



THE
HOUSSON CENTER
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

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Depression In Children

Feeling sad or hopeless is often a part of every child's life. However, some children feel this way all the time, are uninterested in things they used to enjoy, and feel helpless or hopeless in many situations. When children feel constant sadness and hopelessness, they may be diagnosed with **depression.**

Statistics

- Depression affects all age groups
- 15.08% of youth (12-17) report suffering from at least one major depressive episode in the past year
- 300 million people worldwide suffer from this disorder

Symptoms

- Mood changes. The child might appear sadder or more irritable than usual
- Feeling hopeless
- Lacking energy or being tired all the time
- Trouble concentrating
- Poor performance or poor attendance at school
- Low self-esteem or saying negative things about themselves
- Trouble sleeping
- Eating problems (eating too little or too much; gaining or losing a lot of weight)

Thinking about or attempting suicide

Types of Disorders

Major Depressive Disorder: the most familiar kind of depression. One experiences severe symptoms that last between two weeks and several months. The child will feel sad or irritable most of the time and can lose interest in things they usually enjoy.

Persistent Depressive Disorder (Dysthymia): Usually the same symptoms as major depressive disorder but milder and last for a year or more.

Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder (DMDD): Children who have frequent, explosive temper tantrums in reaction to things that normally don't seem like a "big deal." They are usually irritable and get frustrated easily. This depression can look more like anger rather than sadness.

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD): A disorder that affects some women and girls in the week before their period; girls might get anxious, angry, or depressed and cry for little to no reason, feel overwhelmed, or have difficulty concentrating.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD): Type of depression that occurs during specific seasons. It has the same symptoms as major depressive order, but happens during specific months of the year. Most people diagnosed with SAD get depressed in the fall or winter (little sunlight).

Risk Factors

- Genetics and family history
- Physical illness or injury
- Bullying or other traumatic experiences
- Stressful life events (separation, divorce, moving, death of a loved one)
- Substance use

Treatment

Active support and monitoring	Antidepressants	Therapy
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How Can I Help My Child?

- Healthy communication between child and parents where the child feels comfortable sharing what they feel
- Ask the child's doctor
- Ensure the child is spending time with family and friends!
- Have the child stay active and exercise
- Ensure a regular sleep schedule
- Provide healthy meals

Resources:

- [Psychiatry.org - What Is Depression?](#)
- [Depression & Mood Disorders - Child Mind Institute](#)
- [Depression in College Students | Mental Health | Child Mind Institute](#)
- [What Are the Kinds of Depression? - Child Mind Institute](#)
- [How to Help a Depressed Teenager - Child Mind Institute](#)
- [Depression | Psychology Today](#)
- [Teen Depression: More Than Just Moodiness - National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\) \(nih.gov\)](#)
- [Talking to Parents About Depression \(for Teens\) | Nemours KidsHealth](#)

Extra Helpful Resources (Books)

- *The Whole Brain Child* by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
- *How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen* by Joanna Faber and Julie King
- *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish
- *No-Drama Discipline; the Whole-Brain Way to Calm the Chaos and Nurture your Child's Developing Mind* by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.
- *Breaking Free of Child Anxiety and OCD* by Eli R. Lebowitz, Ph.D.
- *Freeing your Child from Anxiety* by Tamar E. Chansky, Ph.D.