

Teen Chaos

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For adolescents navigating the rocky road of physical and emotional changes, a disorganized and unstable home life can lead to greater depression, poorer physical health and increased likelihood of engaging in substance abuse.

That's what Corinna Jenkins Tucker, professor of human development and family studies, found when she studied 10th-graders living in an economically vulnerable rural community in New Hampshire. Her study, published in the *Journal of Family and Child Studies*, looked at how these teens' perceptions of chaos in the home were linked to mental, physical and behavioral health.

Meet a Researcher: Corinna Jenkins Tucker



WATCH

“We know that chaos at home creates stress, which impacts an individual’s ability to self-regulate, or the ability to calm oneself, manage emotions and think before acting,” said Tucker. “Adolescence is a critical time to develop self-regulation as teens prepare for transition into adulthood. The stress caused by a chaotic household may cause teens to withdraw and miss out on learning opportunities and feel helpless.”The authors of the study say reducing household chaos through routines, organization and supportive parenting can promote healthy development.

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