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DEPRESSION IN TEENAGERS

HOW YOU AS A TEACHER CAN RECOGNIZE EARLY SIGNS IN STUDENTS

What is depression?

Depression affects chemicals in the brain, impacting how a student feels, thinks, and acts. It can range from two weeks to years if left untreated. making things like going to school, doing homework, or hanging out with friends feel overwhelming or impossible.

What to say?

✓ "I'm here if you want to talk."

✓ "You're not alone — would you like to see the counselor together?"

✓ "You don't have to go through this by yourself."

Myth vs. Fact

"They're just lazy."
Depression can drain energy and motivation.

"It's just a phase."
Untreated depression can have long-term consequences.

Did you know?

Depression is the second leading cause of disability worldwide

Persistent depression disorder's typical onset is in late childhood/adolescence

What it might look like in your classroom

- Irritability - unusually moody, defiant

- Sudden absenteeism
- Drop in grades - sudden lack of motivation

- Sleep issues - falling asleep in class

- Physical complaints - frequent headaches, stomach aches

emergency resources

Teljeunes
Text or call 1-800-263-2266
Info-Social 811
Dial 811, then choose Option 2
Suicide prevention
1-866-APPELLE (277-3553)

What can you do as a teacher?

- Notice
- Document
- Approach delicately
- Talk privately
- Refer to the school psychologist or nurse
- Allow flexibility for struggling students
- Follow up

What not to say?

✗ "Cheer up."

✗ "Other people have it worse."

✗ "It's just hormones."

✗ "Just try harder."

Who's more at risk?

- Kids who've experienced abuse or neglect
- Students with little or no social support
- Those going through major stress or life changes
- Teens with a parent who has depression