

Depression in Youth and Adolescents

Depression can occur in people of all ages, and can result from a variety of factors.

Common symptoms of depression in youth and adolescents consist of: (AACAP, 2018)

- Sleeping more/less
- Feeling tired
- Caring less about activities or hobbies
- Looking sad or tearful
- Having thoughts of suicide

Many studies have shown that depression in youth and adolescents will continue to rise, and that is why it is more important than ever to start bringing awareness, and helping those in need.

Youth and adolescents are continuously developing, growing, and learning new skills. When it comes to depression, this mental health issue can significantly affect the growth and development of these individuals. Many things that factor into depression for adolescents may include substance and alcohol abuse, obesity, and social media. Substance and alcohol abuse can have “neurotoxic effects during this developmentally sensitive period” (Beirão et al., 2020). When the brain becomes disrupted, especially during the developmental periods, it can have altering effects that will negatively impact the way they continue to grow and learn. This can also lead to obesity as well as lack of exercise, poor diet, and unhealthy decision making. Many youth and adolescents who are or become obese face depression at much higher rates. In today’s society, there is an influx of unrealistic body images and expectations from others. When younger people view these images or see hate comments from others, it directly contributes to their mental health. Not feeling accepted or feeling like you are not good enough is a common theme, and it must be stopped.

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References

Aacap. (2018, October). *Depression in Children and Teens*. American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/The-Depressed-Child-004.aspx.

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