

December 14, 2022

LCPS Parent Seminar Series

IS THIS A PHASE?

Recognizing the difference between
moodiness and Depression in your teen

Presented by

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Fiona Brown, LPC

Student Assistance Services



HEY, THERE!



Darren Madison,
LCSW



Fiona Brown,
LPC



AGENDA

- ✦ Teen brain development
- ✦ Moodiness
- ✦ Depression as a clinical diagnosis
- ✦ Prevalence and contributing factors
- ✦ Boosting mood & building resiliency
- ✦ Resources and Q&A

TEEN BRAIN DEVELOPMENT



- ✦ Underdeveloped executive functioning
- ✦ Heightened activity and sensitivity to reward and emotion
- ✦ High level of neuroplasticity makes their brain **adaptable** and **creative**, but also **vulnerable** to the negative effects of influences like lack of sleep, adverse experiences and substance use

MOODINESS

- ✦ Individual moods may be unpredictable, but moodiness is a predictable adolescent experience
- ✦ You may notice sudden mood changes, exaggerated interpretation of events
- ✦ Natural result of cognitive/inhibitive functions lagging behind emotional

3 things to keep in mind:



Severity - How intense are the symptoms and how much do they impact healthy functioning?



Duration - Does the same mood persist without relief for more than two weeks?



Domains - Is your child experiencing these moods and problems in more than one life area? (at home, school, activities, with friends, etc.)

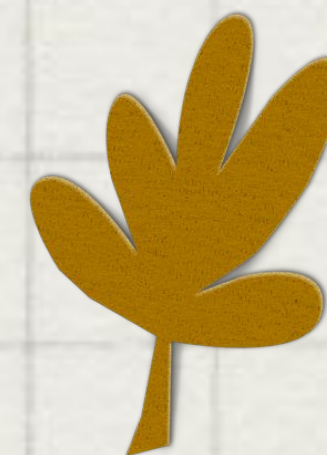
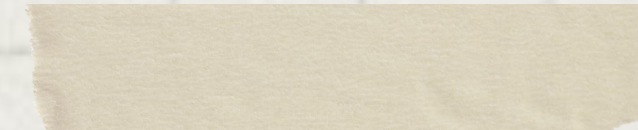
DEPRESSION

- ✦ Clinical diagnosis made by a medical professional
- ✦ Diagnosis describes symptoms. It does not tell us the cause
- ✦ Can be caused by genetics, stressors, adverse childhood experiences or internalized negative thoughts/rumination on negative experiences

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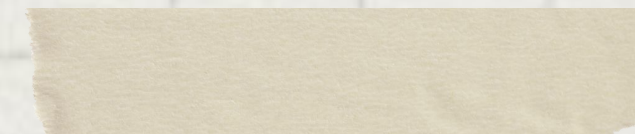
DEPRESSION (symptoms)

- ✦ Persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, irritability or lack of emotion every day
- ✦ Loss of interest in activities
- ✦ Persistent disruption to appetite or sleep
- ✦ Lack of energy or motivation
- ✦ Isolating self from friends and/or family

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HOW PREVALENT IS THIS?

"From 2009 to 2021, the share of American high-school students who say they feel “persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness” rose from 26 percent to 44.” - The Atlantic

Why American Teens are So Sad"
- The Atlantic



WHY ARE TEENS DEPRESSED?

Physical Health

Social Comparison

Social media

Lack of connection

Global stressors

Adverse Childhood Experiences

High achievement stress

Parental
overaccommodation



STRESS RESPONSE

- ✦ Fight, Flight, Freeze
- ✦ Activated by any stressor/fear/threat
- ✦ Requires skills to prevent lasting effects
- ✦ Impacts other mental health variables

SUBSTANCE USE

Affects mood

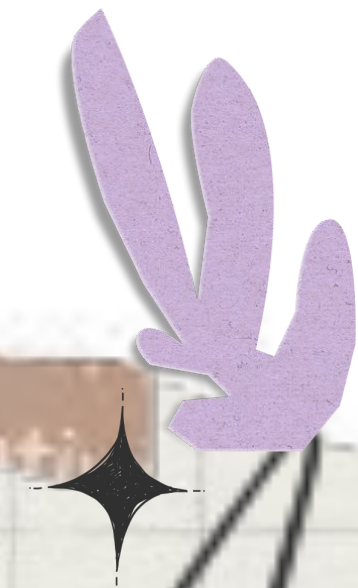
Causes symptoms of mental illness

Impairs social emotional
development

Exacerbates symptoms of mental illness

Interferes with achievement and sense
of mastery

HOW DO WE TURN
THIS AROUND?



TALKING TO YOUR MOODY TEEN



- ✦ Maintaining control of yourself
- ✦ Show empathy
- ✦ Offer alternative interpretations
- ✦ Invite them to practice healthy coping
- ✦ Distinguish between moods and behavior

Your teen's ability to
regulate will often
mirror your own
ability to regulate

BUILDING RESILIENCY

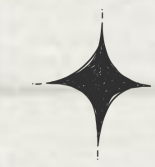
Sources of
Strength



GETTING SUPPORT



LCPS Mental Health Services website



Speak to School-based UMHT Staff:

School Psychologist

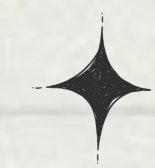
School Social Worker

Student Assistance Specialist

School Counselors



Mental Health/Substance Abuse Evaluation



Crisis Response:

988

Community Regional Crisis Response

911/Nearest Emergency Room

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