



## Depression in Children



### Overview

Every child feels sad or even hopeless sometimes. Learning to cope with emotions is a normal part of growth and development. But sometimes, negative feelings begin to take over a child's life. Your child may lose interest in things they use to enjoy. This is "depression."

### Signs

What are the signs of depression? Your child may often seem sad, tired, sluggish and irritable. They may not want to do fun things. You may notice a change in their eating and sleeping patterns, too. They may begin to eat and sleep more or less than usual. And, it may be hard for them to stay focused. It's often not easy for people to talk about depression, so these signs can be easy to miss.

### Get help

Watch for more serious problems, too. Does your child say they feel worthless or useless? Do they have feelings of guilt? Are they injuring themselves, or doing things that are self-destructive? Are they having thoughts about suicide? These are signs that your child needs help. Do not ignore them.

### Treatment

We can treat depression with a healthy lifestyle, with different types of therapy and with medications. Teachers and school counselors may play an important role. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.