

Depression



What is it?

We all have good days and bad days. Usually we can find ways to feel better on our bad days, but sometimes the blues just won't go away. This might be a sign of depression. Depression is a mood disorder that causes you to feel very low, down or unhappy a lot of the time.

How do I know if my child is experiencing depression?

It's normal for teenagers to experience changes in their interests, sleep and eating patterns and relationships as they navigate the challenges of social, emotional and physical development.

If your child is experiencing some of the things below and symptoms are persistent or getting worse, it could be a sign of depression:

- Losing interest in things they normally enjoy
- Negative thoughts or feeling 'down' that lasts a long time
- Avoiding friends or other social situations
- Sleeping more or less than usual
- Eating more or less than usual
- Feeling hopeless
- Less energy than usual

How can I support my child if they are suffering from depression?

Space to Talk

Offer a listening ear, remember they may not be looking for a solution or a fix and they may prefer to speak to someone else

Stay Active

Encourage and support them to get moving. Even just going for a walk can help boost mood.

Coping Strategies

Help them identify their personal coping strategies. It might include listening to music, or taking a break from social media.

Get Support

Encourage and support them to speak to a professional. Your GP can talk to you about treatment options like therapy or medication.

Create a Routine

Try making a wellbeing schedule together. Making sure to get enough sleep, a balanced diet and doing positive activities can make a big difference.

What if I am worried about my child's wellbeing or safety?

Sometimes depression can leave someone feeling so low that they might have thoughts to harm themselves, or may experience suicidal thoughts. If you are worried about your child, speak to their GP to get professional help, and if you think there might be an immediate risk to their safety, you should take them to A&E or call 999.

What resources are available to us? Where can we get support?

Apps & Websites

Calm Harm App – For coping with self-harm urges

Smiling Minds App – Relaxation & Mindfulness

<https://izone.org.uk/> – Information & Advice

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/> – Information & Advice

Services

The Mix

Support and advice for under 25s, including a helpline, crisis messenger service and webchat.

Kooth.com

Free & confidential online mental health support, access to forum's, advice and more

The What? Centre

Young Person's information, advice & counselling service

CAMHS

NHS Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service for assessment and treatment of young people with emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties

Phone / Text support

- Papyrus suicide prevention hopeline 9am–midnight
 - Call: 0800 068 4141 OR Text: 07860039967
- Young Minds 24/7 Text line
 - 85258
- Young Minds Parent Helpline
 - 0808 802 5544 9:30am – 4pm, Monday – Friday
- The Mix
 - 0808 808 4994
 - 85258 (crisis messenger service, text THEMIX)



Anxiety



What is it?

Worry is our brain's way of letting us know we don't feel safe. It's there to help us survive and make sensible choices, but sometimes anxiety can go into over-drive, where feelings of worry or panic won't go away, or don't match the situation. All sorts of situations can trigger anxiety.

How do I know if my child is experiencing anxiety?

Teenagers experience a lot of change; friendships, physical development, school, interests, and much more. The teenage brain can find this very overwhelming, leading to the release of stress hormones like cortisol.

Whilst it's normal to feel stressed as a teen, if your child is experiencing the following symptoms for a long time, or they seem to be getting worse, they may need some help to cope with their anxiety:

- Feeling nervous, out of control, or overwhelmed all the time
- Difficulty sleeping
- Physical symptoms like shaking, dry mouth, upset tummy, excess sweating, feeling faint, or faster heart beat
- Panic attacks or anxiety attacks (might include breathing quickly, sweating or getting hot, crying or feeling out of control)
- Eating more or less than usual

How can I support my child if they are suffering from anxiety?

Space to Talk

Offer a listening ear, remember they may not be looking for a solution or a fix and they may prefer to speak to someone else

Stay Active

Encourage and support them to get moving. Exercise helps regulate mood. A good sleep routine and healthy diet helps too.

Coping Strategies

Help them identify personal coping strategies. It might include deep breathing, listening to mindfulness meditation, using fidget toys or an app

Get Support

Encourage and support them to speak to a professional. Your GP can talk to you about treatment options like therapy or medication.

Build confidence

Support them to be involved in activities that build confidence and self-esteem, or make a poster or jar for them to record their strengths and achievements

What if I am worried about my child's wellbeing or safety?

Anxiety can come hand-in-hand with low mood. Sometimes people harm themselves when they feel overwhelmed by anxiety or low mood. If you are worried about your child, speak to their GP to get professional help, and if you think there might be an immediate risk to their safety, you should take them to A&E or call 999.

What resources are available to us? Where can we get support?

Apps & Websites

Clear Fear App – For coping with anxiety

Smiling Minds App – Relaxation & Mindfulness

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Self-Esteem & Confidence



What is it?

Self-esteem is made up of how confident or positive we feel about ourselves. Young people often suffer from low self-esteem and confidence as they spend more time with peers, begin to compare themselves to others, and work out who they are in relation to the people around them.

How do I know if my child is experiencing low self-esteem or low confidence?

In new situations or when learning something new, feeling a bit unsure of yourself is to be expected. However if a child feels particularly negative about themselves, dislikes themselves or are being unfairly harsh, then they might need some help building their confidence and self-esteem.

Low self-esteem and low confidence can express itself in some of the following ways:

- Withdrawing from friends, isolating themselves
- Being overly critical about self
- Avoiding situations where they might be in front of others
- Ignoring positives about self and focusing on negatives
- Trying to change or hide their appearance or certain qualities
- Comparing themselves to other people (in real life or online)
- Saying negative things or making critical jokes about self

How can I support my child if they are suffering from low self-esteem?

Space to Talk

Offer a listening ear, remember they may not be looking for a solution or a fix and they may prefer to speak to someone else

Offer encouragement

Gently offer praise and support when they try new things, remind them it's ok to fail and nobody is perfect. Reward them for effort rather than achievement.

Coping Strategies

Help them identify personal coping strategies. It might include deep breathing, listening to mindfulness meditation, using fidget toys or an app

Get Support

Encourage and support them to speak to a professional. Your GP can talk to you about treatment options like therapy or medication.

Build confidence

Support them to be involved in activities that build confidence and self-esteem, or make a poster or jar for them to record their strengths and achievements

What if I am worried about my child's wellbeing or safety?

Low self-esteem and confidence can lead to low mood. Sometimes low mood can lead to people having thoughts to harm themselves, or experiencing suicidal thoughts. If you are worried about your child, speak to their GP to get professional help, and if you think there might be an immediate risk to their safety, you should take them to A&E or call 999.

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