

DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



Experiencing emotions is part of everyday life. No two days are the same and Children and Young People can experience many different emotions throughout one single day. These can range from happiness and excitement to sadness and anger with many different emotions in-between. At times when their mood is low then they may feel that they have less energy or motivation to do things, this could be a response to what is happening in their life. These feelings can pass through time, with support or doing activities they enjoy.

WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Depression is when the sadness and low mood does not go away, it can feel like a dark cloud is hanging over you all the time and it can become overwhelming. It makes each day extremely difficult. Getting up, going to school, or doing tasks can seem daunting and unmanageable. It steals the joy from the activities you used to enjoy. You feel completely alone.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms of Depression can range between mild, moderate, or severe.

Common examples are:

- Sadness
- Anger
- Low Mood
- Teary
- Worried
- Low Confidence/ Low Self-Worth
- Isolated
- Alone
- Feeling Numb

REASONS WHY?

Sometimes depression is a reaction to a particular event that has happened or perhaps a catalogue of events over a number of months or years. For example, it could be:

- Bullying
- Exams
- Stress
- Death of a Family Member/ Friend
- Separation
- Struggling with a change in circumstance

HOW MIGHT THEY REACT?

Depression affects them in different ways and can cause a wide variety of reactions and symptoms.

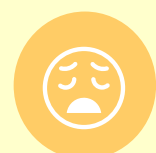
- Lose Concentration
- Lose Interest in Activities
- Withdraw from Family/Friends
- Become more Critical
- Stop caring for themselves
- Becoming Stressed or Anxious
- Decreased Motivation

Severe reactions can lead to an inability to function or suicide.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION



Constant Tiredness



Sleeping Badly



Aches and Pains



Loss or Increase in Appetite

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON IS DEPRESSED?

1. **PATIENCE AND SUPPORT** – These feelings can change in time, and it can happen with support. It is helpful to go at the Child or Young Persons own pace. You want to avoid overwhelming your child or young person with too much too soon because this may lead to them feeling worse.
2. **IT IS GOOD TO SHARE** - It can be difficult for them to share how they feel. Show they are not alone and people who want to support them. Try to ensure they have time alone with you often, so they have an opportunity to talk when they need. Remember there is no time limit and it helps them to open up when someone does it in return.
3. **ENCOURAGING ROUTINE** – To be begin with this may be a basic routine. For example, this could start with sleeping, eating or basic hygiene.
4. **TIME OUT** – Encourage your Child and Young Person to take time out for themselves to relax or do something they enjoy e.g., listening to music, doing relaxation techniques, or even doing nothing.

IDEAS TO SUPPORT THEIR WELLBEING

Some examples could be:

- Listen to Music
- Watch a Movie
- Draw/ Mindfulness Colouring In
- Play Games
- Catch up with Friends/ Family
- Talk to Friends/ Family
- Going for a Walk

CAN YOU THINK OF ANYMORE YOUR CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON WOULD ENJOY?

The Miracle Foundation SCIO are a bereavement and trauma organisation for Children and Young People between the age of 4 and 18 years old.

We have a great team of counsellors and art therapists that can help you deal with the thoughts and feelings you are experiencing. We will help you develop healthy techniques to deal with your emotions, build on your emotional strength and provide you with a hope for the future. We are here to support and help you when you are struggling during difficult times.

IF YOU NEED HELP/SUPPORT STRAIGHT AWAY, YOU CAN CALL 999 OR GO STRAIGHT TO MY NEAREST ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPT IF YOU CAN GET THERE SAFELY.

REACHING OUT FOR SUPPORT!

There is no shame with reaching out for support! Professional Support can be:

- Having a chat with your GP
- Counselling
- Talking with their Pupil Support Teacher

Depression is treatable, these feelings do not last forever, reach out for the support for your Child or Young Person.

USEFUL CONTACTS

If someone is at risk of coming to harm, the services would need to get in touch with emergency services or appropriate authorities.

CHILDLINE

A confidential service, operating times can be found on the website.

TEL: 08001111

ONLINE COUNSELLING: 1-2-1 chat

SHOUT

A free confidential and anonymous service available 24/7.

TEXT: 85258

SAMARITANS

Whatever you are going through, Samaritans can be called ay time, from any phone for free.

TEL: 116 123

BREATHING SPACE

A free, confidential, phone service for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16 experiencing low mood, depression, or anxiety.



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