



# Gateway to Success Teachers' Newsletter

## Depression: Beyond Sadness



Feeling sad is a "normal" feeling that many people experience. However, depression is a pervasive sense of sadness. 1 in 10 children and teens experience depression and adolescents often do not know what is going on and how to express it. Schools provide educators with the unique role of seeing teens in many contexts. Thus, you are able to see behaviors that can be more or less apparent. That is why it is important for teachers to understand the signs and symptoms of childhood and adolescent depression.

### Signs and Symptoms

- Continuous feelings of sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness and/or guilt
- Irritability or anger. Depression in children and teens can be displayed through anger
- Social withdrawal and loss of interest in activities that were once considered enjoyable
- Changes in appetite and sleep either increased or decreased amounts
- Fatigue and low energy
- Difficulty concentrating, attention and/or poor grades
- Physical complaints (such as stomachaches, headaches) that do not remediate
- Thoughts of death or suicide. Encourage the student to seek help immediately and talk to the student's parents

### What to Do About It

Talk to the child's parent/guardian informing them of the symptoms and your concerns. You might encourage the parent to make a referral to the school's counseling services or you might make one yourself. Remember, counseling services are available to your students at the school.

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

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