

Journeys has a range of information and resources for young people affected by depression, their friends, families, and carers.

If you are worried that a friend may be depressed:

- Listen to them, and be sympathetic
- Don't expect them just to 'cheer up'
- Don't criticise or tease them
- Encourage them to talk about their feelings
- Encourage and help them to get support

Childline 0800 1111
Samaritans 08457 909090

Journeys is the only organisation in Wales whose sole purpose is to offer support and understanding to people affected by depression, their friends, families and carers.

Journeys takes a holistic approach to overcoming depression through guided self-help and the development of skills and strategies. We help people to find their own route to recovery, building the foundations for sustainable and long-term wellbeing.

We facilitate a network of self-help groups where people can share experiences and coping strategies; offer information and advice; provide a unique range of publications and practical resources covering many depression related topics; run training courses to help people understand, manage and recover from depression; and co-ordinate mutual support services. We also offer a free information pack.

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Depression & Young People

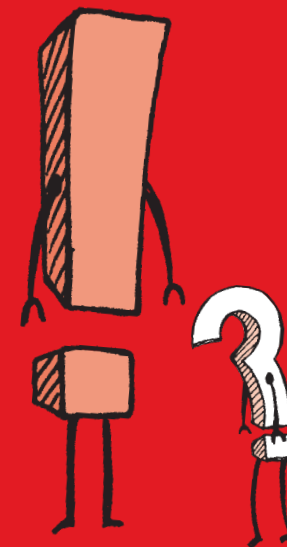
Depression affects young people as well as adults. With the right help and support you can find your road to recovery.

To request a free information pack or to find out more please contact us.

Call 029 2069 2891
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www.journeysonline.org.uk

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What is depression?

Everyone feels sad or upset sometimes, children and young people as well as adults. This is a normal response to difficult or distressing experiences. When these feelings remain for a long time or are so bad that they interfere with your whole life they may be symptoms of depression.

Depression is a common and treatable condition. It affects 2% of children under 12 and 5% of teenagers.

Depression and young people

Depression can affect all areas of your life – your outlook, how you feel, and what you are able to do. Because of this it can leave you less able to cope with ordinary daily life than usual.

If you are depressed you may:

- ⇔ Feel guilty, miserable and lonely
- ⇔ Feel moody, irritable or easily upset
- ⇔ Avoid family and friends, and regular activities
- ⇔ Have difficulty making decisions
- ⇔ Find it difficult to concentrate
- ⇔ Have changes in your appetite
- ⇔ Have problems with sleeping
- ⇔ Lose your self confidence
- ⇔ Feel tired or lack energy

These symptoms can cause serious problems such as:

- ⇔ Difficulties getting on with friends and family
- ⇔ Inability to study, work and perform well in exams
- ⇔ Difficulty with day-to-day tasks
- ⇔ Lying, stealing and truanting
- ⇔ Alcohol, drug or solvent abuse
- ⇔ Self-injury
- ⇔ Suicide

What causes depression?

Depression is usually the result of a number of different things rather than any single cause. You may find it difficult to identify why you feel the way you do.

Some people have experiences that lead to depression. This might include family breakdown, abuse, neglect, bullying or if someone close to you dies or becomes ill. Life can be hard sometimes and this can also bring on depression. It can be really difficult to cope with changes when they happen too quickly, moving house or school, worrying about exams or the future, arguing a lot with people you care about, feeling left out or not fitting in.

People are at greater risk of depression if they have no one to share their worries with, a lot of demands on them, and not enough support.

What should I do if I think I'm depressed?

Depression is a serious condition but with the right help and support people do get better. So the most important thing you can do if you think you may be depressed is to ask for help.

This means talking to an adult you trust about how you are feeling. Family members can provide help and support, as can a friend's parents, youth workers, teachers, college/ school counsellors, school nurses and your doctor.

If there is no-one around you feel able to talk to, you could try a confidential helpline like Childline or Samaritans (you will find the numbers over the page).

What will happen if I talk to someone?

Talking to an adult will be helpful. They will be able to reassure you, enable you to access further information and advice, and be able to make arrangements for you if needed. If you talk to a teacher they will also be able to help if your problems are affecting your school or college work.

Doctors are a good source of advice and information about depression. They will also be able to refer you to services, such as a counsellor or your local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team.

If you are concerned about confidentiality, make sure you tell the person you are speaking to. Anything that you talk to your doctor or school counsellor about will be kept confidential but if they are very worried about your health they may ask you if they can contact a parent or carer. If you are nervous you could ask a friend to go along with you. It may also help to write down your thoughts and feelings beforehand as it can be difficult to remember all the things that you want to say.

What will help?

Effective treatment for depression usually means sharing worries, working out solutions and discovering new ways of coping. You may also benefit from practical support with some things, such as relationships, school, finance or housing.

There are also things that you can do to help yourself:

- ⇔ Talk about your feelings
- ⇔ Try to eat healthily and drink plenty of water
- ⇔ Get enough sleep
- ⇔ Spend time with friends, even if you don't feel like it
- ⇔ Try to do some activities
- ⇔ Get some fresh air every day
- ⇔ Do something creative
- ⇔ Watch your favourite film or TV show
- ⇔ Listen to your favourite music
- ⇔ Remind yourself that you will feel better soon - even if it doesn't seem like it at the moment