

LOW MOOD AND DEPRESSION

Healthy Young Minds



What is low mood and depression?

- **Low Mood** is: A feeling that can include:
 - sadness
 - worry
 - tiredness
 - frustration
 - anger
- Low mood tends to lift after a few days
- We all experience low mood sometimes
- Low mood that doesn't go away after a few weeks can be a sign of depression

What signs should I look out for in a young person?

- Loss of interest in activities they previously enjoyed
- Sleeping more/less than usual
- Eating more/less than usual
- Difficulties concentrating on homework
- Being more forgetful than usual
- Difficulties making decisions
- Not wanting to go to school
- Feeling tired
- Tearfulness
- More irritable than usual
- Lack of motivation and energy
- Feeling hopeless
- Thoughts of suicide or harming self
- Complaints of aches and pains e.g headaches, tummy pains
- Constantly complaining of feeling bored or lonely, even when they have friends
- Lack of confidence and blaming themselves if things go wrong
- Becoming very withdrawn



How can I help raise a child's mood and help them to be happy?

- ✓ Help children discover and develop their talents, through clubs, groups and activities. Finding something they are good at provides a huge boost to their feelings of self-worth.
- ✓ Talk to them and try to find out what's troubling them.
- ✓ Acknowledge their feelings and help them express their feelings in words. For example, encourage them to say, "I'm upset because..." or "I feel happy when..."
- ✓ Encourage them to get a good night's sleep
- ✓ Help them to stick to a healthy diet
- ✓ Encourage them to exercise, even just a 20 minute walk can be helpful
- ✓ Plan in fun activities to do with them
- ✓ Show them lots of love and be positive about them as a person – tell them what makes them special to you
- ✗ Don't trivialise whatever is causing the problem, it may not be a big deal to you but could be a major problem for the child.

➤ **Some useful websites:**

- http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/depression
- <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyouthinfo/parentscarers/depression.asp>



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