

"I'm horrible at everything."

"Maybe life would be better if I was dead."

"I can't do anything right."

# Depression

*It doesn't hurt just you.*

Who can get depression? Anyone-Everyone. That's why YOU need to know the facts, so YOU can help.

**Depression** is a physical illness that causes a person to have persistent feelings of unhappiness, of hopelessness; it causes a lowering of self-esteem and self-quality. It causes a person to think they are not good enough, for anything.

**Causes:** Causes of depression can range from the loss of a loved one, to dysfunction at home or at school, to a chemical imbalance in the brain. Depression can be short-term or long-term, it can be mild to severe; But no matter how severe or how long someone has it, depression can destroy a life, literally.



## What symptoms can you, as a parent, a teacher, even a friend, look for as a sign?

- Watch their behavioral patterns. Has it changed drastically in recent months, or even weeks?
- Are their grades suffering? Are they having trouble paying attention, concentrating, or remembering things?
- Are they having trouble sleeping? Are they sleeping a lot more than usual?
- Are they not eating at all, or maybe overeating?
- Do they act sad and unhappy on a regular basis?
- Has their energy level dropped? Have they lost interest in social and physical activities?
- Have they had repeated thoughts of suicide? Have they attempted suicide?

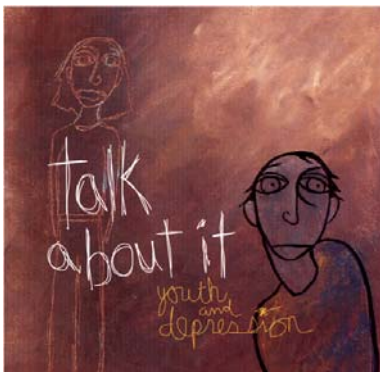


These are all valid questions to ask. Maybe as a parent you noticed behavioral changes or changes in eating habits. As a teacher you've noticed a sudden drop in a student's grades and social interaction. And maybe as a friend, someone has talked to you about attempting suicide. Each of these is a cry for help, and we need to be aware.

## What can you do to help?

First of all, someone with depression is seeking out someone who will care for them. Be their friend, help them, be a positive influence - and most of all, **DO NOT** give up on them.

**Treatment:** Treatment for depression includes antidepressant medication and seeking professional help. But most important of all is to be there for them, to be supportive and to make sure they know that you love and care for them.



If you think somebody may have depression, bring it to the attention of a parent, teacher, or other superior. This person needs help and quickly. If you yourself think you may have depression, but you're afraid to talk to anyone, there are other ways. The Yellow Ribbon Program is a world-wide awareness and prevention program on depression and suicide. If you receive a 'Yellow Card' from someone, call the number on the card right away. By giving that card, a person is sending out a cry for help. To learn more about the Yellow Ribbon Program, visit their website: <http://www.yellowribbon.org>