

# Family obligation in Chinese homes lowers teenage depression symptoms

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A new study of Chinese-American youth has found that family obligation, for example caring for siblings or helping elders, plays a positive role in the mental health of Chinese-American adolescents and may prevent symptoms of depression in later teenage years.

Published in the *Journal of Family Psychology*, the study found that 14-year-olds who reported a greater sense of family obligation reported fewer [depressive symptoms](#) by the time they reached 16. The findings suggest that family obligation may be protective against depressive symptoms. The authors suggest that a greater sense of family obligation in the early teenage years could provide teenagers with a strong family bond that makes them feel secure even when they move through adolescence and become more autonomous.

The [longitudinal study](#) surveyed 218 Chinese-American teenagers over a two-year period. As participants grew older, their actions to help and support their families decreased. However, their [attitude](#) and respect toward their families remained stable, indicating that immigrant adolescents continue to endorse their traditional cultural values even when their behaviors suggest they are becoming less traditional.

Source: San Francisco State University ([news](#) : [web](#))

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