



Understanding depression in kids and teens

What is depression?

Sometimes kids feel sad. That is normal.

Depression is when a child feels sad or upset most days for a long time and stops enjoying things.

Signs to look for:

- Feels sad, cries, or seems grouchy
- Stops having fun
- Spends less time with friends
- Eats or sleeps more or less than usual
- Feels tired a lot
- Thinks they are not good enough
- Has trouble focusing
- Does worse in school
- Has headaches or stomach aches
- Talks about wanting to die or hurt themselves

What can cause depression?

- Stress or hard life events
- Losing someone important
- Bullying
- Too much time on social media
- Family history of depression
- Other problems like anxiety or learning issues

What should parents do?

- Talk to your child about their feelings
- Listen carefully
- Take any talk about self-harm very seriously and get help right away
- Talk to your child's doctor or school counselor about finding help

How doctors help:

Doctors may ask questions, give surveys, and do a full check-up.

Treatment options:

Therapy:

- Talking with a therapist helps children feel better
- Helps them learn coping skills

Family and school help:

- Family meetings can help
- Schools may provide support

Medicine:

- Some children may need medicine
- Doctors will discuss risks and benefits with parents

Good news: Depression can be treated. With help, kids can feel better, enjoy life again, and succeed in school and friendships.