

Resources for Depression

Depression is not a personality or character flaw, it does not define who you are, nor make you any less of a person. It is a condition just like diabetes or the flu and should not be something that you are ashamed of.

Diagnosis and Support:

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): <http://www.nih.gov>

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) <https://aacap.org>

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI): <https://www.namiut.org>

Anxiety and Depression Association of America: <https://www.adaa.org>

Coping Skills/Tools:

-Self Care: eat healthy, exercise daily, get at least eight hours of sleep nightly, maintain positive relationships with family and friends, engage in hobbies or activities that you enjoy.

-Make and keep supportive friendships and other relationships. It is very common when you are feeling depressed to want to isolate yourself from others. Connection is one of the greatest tools to fighting depressive symptoms.

-Deep breathing: Take a deep breath in through your nose, pause, then breath out slowly through your mouth.

-Progressive muscle relaxation: Tense the muscle groups in your body, one at a time. Then, relax that muscle group for 15 seconds before moving on to the next muscle group.

-Accept what you cannot control and focus your thought and energy on the things that you can control.

-Avoid guilt, shame, or blame. Focus instead on problem solving, and how to move forward.

-Identify and talk about your feelings with someone that you trust (preferably an adult).

-Break down chores and tasks into smaller steps. This can help prevent you from feeling overwhelmed and keep you motivated.

-Challenge unhealthy or unhelpful thoughts: Avoid thinking traps such as over-generalization, all or nothing thinking, mind reading, and jumping to conclusions. Identify and challenge these unhealthy thoughts and try to replace them with a more helpful thought.

-Practice mindfulness or grounding exercises.

-Draw or write about your feelings.

-Listen to music or play a musical instrument.

-Get outside and go for a walk or hike.



-Visualize a calm or peaceful place: Think of your favorite place, notice what you see, hear, smell, taste, and touch.

-Ask for help, Cuddle or play with a pet, Get or give a hug.

-Get moving: engage in intensive cardio exercise (such as running) for 30 minutes.

-Stay focused and centered in the present (don't dwell on the past or worry about the future).

Parental Support:

-If there are firearms in the home, please ensure that they are not accessible to your child (your hidden key may not be as "hidden" as you would like to believe).

-Reach out to a professional or school counselor for help.

-Be responsive instead of reactive when talking to your child.

-Let your child know that you are available and open to talking with him or her about their problems or feelings. Avoid lecturing or similar forms of communication that may cause disconnection.

-With your child, come up with a plan to manage technology use, including social media.

-Assist your child with self-care by structuring bedtime and sleeping routines, and encouraging healthy eating practices, and regular exercise.

-Hug your child every day, multiple times a day.

-Maintain consistent family routines and rituals, such as eating dinner together as a family.

-Remember that it is not your job to "fix" your child, but to be his or her advocate and cheerleader.

Resources:

Apps = SafeUT, Suicide Safe, Virtual Hope Box, Mindshift, Headspace, Stop Breathe and Think Kids, Happify, What's Up, MoodTools

Books

Conquer Negative Thinking for Teens by Alvord, Karapetian, and McGrath

Beyond the Blues by Lisa Schab

Don't Let Your Emotions Run Your Life for Teens by Van Dijk

Adolescent Depression: A Guide for Parents by Mondimore and Kelly

My Feeling Better Workbook by Sara Hamil

How To Get Unstuck From the Negative Muck by Lake Sullivan

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Suess

The Way I Feel by Janan Cain



FAMILIES FIRST
P E D I A T R I C S

Websites

<https://kidshealth.org>

<https://childmind.org>

www.helpguide.org

www.nimh.nih.gov(National Institute for Mental Health)

www.theimagineproject.org