



# Is Depression on the Rise, Amongst the Younsters of Today? Watch out For Signals

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**ABSTRACT :** In this age of high technology, rise in individual demands, importance given to performance, also facing different life challenges young people tends to get moody, feel helpless & sad at times, which is normal. Again when, the feelings of sadness in young people persists for weeks or months it can affect their everyday life. When a young person feels miserable most of the time and finds no motivation in life, they may have – a serious illness that can affect people of all ages, which is called “Depression”. One in four young people aged 16yrs.to 24 years suffer from depression.(Health Direct)

Young people feels sad and worried about common issues, as giving exam, having fights with family or friends, feeling worried about having face loss among friends, or while changing schools or moving house.

It varies in degrees, and if the feeling goes on for days & months it is to be taken seriously as it is nothing but depression, which needs treatment & is not to be neglected.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Causes

We find no single cause of depression, but it can develop from life events, genetic dispositions, hormones, or any combination of these factors.

Though some serious kinds of depression comes from separation of parents, or having abusive parents or death of a parent. These can even lead to the development of paranoid personality, later on. Specially with the loss or death of parents.

Feelings of depression is different among different people, but it needs early detection & treatment for cure..

The word ‘depression’ is often used when people are talking about moments when they’re feeling sad or down. It’s normal to feel down from time to time. Many people feel sad after they have gone through stressful or difficult times.

Other reasons might include----

- relationship break-up, trouble with family or friends, changing schools or during exam times.
- There’s no simple answer for why depression happens. For some people, it can be a mix of events or issues, directly affecting how they feel, think and act. Sometimes there’s no clear reason and that’s acceptable too.

The good news is that people suffering from depression can and do get better.

## SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION AMONST YOUNG PEOPLE

- Feeling irritable or sad all the time.
- Having occasional mood swings.
- Feeling tired & bored
- Being particularly sensitive to rejection and criticism.
- Unable to socialise.
- Staying away from people, or avoiding them.
- Not having any kind of interest in life.
- Locking oneself in a room.
- Not communicating at all.
- Not being able to take decision.
- Showing temper tantrums.
- Feeling worthless or guilty most of the time.
- Having thoughts of death or suicide.
- Having trouble sleeping –eg. either falling asleep or staying asleep.
- Lacking motivation and feeling everything is too hard to accept.
- Losing interest in food or eating too much.
- Losing weight or gaining weight.
- Lack of interest in their hobbies.
- Feeling unhappy, numb, empty, moody or irritable.



- Not looking after their own hygiene.
- Ultimately using cigarettes, alcohol or illegal drugs

**Other alarming signals are—**

- Withdrawing Socially
- Getting lower marks at school.
- Having changes in mood and behaviour.
- Having risk-taking behaviour attitude.
- Using alcohol and drugs

**Changes to feelings or emotions:**

- feeling unhappy, numb, empty, moody or irritable.
- loss of interest in things that used to be enjoyable.
- feeling worthless or guilty a lot of the time.
- Feeling like everything is becoming ‘too hard’.

**Having changes in thinking Pattern:**

- Having negative thoughts about themselves, the world and the future
- Having a hard time concentrating, making decisions, or remembering things
- Having thoughts of self harm
- Having thoughts of death or suicide.
- Be particularly sensitive to rejection and criticism
- Lacking motivation and feeling everything is too hard.

**Physical changes:**

- Having low energy and motivation
- Having trouble sleeping, experiencing changes in sleeping habits .
- Changes in appetite, loss of interest in food or eating too much – leading to weight loss or weight gain
- Feeling rested regardless of the amount of sleep
- Changes in appetite, loss of interest in food or eating too much – leading to weight loss or gain
- Having body aches and pains that can’t be explained.

**Behavioural changes:**

- Not getting things done
- Having difficulty with school work
- Using more alcohol and/or other drugs
- Getting into trouble.

**Causes of depression among young people**

There is no single cause of depression; life events, hormones, chemical imbalances, and genetics can all play differing roles depending on the individual.

It is important that depression is diagnosed and treated early and the focus should be on treatment, & not just causes.

**Depression**

Sometimes depression & suicide go hand in hand, if young adults with depression talks about suicide then, it is important to take them to a doctor or psychiatrist.



### **Treatment**

It is important to encourage the young adult to talk freely with whoever he/she is comfortable with, to know their intentions.

To make them aware that depression is a disease & needs to be taken care of.

Taking them to a doctor & try finding out whether they have depression and what can be done to treat it.

Providing Psychological therapy that helps on building skills to deal with lifestresses. Changing negative thinking patterns, as well as healthy lifestyle changes (including creating exercise and sleeping routines).

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy helps in thinking positively by changing the perspective of the environment from negative to positive & for better and happy living.

Doctor may also add antidepressant medication to the treatment plan. It can take up to six weeks to feel better after treatment when medication begins, but most young people will notice an improvement.

Encouraging them to speak with their doctor about any changes in their moods.

### **Other processes that help in depression are---**

- exercising regularly
- eating healthy food
- practising relaxation techniques
- speaking regularly with trusted friends and family
- engaging in creative activities, for example painting or song writing
- setting small goals
- doing something enjoyable.
- Pursuing their habits.

Many people deny showing to doctors, it is important to help them to give some information about depression and also point out some of the coping strategies, to them.

### **Young Adults & Depression**

Depression is not uncommon among students. But it can go unrecognized or undiagnosed. Many students with depression do not receive the care they need. In fact, many people are surviving today with depression and most of the people are ignorant about it, they do not know that themselves, and their family members are ignorant about it, so these people with depression tend to lead an unhappy life.

Depression can get better with the right treatment and support. Mental health professionals treat depression with therapy, medication, or both. Effective early treatment can reduce the risk of future episodes of depression. Hence early diagnosis is important.

It is necessary for the teachers to know the signs of depression, by taking steps to guide students toward the help they need, and by being a source of support and encouragement, for the young students

### **Teachers should recognise the signs that could mean a student is having depression-**

Students with depression may:

- seem sad or irritable more often than not.
- seem tired, or having lack of energy, giving up easily.
- putting little effort into schoolwork.
- having trouble concentrating in class.
- fail to turn in work, getting lower grades
- seem not to enjoy things
- withdrawing from friends or activities
- missing school days, or being frequently late

### **Some students with depression may have:**

- Experienced trauma or adverse life events
- Other mental health issues, such as anxiety
- Engage in risky or self-harming behaviors (for example, be reckless or turn to alcohol, drugs, or self-injury)
- Talk about death or suicide

### **Teachers should recognise student behaviours that can be warning signs including:**

- Talking about suicide or death
- Hinting that they might not be around anymore



- Writing songs, poems, or letters about death
- Giving away treasured possessions to others.
- Losing interest in school, classmates, sports, or other activities
- Engaging in risky behaviors

Steps that Teachers are **to take to prevent suicide**, and **follow their school's protocol** as to how to control suicide :eg.

- notify parents if a student appears suicidal.
- get help for a student at risk of suicide.
- supervise an at-risk student.
- work with the school's crisis team to set up a support system at school and at home.

**Students with depression may need:**

- treatment from mental health professionals
- emotional support from a school counsellor or school psychologist.
- short breaks throughout the day to avoid feeling tired.
- Need extra time or extra help to complete assignments.
- to take medication
- treatment for other mental health issues or what they've faced
- Empathy from both teachers & their peer.

#### **TEACHER'S WORK**

- **Offering support and encouragement.** Help students with depression feel welcome and included. Let them know they are available to help. Encourage their strengths and their interests. Look for opportunities for them to succeed in the classroom. Let them encourage efforts — even the small steps.
- **Give extra time to complete assignments.** Offer extra help. Consider having students work with a supportive peer to work on assignments or to study for tests.
- **Make physical activities a part of your daily classroom routine.** This can help ease mild depression symptoms. It can energize all of your other students, too.
- **Make brief mindfulness practices a part of everyday instruction.** At random or scheduled times, invite your class, "Let's all pause and take a few slow, calm breaths." This helps students learn and practice this simple but effective self-calming skill.
- **Use trauma-informed education approaches.** Create and maintain an environment where every student can feel a sense of safety and inclusion. This helps every student thrive.

#### **PARENTS WORK**

Parents can be supportive

Listen to their children

Have empathy on them.

Try not be perfectionist & competitive

Keep their expectations low

Encourage their children.

Let their children do things at their own pace.

Not to overburden their children with activities.

Adjusting to the pace of their children.

Love them

Take care of them

Encourage them to pursue their hobbies.

Motivate their children, without comparing them with others.

Finally taking them to counsellors & psychiatrists for taking care of their child's mental health.

#### **NET REFERENCING**

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/Depression-in-young-people#symptoms-of-depression-in-young-people> comprehensive websites.

**Medically reviewed by: Amanda S.Lauchrie**

Health Direct

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