



MENTAL HEALTH FAST FACTS ABOUT DEPRESSION

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WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

All children experience short periods of sadness, this is a normal reaction to events that are stressful, upsetting or difficult to come to terms with. However, when sadness dominates or interferes with their academic and social functioning – it is classified a depression. When depression reaches the point of becoming an illness, it needs treatment.

- Being moody and irritable – easily upset, ‘ratty’ or tearful.
- Becoming withdrawn – avoiding friends, family and regular activities.
- Feeling guilty or bad, being self-critical and self-blaming – hating oneself.
- Feeling unhappy, miserable and lonely a lot of the time.
- Feeling hopeless and wanting to die.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Not looking after personal appearance.
- Difficulty going to sleep or waking very early.
- Lack of energy.
- Frequent minor health problems such as headaches or stomachaches.

Depression is usually caused by a variety of factors that include biological, familial, and significant stress in the student’s life. The depressed student can be referred to a mental health specialist such as psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists and social workers, all of whom are highly skilled in helping young people and their families.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT DEPRESSION

NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)

Colonial Place Three

2107 Wilson Blvd. - Suite 300, Arlington, VA

(703) 524-7600

(703) 524-9094 (fax)

NAMI HelpLine: 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) <http://www.nami.org>

National Depressive and Manic-Depressive Association

730 N. Franklin, Suite 501

Chicago, IL 60610

(312) 642-0049

<http://ndmda.org>