

Signs of Depression in Children

Children often do not know how to explain how they are feeling, so it is important to pay attention to their behaviors. The signs and symptoms of depression in children may not be the same as those of adults and older children.

Some common signs of depression in young children include:

- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Withdraws from social situations, friends, and family
- Irritability, agitation, aggression, easily annoyed and upset
- Low energy and difficulty getting motivated
- Sadness, cries easily, difficult to soothe
- Change in eating patterns: either loss of interest in food or overeating
- Change in sleeping patterns: difficulty going to sleep or sleeping a lot
- Difficulty listening or concentrating on tasks
- Difficult to please
- Makes negative comments about themselves
- * Thoughts of self-harm
- * Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

Because one of the most common symptoms of depression in children is irritability and agitation, it is easy to feel frustrated and punish the child for their behavior. It is important to talk to them and assess all their behaviors.

If you notice a change in mood and/or behavior that includes some of these symptoms that last for several weeks, the child may be experiencing depression. If you think your child may have depression, contact their primary doctor or health care provider to learn about treatment options.

Depression is treatable!

* If your child is expressing suicidal thoughts or you are concerned about their immediate safety, call 911 or take them to your local hospital's emergency room.

