> I never realised how common teenage depression was and have found the tips on how to manage a student who presents with depression in my class very helpful.

> Everyone talks about self-harm and eating disorders and no one mentions depression, which I have suffered from for the past two years.

> The bad days are just that, bad days. They pass, move on to the next person, because that's what depression does. It circulates around us like a black mist. You're not alone and trust me, I'm no expert. I'm 15 and my life hasn't even begun.

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USEFUL CONTACTS

Mind

Information on mental health problems and where to get help.

Infoline: 0300 123 3393 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 6pm)

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

Support for men of any age who are depressed or in crisis via a helpline, webchat, and website.

Helpline: 0800 58 58 58 (Every day, 5pm – midnight)

Website: www.thecalmzone.net

Samaritans

Provide confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Helpline: 116 123 (24/7)

Website: www.samaritans.org

SHOUT

Free confidential, anonymous text support service.

Text 'SHOUT' to 85258 (24/7)

Website: www.giveusashout.org

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51 St George's Road
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e: info@stem4.org.uk
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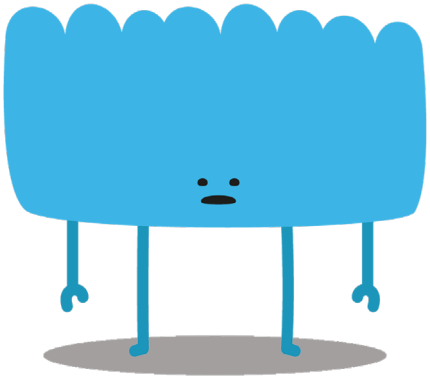
stem4
supporting teenage mental health
Registered Charity No. 1144506

DEPRESSION



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DEPRESSION

Key facts:

Signs of Clinical Depression may include:

- consistent low mood;
- loss of interest;
- negative self-beliefs;
- changes in appetite, sleep, and sexual interest;
- lower energy levels;
- withdrawing from friends and things you love doing.

How do I know if I'm depressed?

- Do you overthink things, have negative thoughts, and experience repetitive thinking?
- Are you experiencing difficulties sleeping or major changes to your sleep habits?
- Has your appetite changed, either going off your food or binge eating?
- Have you lost interest in things that you love?
- Are you less active?
- Are you feeling constantly tearful or numb and distant from others?
- Are you hurting yourself?

If you answered 'yes' to most of these questions, we recommend you see a GP or mental health professional for their accurate assessment and diagnosis.

Why deal with depression?

Depression tends to negatively affect mood and this, in turn, makes it difficult to think positively or to behave in ways that help you to get the best out of life.

Depression can affect your concentration and memory, and this may affect your learning. It can make it hard to be sociable, and so often leads to loneliness. Depression can make it hard to keep trying and, ultimately, affects motivation and desire to make change.

What can I try to do?

- Eat a balanced diet and eat regularly.
- Get into healthy sleep patterns. This means sleeping at night for around 8 hours and avoiding catching up on lost sleep during the day.
- Follow an exercise schedule—half an hour a day makes a difference.
- Draw up an activity schedule of regular things to do every day.
- Increase your social contact by planning to connect with at least one person a day.
- Keep a mood diary—note down your negative thoughts to see if you might be able to work out if they are valid.
- Talk to someone you trust, such as a friend, family member, or school staff member. Emotions don't work well when buried.
- See a mental health professional by going through your GP as there are lots of very effective treatments.
- Check the NHS website for further information on depression.
- Visit your GP by phoning your local practice and booking an appointment (check if you can book it with their mental health lead). Go ready to discuss your concerns and the problems you are experiencing. You can always take your mood diary with you in order to help this process or write down what you want to discuss. If you have a lot to discuss, book a double appointment.
- Treatment often includes talking therapies that focus on thoughts and behaviours relating to depression, for example, a treatment called Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and occasionally medication.

Move Mood

Why not try the stem4 Move Mood app?

Move Mood is an app to help teenagers manage low mood and depression, developed by a clinician in collaboration with young people.

The Move Mood app uses evidence-based Behavioural Activation Therapy.

It is FREE to download from the Apple Store and Google Play.

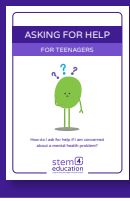
MOVE MOOD

Available on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

"This app is excellent. It can help any age. The companion and reminder notifications are particularly helpful."

"This has helped me a lot. It's just nice being organised about tasks and then getting an award, I really like it."

Asking for help

stem4 has an Asking for help booklet available on our Resources page www.stem4.org.uk/resources