Today’s piece was prepared by Lucy Bollinger, MD, based on an NPR story [Having a Best Friend in Your Teenage Years Could Benefit You for Life](http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/08/26/543739986/having-a-best-friend-in-your-teenage-years-could-benefit-you-for-life)

This article was written about [a study recently published in *Child Development*](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cdev.12905/full) which found that strong friendships at the ages of 15 and 16 correlated with a drop in symptoms of anxiety and depression at age 25. Study participants whose close relationships weren’t as strong did not show a change in symptoms of depression or anxiety at age 25. The article discusses the study methodology in very basic terms but does not go into enough detail to allow us to determine the quality of the study or more information about the study population which could be important to the findings. For example, there’s little information about where or how participants were selected or how strength of friendships and symptoms of anxiety and depression were assessed.

The article does include commentary from several reputable sources, including the study’s lead author and two psychologists who were unaffiliated with the study. The psychologists are clear in pointing out that while these findings seem to make intuitive sense, (i.e. that close relationships could help an adolescent’s emotional development which may have long-term effect) right now there is no exact mechanism through which we can understand these findings. The article does not discuss any specific limitations of the study.

Overall, despite its click-bait style headline, this article clearly and concisely explains a new finding which would certainly be of interest to families with adolescents. While it discusses the *Child Development* study in very broad terms, it does make it easy to access more information by providing a link to the journal article.

**RESOURCES ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH**

[Multiple topics (articles and videos)](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/index.shtml#part_152583) *National Institute of Mental Health: Child/Adolescent Mental Health*

[Stages of Adolescent Development](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/Pages/Stages-of-Adolescence.aspx) *AAP site “Healthy Children”, describing Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, and Social development*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!