITY

## #7 INSECURITY AT HOME

Many teens faced insecurity at home. Adults were more stressed than normal. Jobs were lost. There was a higher risk for child abuse and neglect. Many teens were left home alone due to the lack of in-person school. This insecurity at home has major impacts on teens.

## #8 POLITICAL UNREST

This year has been incredibly divisive for our country, especially in response to the Presidential Election. Between debates, social media rants, and the storming of the capitol building, teenagers have seen a large amount of anger, unrest, and division.

# POLITICS



## #9 DISCONNECTION FROM OTHERS

Social distancing and virtual learning meant that students were disconnected from friends and trusted adults. Virtual does not take the place of face-to-face, and mental health has suffered. Connection matters. Having consistent support matters!

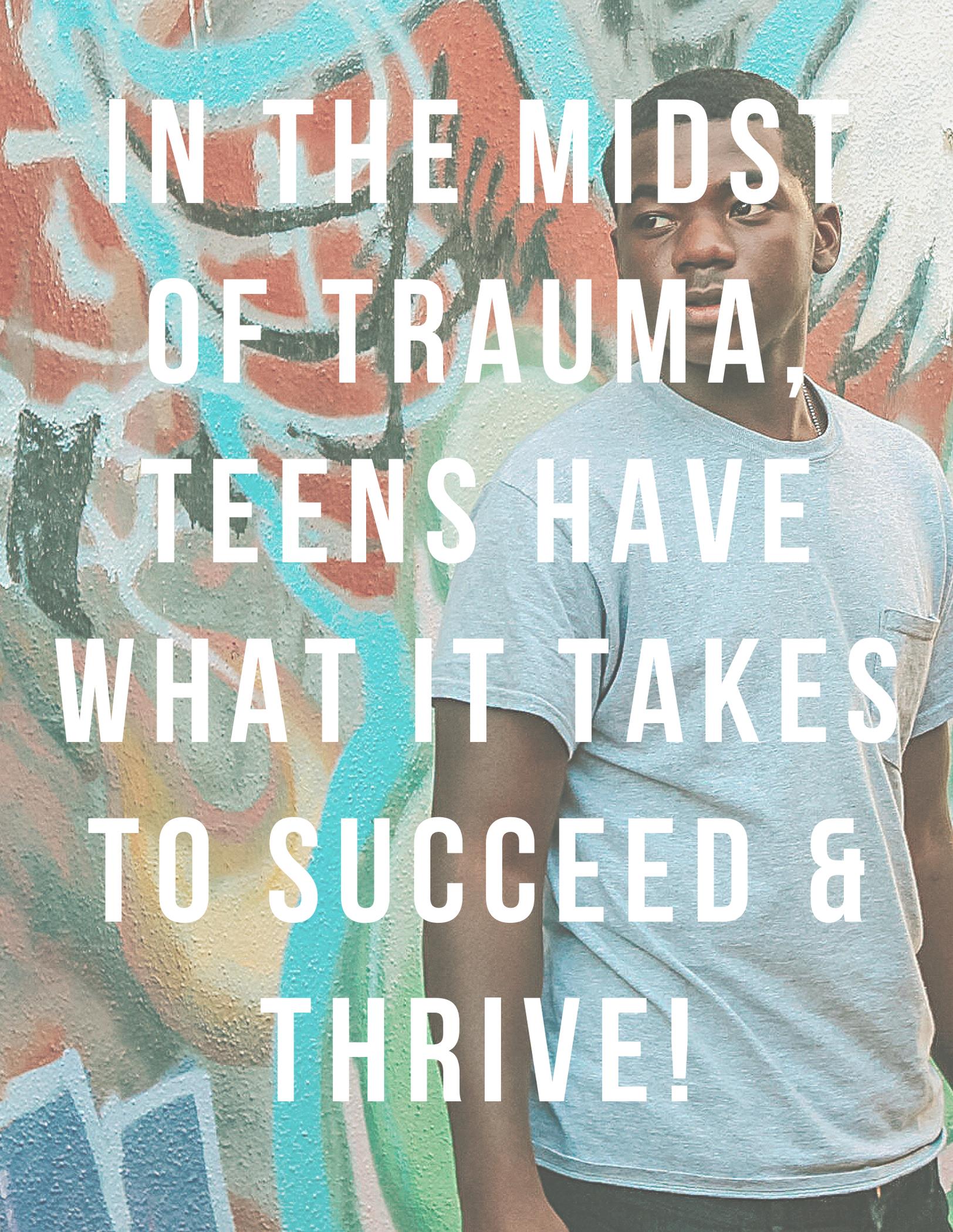
# DISCONNECTION



# EMERGENCIES

## #10 STATES OF EMERGENCY

This past year, our country has experienced tropical storms, wildfires, snowstorms, and unprecedented power outages. Outside of a pandemic, teens have also been forced to survive some extreme circumstances due to factors outside of their control.



IN THE MIDST  
OF TRAUMA,  
TEENS HAVE  
WHAT IT TAKES  
TO SUCCEED &  
THRIVE!

# NOW WHAT?



## *EMPOWERING TEENAGERS TO THRIVE*

Now that we are aware of the trauma teens have experienced this year, let's take a look at what we can do to help...

1. **Check-in.** This sounds simple, but it can make a big difference. Ask teens how they are handling the stress of this year. How can you help? Do they have someone they can talk to? Be consistent with this ask!

# EMPOWERING TEENAGERS TO THRIVE

## 2. **Celebrate the little**

**things.** It has been a difficult year, so make sure you take time to celebrate the things that have gone well. Teens have overcome so much - let them hear you praise their resilience and strength.

## 3. **Encourage connection.**

Look for safe ways to reconnect teens to the people and things that bring them joy. They need connection with you, but they also need to be connected with peers and other trusted adults.

4. **Find resources.** Look for resources that will help you help teenagers! By equipping yourself, you will be in a better place to empower teens. You will feel rejuvenated and confident when you offer resources and help to the teens in your life. Check out a few ideas on the next page!

## 5. **Join a Teen Life Support**

**Group.** Teen Life is offering free virtual Support Groups for Middle School and High School students. This is a great place for them to connect and grow. To sign up, visit [www.teenlife.ngo/VirtualGroups](http://www.teenlife.ngo/VirtualGroups)





# TEEN LIFE SUMMIT

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE - MAY 11-12, 2021

In the midst of an unprecedented and difficult year, it is vital that teenagers feel empowered to move forward. This Summit will give you the skills, knowledge, and confidence to bring out the best in the teenagers in your life. Whether you are a parent, school staff, volunteer, coach, or youth worker, this Summit will leave you feeling encouraged and capable to empower the teens you love!

Check out our speakers and register now!

[www.teenlife.ngo/summit](http://www.teenlife.ngo/summit)



We believe teenagers are not a problem to be solved. We are here to help you empower teenagers to use the strengths they already have. Listen to our weekly podcast for relevant teen topics, trends, and tips!

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