

Identifying and Managing Childhood Anxiety and Depression

Voluntown Elementary School

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Agenda

- Signs & Symptoms of Depression & Anxiety in Children & Adolescents
- Causes of Depression & Anxiety
- How to help a youth who is down or nervous
- Determine when professional help is appropriate

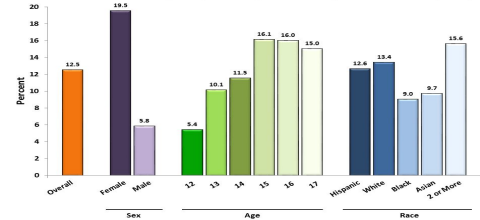


12.5 %

12-17 year-olds present with a major depressive episode

National Institute of Mental health 2015

12-month Prevalence of Major Depressive Episode Among U.S. Adolescents (2015)



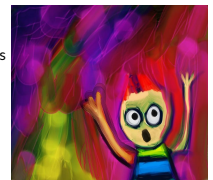
National Institute of Mental Health 2015

20 %

12-17 year-olds present with an anxiety disorder

Why is this Discussion Important?

School Problems
Family/Relationship Problems
Medical/Health Issues
Self-medication
Suicide



Why is this Discussion Important?

On average, the delay between onset of symptoms and intervention is 9 years

50 % of all cases of mental illness begin by age 14.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in youth ages 10-24

Statistics provided by National Institute of Mental Health

Depression



Depression

Signs & Symptoms

- Feeling sad
- Irritability/Anger
- No longer seems to enjoy things once liked/Less enthusiasm
- Withdrawal
- Avoiding social situations
- Crying spells, tantrum behavior
- Poor concentration
- Indecision

Depressive symptoms are considered **significant** when:

- Present for 2 weeks
- Impact functioning

Depression

Signs & Symptoms

- Falling behind in school
- Low energy level
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Physical complaints - headaches, stomach pain
- Change in appetite
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Change in themes in play, music, or art
- Thoughts of suicide

Depressive symptoms are considered **significant** when:

- Present for 2 weeks
- Impact functioning

Suicide Warning Signs

- Talking or joking about suicide
- Drawing or writing about death, dying, or suicide
 - Romanticizing death
- Engaging in reckless behavior
- Giving away prized possessions
 - Saying good-bye
- Seeking out weapons, pills, or other lethal objects

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK

Anxiety



Anxiety

Signs & Symptoms

- Constant and unnecessary worry
- Fear of certain situations or things
- Dwelling on negative thoughts or events
- Self-consciousness/sensitivity to criticism
- Need for constant reassurance
- Excessive shyness
- Reluctance to try new things
- Clinginess

Anxiety symptoms are considered **significant** when:

- Present for 2 weeks
- Impact functioning

Anxiety

Signs & Symptoms

- Avoidance
- Difficulty concentrating
- Nervous habits (biting fingernails, repetitive behaviors, thumb sucking)
- Seeming on edge and jumpy
- Restlessness
- Tantrum behavior
- Disruptive Behavior
- Physical complaints (headache, stomach pain)
- Change in appetite and sleeping patterns
- Regressive behaviors

Anxiety symptoms are considered **significant** when:

- Present for 2 weeks
- Impact functioning

Causes/Risk Factors of Depression & Anxiety



Risk Factors for Depression

- Family history of depression
- Low birth weight
- Being female or part of a social-cultural minority
- Being a more sensitive, emotional, or anxious person
- History of trauma or abuse
- Family poverty or social disadvantage
- School difficulties
- Recent negative life events
- Long-term illness or pain
- Presence of another mental health condition






Depression - Other causes

- Effect of medical condition
- Side effects of medication

Risk Factors for Anxiety

- Family history of anxiety
- Being a more sensitive, emotional, or anxious person
- Being female
- A history of worry and shyness
- History of trauma
- Overly strict parents
- Parental alcohol abuse
- Parental separation or divorce




Anxiety - Other causes

- Effect of medical condition
- Side effects of medication




What can caretakers do to help?

THE BASICS



The Basics

- Diet
- Sleep
- Exercise/Activity
- Screen Time
- Play



Sleep Hygiene



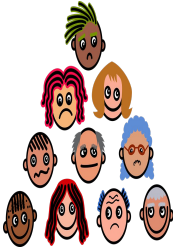


How to Help

- Open dialogue
 - Focus on listening, not lecturing.
- Be gentle and persistent
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Trust your parental instincts
- Encourage social connection
- Be playful



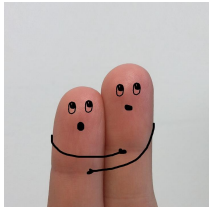
Tips/Techniques



- Emotional identification and education
- Positive Reframe
- Break down problems or tasks into smaller steps
- Monitor the language you use in communicating
- Be a good role model
- Allow your child to have opportunities to for control and choice
- Avoid burdening children with your own problems.
- Offering praise


How to Help - Anxiety

- Focus on managing the anxious feelings, not eliminating it
- Don't avoid what makes a child anxious
- Express confidence
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Avoid reinforcing the fears with body language, tone or voice, or overly protective behaviors
- Help your child tolerate the anxious feelings
- Keep anticipation periods short
- Talk it through
- Model effective coping strategies.



Treatment Works!

- Seek treatment for your child
- Seek support or treatment for yourself



Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1.800.273.TALK	www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Connecticut 2-1-1	2.1.1 or 1.800.203.1234	www.211ct.org
Anxiety and Depression Association of America		www.adaa.org
Therapist Finder		www.psychologytoday.com



Contact Information

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