



# Gateway to Success Teens' Newsletter

## Depression: Beyond Sadness

Sadness is a feeling everyone experiences. Many things and experiences will invoke the feeling of sadness; the death of a loved one, the break-up of a relationship, not getting a good grade. These are all "normal" experiences that may make one feel sad. However, depression is beyond sadness. Depression is an emotional state of sadness that is pervasive and lasts for a significant amount of time. Although one can feel depressed at times, clinical depression is when a person feels a constant sense of sadness.

### Signs and Symptoms



- **A pervasive feeling of sadness**, worthlessness and/or guilt. Depression is when one feels sad for most of the day for many days for at least 2 weeks.
- **Increased irritability or anger**. Sometimes when one is depressed one may become easily angered and annoyed.
- **Withdrawing socially or from activities** that were once considered enjoyable. A person may isolate themselves from social, extracurricular or fun outings because the feeling of sadness is persistent.
- **Changes in appetite and sleep** either increased or decreased amounts.
- **Difficulty concentrating**. When one is depressed, one is less likely to have the energy to fully concentrate.
- **Fatigue and low energy**. Depression typically makes one feel very tired or lacking the energy to complete everyday tasks.
- **Thoughts of death or suicide**. If you ever have thoughts of death or suicide, seek help immediately!

### Getting Help

Getting help is a key factor in feeling better. Talk to someone about your feelings. A trusted friend or parent might be a good person to share your experiences with. Sometimes, though, seeking the help of a professional would be beneficial. A therapist or counselor can help you identify and understand the possible reasons and factors that are affecting the depression. Also, therapy can help identify coping strategies that may lessen those feelings. Remember, counseling services are available to you on your campus.

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For more information contact the Director of Pupil Services (626) 943-3410

July 2010