



**Mental Health Association of Tarrant County**  
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## **Back to School**

### **Top Ten Tips For Teens**

Appreciating The Differences That Make Each Of Us Special

1. Talk with young children about their friends and what makes each of them special. Ask them to tell you about their special qualities as well!
2. Attend a play, listen to music or go to a dance performance by artists whose race, culture or ethnicity is different from your own.
3. Offer to help tutor students at your school who are at a different learning level than your own.
4. Speak up when you hear slurs, or name-calling. Let people know that bias speech is always unacceptable.
5. List all the stereotypes you can, both positive and negative, about particular groups of people. Do you believe them to be true? Challenge yourself not to form opinions about groups of people without getting to know them.
6. Spend time volunteering with an organization that serves a group of people with different struggles than you . a homeless shelter, a nursing home, an agency that serves immigrants or refugees, a hospice, or head-start program.
7. Spend time trying to understand what it is like to live with a physical disability. Try to make a lunch using only one hand. Try to communicate with a friend without making any noise. If you have access to a wheelchair, spend an hour in it trying to move around your home, school or community.
8. Spend time talking with your friends about how stereotypes make you feel. What can you do as a group to help turn stereotypes into positive praise of difference?
9. Go to an ethnic restaurant with your friends. Learn about the people from that part of the world.
10. Learn more about mental health from students who have a mental illness, such as ADHD or depression. Ask them how it feels, when they realized they needed help or how they cope. Spread positive messages about people with mental illness. Help to decrease the stigma!