



Depression

Pay Attention. Listen. Watch.

The first step toward defeating depression is to define it.

But people who are depressed often have a hard time thinking clearly or recognizing their own symptoms. They may need your help.

Check the following boxes if you notice any of the following symptoms persisting longer than two weeks.

- Sadness or “emptiness”
- Trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or getting up
- Hopelessness, pessimism, or guilt
- Appetite problems, losing or gaining weight
- Helplessness or worthlessness
- Headaches, stomachaches, or backaches
- Unable to make decisions
- Chronic aches and pains in joints and muscles
- Unable to concentrate and remember
- Restless or more irritable than usual
- Lost interest or pleasure in ordinary activities
- Wanting to be alone most of the time
- Loss of energy and drive - so they seem “slowed down”
- Increasing problems with school and family
- Drinking heavily or taking drugs
- They’ve started cutting classes or dropped
- Talking about or preoccupation with death or suicide

Teachers often prove better able to detect depression in adolescents than do their parents. Let them know if they notice your son or daughter is depressed or seems to be contemplating suicide, that you want them to ACT, not wait to see if your child feels better the next day.

Most youth suicide attempts take place at home in the late afternoon or evening. Your child’s teacher may be the last adult the student interacts with her/him before a suicide attempt.