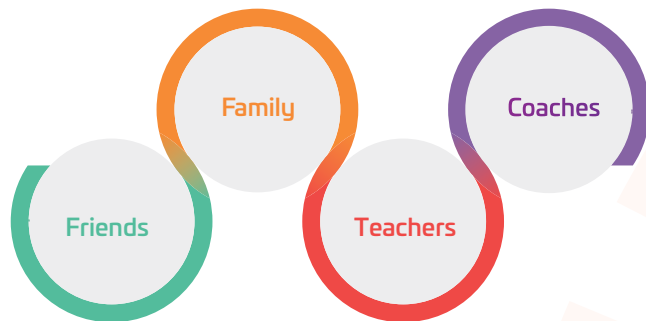




How can a support network help you?

01 Work with a classmate. What do the different groups of people have in common?



02 Read “Be My Backbone” and list the benefits of a support network that the writer talks about.

03 Use the words in bold to write a short paragraph describing a support network and why it’s important.

04 Work with a classmate. Follow the instructions.

1. Create a dialogue between a teen feeling stressed and a person in their life.
2. In the dialogue, the teen describes a problem, and the member of their support network provides nonjudgmental emotional support.
3. Perform your dialogue for another pair.

Be My Backbone

Hello everyone! My topic today is why, as a teenager, you need a support network, because I’m sure you sometimes feel like school, friend drama, family, and future planning are getting to be too much. Your support network can help with that; furthermore, research into teen mental health proves that having a group of people you can turn to in times of stress provides positivity, solutions, and a general feeling of not being alone. I asked students at my high school what ‘support’ means to them, and here’s a sample of what a few of them said:

- “When I **tanked** an important exam, my sister reminded me the world would continue.” This demonstrates that family can provide **perspective**, comfort, and motivation to overcome challenging moments.
- “My best friend is great because he’s super chill and lets me **vent** about whatever bothers me, then we play video games!” Friends can be great listeners, plus they provide nonjudgmental emotional support and help us redirect our focus, build **resilience**, and diminish stress.
- “When I struggled with a topic in science class, my teacher stayed after class for a week to help me get over my anxiety and truly understand, and since I want to study medicine at university, science is essential. My teacher was patient and showed she cared.” Teachers and coaches can be **mentors**, gently guiding us toward academic and personal **growth**.

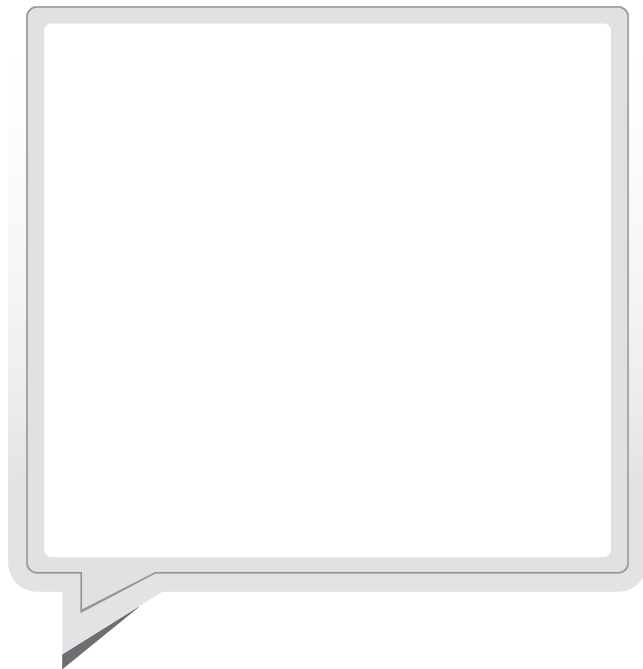
I want to leave you with two essential and connected take-home messages. First, it’s not just acceptable to ask for help; knowing when you need support is a sign of strength and self-confidence. Second, your support crew is drawn from many areas of your life, thus providing different types of help and understanding. So, who’s got your back? And just as important, do you have their back too?



05 Work with a classmate to identify the homograph for each pair of definitions. Then, create two more to test your classmates.

- 1a. a pause or rest from activity
 1b. to separate into pieces or fracture: _____
- 2a. a timekeeping device worn on the wrist
 2b. to observe or look at attentively: _____
- 3a. to guide or direct others
 3b. a heavy metal used in batteries: _____
- 4a. to decline or reject something
 4b. waste or garbage: _____
- 5a. financial certificates issued by governments
 5b. emotional or social connections: _____
- 6a. _____
 6b. _____
- 7a. _____
 7b. _____

07 Write an advice blog for students who want to feel more comfortable asking for help. Use three homographs in your response. Then, share your blog with a classmate.



06 Complete the sentences with the correct homograph from Exercise 5.

1. Support networks help teens build strong _____ with others, especially during stressful times.
2. When teens face setbacks, even a short _____ with a trusted friend can help them see things from a different perspective.
3. A strong support system can help a teen _____ a more confident life.
4. Teens with strong support networks often _____ to let peer pressures affect them.
5. Having someone supportive _____ your progress can keep you motivated.
6. _____
7. _____

08 Draw a picture of your personal support network. Fill in the mind-map with the names and roles of the people who have your back. Then, take turns describing your network to a classmate.

