

Depression Resource Center

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Depression Resource Center

about

Depression is defined as an illness when feelings of sadness or irritability persist and interfere with a child or adolescent's ability to function. About 5 percent of children and adolescents in the general population suffer from depression at any given point in time. Children under stress, who experience loss, or who have attentional, learning, conduct or anxiety disorders are at a higher risk for depression. Depression also tends to run in families. Seriously depressed children and adolescents experience symptoms that are beyond the range of normal sadness. The good news is that depression is a treatable illness.



For additional information see:

- [The Depressed Child](#)
- [Psychiatric Medication for Children and Adolescents Part I: How Medications Are Used #21](#)
- [Psychiatric Medication for Children and Adolescents Part II: Types of Medications #29](#)
- [Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part III: Questions to Ask #51](#)
- [Excerpts on Depressive Disorders from AACAP's book, *Your Child*](#)
- [Excerpts on Depressive Disorders from AACAP's book, *Your Adolescent*](#)
- [AACAP Glossary of Symptoms and Illnesses - Symptoms of Depression](#)
- [The National Institute of Mental Health Site on Depression in Children and Adolescents](#)
- [National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression \(NARSAD\), The World's Leading Charity Dedicated to Mental Health Research](#)

frequently asked questions

1. [What causes depression in children?](#)
2. [What are the signs and symptoms of depression?](#)
3. [Will depression improve without treatment?](#)
4. [What should treatment consist of?](#)
5. [Does psychotherapy work? How?](#)
6. [Are medications safe? Do they increase risk of suicide?](#)



facts for families

AACAP's *Facts for Families* provide concise up-to-date information on issues that affect children, teenagers, and their families

[The Depressed Child](#)

[Psychiatric Medication for Children and Adolescents Part I: How Medications Are Used](#)

[Psychiatric Medication for Children and Adolescents Part II: Types of Medications](#)

[Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part III: Questions to Ask](#)

[Psychotherapies for Children and Adolescents](#)

[Where to Find Help For Your Child](#)

[Children and Grief](#)

[Bipolar Disorder](#)

[Teen Suicide](#)

[Comprehensive Psychiatric Evaluation](#)

[What is Psychotherapy For Children and Adolescents?](#)

video clips

Depression and Antidepressants

Graham Emslie, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry
Division Chief, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
University of Texas
Southwestern Medical Center
(Jan 2008)

[Disclosures](#)

duration: 01:41

clinical resources

Practice Parameters

Considered resources for experts, mental health professional and physicians, AACAP's practice parameters were developed to guide clinical decision making. They show the best treatments and the range of treatment options available to families living with childhood and adolescent mental illness.

[Click here for the Practice Parameter for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents with Depressive Disorders.](#)

[Practice Parameter for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents with Suicidal Behavior.](#)

[Parents Med Guide](#)



The American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) developed *The Use of Medication in Treating Childhood and Adolescent Depression: Information for Patients and Families*. Both the ParentsMedGuide and PhysiciansMedGuide were designed to help individuals make informed decisions about childhood and adolescent depression treatment.

research and training

Scientific Articles and Information

[The Treatment for Adolescents with Depression Study](#)

[Fluoxetine, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, and Their Combination for Adolescents With Depression](#)

Treatment for Adolescents With Depression Study (TADS) Randomized Controlled Trial

Treatment for Adolescents With Depression Study (TADS) Team

JAMA. 2004;292:807-820.



[Cognitive-Behavioral Psychotherapy for Anxiety and Depressive Disorders in Children and Adolescents: An Evidence-Based Medicine Review](#)

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry:
August 2004 - Volume 43 - Issue 8 - pp 930-959

[Suicide and SSRIs in Children and Adolescents: An Update](#)

[Scientific Programs from the AACAP Annual Meeting 2008 Annual Meeting Sessions](#)

[Click here to search the Annual Meeting Sessions.](#)

[2008 Psychopharmacology Update](#)

Learn about rational medication treatment options for acute treatment of youth with major depressive disorder

[2007 Psychopharmacology Update](#)

Learn how SSRIs work in both the maturing and matured brain, and discuss the recent studies involving the use of SSRIs.

[Treatment for Adolescents with Depression Study \(TADS\)](#)

A combination of psychotherapy and antidepressant medication appears to be the most effective treatment for adolescents with major depressive disorder - more than medication alone or psychotherapy alone, according to results from a major clinical trial funded by the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The study was published in the October 2007 issue of the Archives of General Psychiatry.

[more](#)

books

AACAP's books: *Your Child* and *Your Adolescent* offer easy-to-understand and comprehensive information on the emotional development and behavior of children from infancy through the teen years.

[Your Child](#)

[Click here for excerpts from Your Child on Depressive Disorders](#)



[Your Adolescent](#)

[Click here for excerpts from Your Adolescent on Depressive Disorders](#)

getting help

Getting help is the most important thing that parents can do for children and adolescents with depression. Parents should try to find a mental health professional who has advanced training and experience with evaluating and treating children, adolescents, and families. It is important to find a comfortable match between your child, your family, and the mental health professional.



A child and adolescent psychiatrist is a physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of thinking, feeling and behavior that affect children, adolescents, and their families. Child and adolescent psychiatrists have completed four years of medical school, at least three years of residency training in medicine, neurology, or general psychiatry with adults, and two years of additional training in psychiatric work with children, adolescents, and their families.

[Click here to find a child and adolescent psychiatrist in your area.](#)

Bear in mind that because of the extensive training required, there is a nationwide shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists. To learn more about other mental health professionals and places where families can find help, read [Where to Find Help For Your Child](#).

- [When To Seek Help For Your Child](#)
- [Understanding Your Mental Health Insurance](#)
- [Advocating For Your Child](#)

[Related Web Sites](#)

other links

[The National Institute of Mental Health Site on Depression in Children and Adolescents](#)

[National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression \(NARSAD\), The World's Leading Charity Dedicated to Mental Health Research](#)

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