

Depression & Anxiety in Children

WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

Depression is more than simply feeling unhappy or fed up for a few days. Most people go through **periods of feeling down**, but **depression**; a **mood disorder**, is when you feel **very sad, all the time**, rather than just a few days.

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

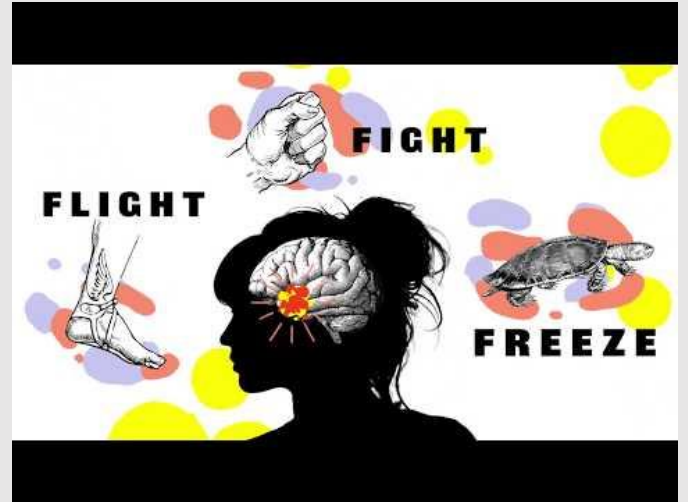
Depression affects different people in different ways and can cause a **wide variety of symptoms**, including;

- not wanting to do things that you previously enjoyed
- avoiding friends or social situations
- sleeping more or less than normal
- eating more or less than normal
- feeling irritable, upset, miserable or lonely
- being self-critical
- feeling hopeless
- maybe wanting to self-harm
- feeling tired and not having any energy

Just because you experience **one or more** of these symptoms, it **doesn't mean you're definitely** affected by depression. **Talk to your GP to get a full diagnosis.**

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is a normal feeling of fear or panic aimed at **keeping us safe in stressful situations**. Feeling worried and anxious when faced with problems or when under stress, like moving school or taking exams is normal. But when you are **not in a stressful situation** and you notice you **still feel worried, scared** or **panicked** then this is when **anxiety becomes a problem**.



SIGNS OF ANXIETY

Symptoms of **anxiety** can include:

- feeling nervous, on edge, or panicky all the time
- feeling overwhelmed / full of dread or out of control
- having trouble sleeping and/or eating
- finding it difficult to concentrate
- feeling tired and grumpy
- heart beating really fast
- having a dry mouth
- trembling, having wobbly legs or feeling faint
- stomach cramps and/or going to the toilet more
- getting very hot and / or sweating more than usual

You might start out just feeling generally anxious, but **if your symptoms get worse** or **last longer than they should**, it's a good idea to **tell someone how you're feeling**. You can **speak to your GP** who may refer you to Children's and Young People's Mental Health Services (**CYPMHS**) for further support.

SELF HELP

Reach out for help

Let somebody know that you're struggling with how you're feeling.

Trying to cope on your own can be really difficult, you don't need to struggle on alone.



I deserve support

Learn about other people's experiences

Some people find it helpful to speak to **other people** with similar experiences as them as it can help them feel less alone. This isn't for everyone though!



Support groups

Will I be ok listening to other experiences?

Practice self-care

There are many ways you can **care for yourself**, this will look different for everybody. Whatever it is, try and build into your routine the **self-care** you need.



Meditate

Exercise

Gaming

Hobbies

Self-help apps

You can access mindfulness or **meditation apps** or **stress relief apps**.



GETTING SUPPORT

Kooth offers an online mental health community. With access to;

Articles – with personal experiences and tips from young people and the Kooth team



Discussion boards – conversations with the friendly Kooth community on lots of topics



Chat with the team – about anything that's on your mind, message or have a live chat



Daily journals – write in your own daily journal to track feelings or emotions and reflect on how you are



Young Minds is a charity for children and young people's mental health. They provide;



Advice and guidance – help with emotions, coping with life and trauma, medication and mental health advice.

Real stories – about young people's experiences and tips for getting through it

Signposting services – types of support, how to access them and who to talk to if you need help

