

# Parent Talk

SEPTEMBER 2023

## Depression in Kids & Teens

Most kids (and especially teens) experience some form of mood changes as they develop. Whether it's bouts of anger, sadness, or boredom, it can be a normal part of growing up. However, prolonged periods of sadness or anger are cause for concern and can be hard to interpret. Read on for some key factors to pay attention to when trying to determine if your child may be experiencing depression.

### Symptoms Can Occur Earlier Than You Think

Depression can occur in kids as early as three years old. Rates of depression only get more prevalent in older kids, with many cases occurring as they become teenagers. Even if you think your child may be too young to be formally diagnosed with depression, it never hurts to do a check-in! A mild case could turn more severe as they get older.



### Check For Warning Signs

There are many warning signs and potential depression symptoms to be aware of. The most noticeable is a distinct and prolonged change of mood, often multiple weeks of intense sadness or anger. For younger kids, you may see an increase in crying and tantrums. You may also see a lack of energy and changes to their sleeping and eating habits. The key factor to focus on is how long these symptoms last. A day or two is no cause for alarm, but routine occurrences for multiple weeks is one of the earliest signs of depression.



### Pay Attention To Social Interactions

Try keeping a close eye on your child's social life. If your previously outgoing and extroverted child has suddenly become withdrawn and aloof, that's another potential symptom of depression. When your child has play dates, is their behavior any different? Do they seem withdrawn or even aggressive with their friends? Or what if they've dropped all interest in seeing friends altogether? These instances could point to common effects of depression such as a lowering of self-esteem or social confidence.



### What Do I Do If It Is Depression?

If you suspect your child has depression, don't wait for things to get better on their own! Make a call to a therapist to set up an initial check-in. Under the guidance of an expert, you'll be able to determine exactly what your child is dealing with and will be given a concrete treatment plan to help them. Most forms of depression are treated using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or CBT. Clinicians at our [Center for Effective Therapy](#) routinely check for and treat depression in kids!



## Need more help?

Resources at The Baker Center are just a click away

**Therapy & Treatment Services**

**CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE THERAPY** →

**Special Education**

**MANVILLE SCHOOL** →

**Therapeutic Summer Camp**

**CAMP BAKER** →

**College Preparation**

**NEXT STEP** →

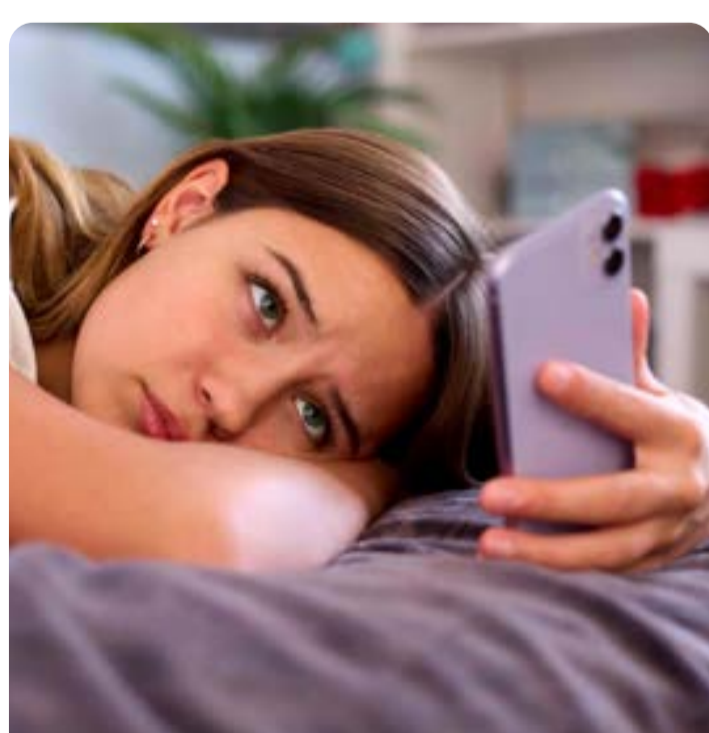
## Featured Resources



### Identifying & Treating Depression In Youth

Join us on September 28th at 11AM for our FREE monthly webinar series! For this presentation, we cover some common symptoms of depression in youth and what an effective treatment plan looks like.

[LEARN MORE](#)



### How Do I Know If My Child Is Depressed?

Approximately 16% of children and teens in the United States have expressed struggles with depressive symptoms.

This might be an underestimate of the overwhelming impact of depression; many believe rates have risen due to increased isolation during the pandemic and teen social interactions occurring more and more online and via social media.

[LEARN MORE](#)



### How Can I Help My Child With Their Depression?

If you think that your child or teenager is battling depression, whether you have recognized symptoms or if they have told you that they are struggling, it may be time to seek out some support from professionals.

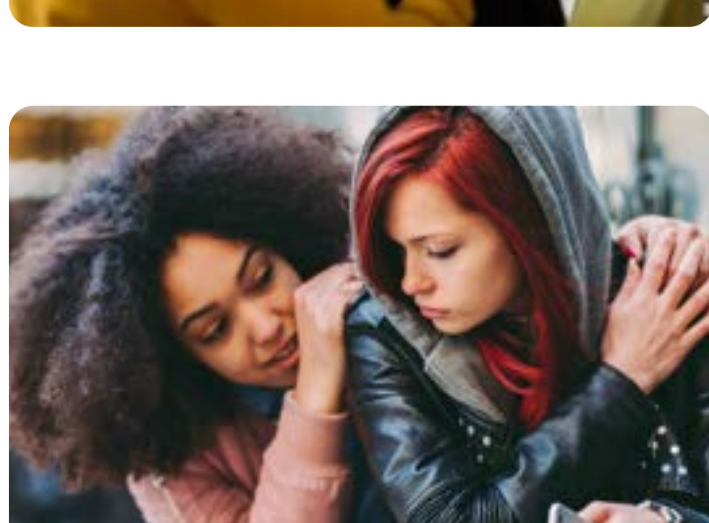
[LEARN MORE](#)



### Client Spotlight: A Helping Hand for Youth Depression

We sit down with a real client who received services at our clinic and speak with them about their experience working with one of our expert clinicians, Sarah Gurney, LICSW. This client contacted The Baker Center when their daughter was experiencing intense feelings of depression.

[LEARN MORE](#)



### LGBTQ+ Youth & Depression

LGBTQ+ youth consistently struggle with more mental health conditions in comparison to heterosexual or cisgender youth. While each experience is different, and some youth may experience different conditions than others, research has identified depression as one of the leading mental health conditions LGBTQ+ youth experience.

[LEARN MORE](#)