



Recognizing depression in teens October 2016

The teen years can be confusing for both children and parents. While young children accept and identify with their parents, adolescents embark on a search for their own identity. They may begin to question and rebel against previously accepted rules and values. They are also going through physical changes and a surge in hormones. These physical, emotional and cognitive changes can play havoc with a teen's sense of well-being.

Parents may feel at a loss as their child changes from compliant and loving to moody and rebellious. It is particularly frightening for parents if the teenager engages in risky behaviors.

How do parents differentiate between a teen experiencing normal mood swings and a depressed teen? Depression is more than feeling sad once in a while. Signs of depression in teens include sadness or crying, hopelessness, increased irritability or anger, inability to concentrate, school absences or a drop in grades. Other signs include physical complaints such as stomachaches or headaches, fatigue or eating or sleeping too much or too little. In addition, a depressed teen may have feelings of hopelessness or guilt, social isolation, boredom or loss of interest in previously-enjoyed activities or low self-esteem.

In more serious cases, you may see alcohol or drug use, self-mutilation (cutting, burning, biting) or thoughts of suicide.*

If your teen is experiencing any of these symptoms for two weeks or more, make an appointment with your doctor. Some illnesses have symptoms similar to depression. If other causes are ruled out, your doctor will recommend individual and/or family counseling and may prescribe an antidepressant.

While depression is a serious illness, don't overreact to the anger and irritability that is common in teen depression. Remember (even when your teen can't) that you and he are partners in fighting the illness, not each other.

** If your teen is having thoughts of suicide, call your local hospital's emergency room immediately.*

You and your family do not have to struggle alone. LCFS counselors help families generate hope and cope with life's challenges. Most insurance plans accepted; sliding-scale fees are available on a case-by-case basis. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact us at lcfs_info@lcfs.org or 800-363-LCFS (5237). Discover LCFS and the services we offer at www.lcfs.org and www.facebook.com/LCFSIL.



Recognizing depression in teens October 2016

The teen years can be confusing for both children and parents. While young children accept and identify with their parents, adolescents embark on a search for their own identity. They may begin to question and rebel against previously accepted rules and values. They are also going through physical changes and a surge in hormones. These physical, emotional and cognitive changes can play havoc with a teen's sense of well-being.

Parents may feel at a loss as their child changes from compliant and loving to moody and rebellious. It is particularly frightening for parents if the teenager engages in risky behaviors.

How do parents differentiate between a teen experiencing normal mood swings and a depressed teen? Depression is more than feeling sad once in a while. Signs of depression in teens include sadness or crying, hopelessness, increased irritability or anger, inability to concentrate, school absences or a drop in grades. Other signs include physical complaints such as stomachaches or headaches, fatigue or eating or sleeping too much or too little. In addition, a depressed teen may have feelings of hopelessness or guilt, social isolation, boredom or loss of interest in previously-enjoyed activities or low self-esteem.

In more serious cases, you may see alcohol or drug use, self-mutilation (cutting, burning, biting) or thoughts of suicide.*

If your teen is experiencing any of these symptoms for two weeks or more, make an appointment with your doctor. Some illnesses have symptoms similar to depression. If other causes are ruled out, your doctor will recommend individual and/or family counseling and may prescribe an antidepressant.

While depression is a serious illness, don't overreact to the anger and irritability that is common in teen depression. Remember (even when your teen can't) that you and he are partners in fighting the illness, not each other.

** If your teen is having thoughts of suicide, call your local hospital's emergency room immediately.*

You and your family do not have to struggle alone. LCFS counselors help families generate hope and cope with life's challenges. Most insurance plans accepted; sliding-scale fees are available on a case-by-case basis. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact us at lcfs_info@lcfs.org or 800-363-LCFS (5237). Discover LCFS and the services we offer at www.lcfs.org and www.facebook.com/LCFSIL.



**LCFS offers counseling
at the following locations:**

Northern Illinois

Grace Lutheran School, River Forest

Central Illinois

Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington

LCFS office, Decatur

LCFS office, Springfield

Southern Illinois

LCFS office, Belleville

LCFS office, Mt. Vernon

**To schedule a first-time appointment,
call 800-363-LCFS (5237) or
visit www.lcfs.org for additional information.**



Lutheran Child and
Family Services of Illinois

**LCFS offers counseling
at the following locations:**

Northern Illinois

Grace Lutheran School, River Forest

Central Illinois

Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington

LCFS office, Decatur

LCFS office, Springfield

Southern Illinois

LCFS office, Belleville

LCFS office, Mt. Vernon

**To schedule a first-time appointment,
call 800-363-LCFS (5237) or
visit www.lcfs.org for additional information.**



Lutheran Child and
Family Services of Illinois