



Serving Kids- Priority One!

Depression

What is depression?

Major depression is one of the mental, emotional, and behavior disorders that can appear during adolescence. This type of depression affects a young person's thoughts, feelings, behavior, and body. Major depression in adolescents is serious; it is more than "the blues." Depression can lead to school failure, alcohol or other drug use, and even suicide.

What are the signs of depression?

Young people with depression may have a hard time coping with everyday activities and responsibilities, have difficulty getting along with others, and suffer from low self-esteem. Signs of depression often include:

- sadness that won't go away;
- hopelessness, boredom;
- unexplained irritability or crying
- loss of interest in usual activities;
- changes in eating or sleeping habits;
- alcohol or substance abuse
- missed school or poor school performance;
- threats or attempts to run away from home;
- outbursts of shouting, complaining, reckless behavior;
- aches and pains that don't get better with treatment;
- thoughts about death or suicide.

Adolescents with major depression are likely to identify themselves as depressed before their parents suspect a problem.

How common is depression?

Mental health problems affect one in every five young people at any given time. Having a family history of depression increases the chances that an adolescent may be depressed.

What can parents do?

- Make careful notes about the behaviors that concern them. Note how long the behaviors have been going on, how often they occur, and how severe they seem.
- Make an appointment with a mental health professional, the RHS School Based Health Center (575-630-7974) or the child's doctor for evaluation and diagnosis.
- Ask questions about treatments and services.