

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO

OCTOBER 2022 | DEPRESSION

WHAT IS DEPRESSION

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. It affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and sometimes you may feel as if life isn't worth living.



Symptoms may include feelings of sadness or hopelessness, irritability, lost of interest in normal activities, isolating from friends/family, sleep or appetite changes, difficulty concentrating, and suicidal thoughts. Depression can be treated by making changes to reduce stress and develop healthier ways to manage life stressors and challenges.

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP THEIR CHILD:

- Respect and validate their feelings. Recognize a person can develop depression, even if they seem to have a good life with little to be upset about.
- Check-in regularly, invite them to talk, and reemphasize your support. Don't force them to talk and avoid giving advice unless asked.
- Listen when they do talk, even if you do not agree with their thoughts and feelings it is important to respect their experience is real to them.
- Provide opportunities for enjoyable activities frequently; movie nights, playing outside or with toys together, board games with family, baking together, or small outings.
- Take any mention of suicide seriously. Don't hesitate to call 911 or go to an emergency room if you feel concerned for their safety.

RESOURCES

If you are concerned your child is displaying signs and symptoms of depression, you should get in touch with a mental health professional. You can reach out to your child's school to get in contact with their mental health therapist from Catholic Charities to discuss treatment options.



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