

Depression is a serious problem that impacts every aspect of a teen's life. Left untreated, teen depression can lead to problems at home and school, drug abuse, self-loathing—even irreversible tragedy such as homicidal violence or suicide. **Always handle suspicion of student depression in accordance with your local school authority guidelines.**

## Signs and symptoms of depression in teens:

- Sadness or hopelessness
- Irritability, anger, or hostility
- Tearfulness or frequent crying
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Loss of interest in activities
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Restlessness and agitation
- Feelings of worthlessness and guilt
- Lack of enthusiasm and motivation
- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Difficulty concentration
- Thoughts of death or suicide
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Extreme sensitivity to criticism

## Untreated Depression Can Lead to:

- Problems at school
- Running away
- Substance abuse
- Low self-esteem
- Eating disorders
- Internet addiction
- Self-injury
- Reckless behavior
- Violence
- Suicide



SAMPLE

PLEASE ORDER ONLINE

[WWW.STUDYATAPU.COM/TIPS-FOR-TEACHERS](http://WWW.STUDYATAPU.COM/TIPS-FOR-TEACHERS)

## Tips for talking to a depressed teen:

- Offer support
- Be gentle but persistent
- Listen without lecturing
- Validate feelings

## Suicide warning signs in teenagers:

- Talking or joking about committing suicide.
- Saying things like, "I'd be better off dead," "I wish I could disappear forever," or "There's no way out."
- Speaking positively about death or romanticizing dying ("If I died, people might love me more").
- Writing stories and poems about death, dying, or suicide.
- Engaging in reckless behavior or having a lot of accidents resulting in injury.
- Giving away prized possessions.
- Saying goodbye to friends and family as if for good.
- Seeking out weapons, pills, or other ways to kill themselves.

## The difference between teenage and adult depression

Depression in teens can look very different from depression in adults. The following symptoms of depression are more common in teenagers than in their adult counterparts:

- Irritable or angry mood – As noted above, irritability, rather than sadness, is often the predominant mood in depressed teens. A depressed teenager may be grumpy, hostile, easily frustrated, or prone to angry outbursts.
- Unexplained aches and pains - Depressed teens frequently complain about physical ailments such as headaches or stomachaches. If a thorough physical exam does not reveal a medical cause, these aches and pains may indicate depression.
- Extreme sensitivity to criticism - Depressed teens are plagued by feelings of worthlessness, making them extremely vulnerable to criticism, rejection, and failure. This is a particular problem for "over-achievers."
- Withdrawing from some, but not all people - While adults tend to isolate themselves when depressed, teenagers usually keep up at least some friendships. However, teens with depression may socialize less than before, pull away from their parents, or start hanging out with a different crowd.

If you suspect that a teenager you know is suicidal, take immediate action!

For 24-hour suicide prevention and support, call the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** at **1.800.273.TALK**.

This information is intended for general summary purposes only and is not intended to take the place of local policy, procedure, or law.