



*A parent's
guide to*
DEPRESSION



Feelings of hopelessness and pessimism



Feelings of worthlessness, guilt and helplessness



Irregular sleep



Decreased energy



Tearfulness



Persistent sad, anxious or empty mood



Restlessness



Insomnia



Changes in mood



Difficulty making decisions



Thoughts of death or suicide



Appetite or weight change

THE WARNING SIGNS.

These warning signs are recognised by mental health professionals as being the common signs and symptoms of depression.

Some of these signs may also be part of normal adolescent moody and difficult behaviour. Look out in particular for any **CHANGES** in behaviour, and keep a note of these.

1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 - 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder, but early diagnosis and support can help for a lifetime.

TIME FOR A CHAT

If you are worried, you will want to talk to your son or daughter. But asking them how they feel can be very difficult and may need some planning. You may be worried that your son or daughter is thinking of harming themselves or is feeling suicidal. It is better to ask about this than ignore it.

Choose statements that are facts and not judgements.

Try to ask 'open questions' which allow them to say how they are feeling.

Be calm and supportive and allow plenty of time.

Try to keep any anxiety you may feel to yourself.

Write down the things that are concerning you before you speak.

Think about what you want to say and keep it simple.

If you think your son or daughter is at risk of suicide, Call 111 and explain the situation immediately.

You may also want to talk to their teacher, school nurse or another trusted adult. It is best to tell your son or daughter that you are planning to do this and include them in the conversation so they do not feel excluded.

**After talking
with your son or
daughter, your GP
is the main place to
raise your concerns,
to diagnose the
problem and offer
talking therapies,
support and advice.**



Any triggers to the depression.

**How long it's been going on
and how severe it seems.**

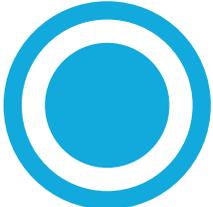
**Whether there are any self-
harm or suicidal thoughts.**

**How is home, school, social
life? Any bullying or abuse?**

**Any changes in self-care,
eating, sleeping, exercise,
drug or alcohol usage.**

**Is there a family
history of depression?**

**Are there any new
risky behaviours
or impulsive
acts?**



What will your GP ask you?

Pharmacy Stamp

Age

Title, Forename, Surname & Address

D.o.B

Information and Self Help materials

Please don't stamp over age box

Number of days' treatment
N.B. Ensure dose is stated

Endorsements

What should the doctors recommend?

A
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X
Y
Z

Signature of Prescriber

Date

For dispenser
No. of
Prescs.
on form



FP10SS

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Your GP may recommend "watchful waiting" and arrange a two week follow-up appointment.

The next step will be a referral to a psychological service for "talking therapy", mainly CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy).

If your son or daughter is under 16, they may be referred to the local CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

If your son or daughter is over 18, they will usually be referred to adult services.

If there is a long wait for local services, your GP should keep in touch.

If depression is severe your GP may prescribe medication alongside therapy.

You may choose to find your own private therapist.

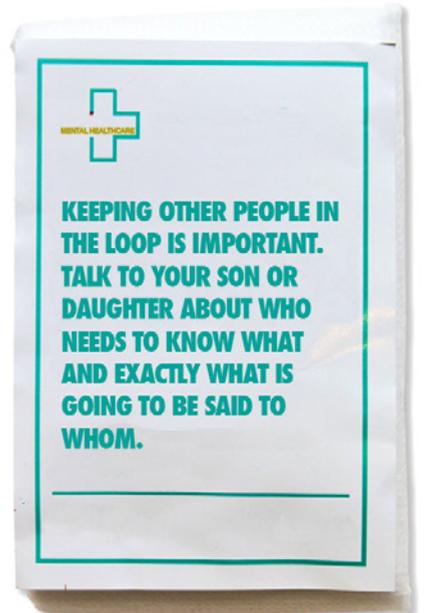
Make sure they are registered and accredited by a professional body such as the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies (BABCP).

Your son or daughter may be able to visit a school or university counsellor.

Local voluntary groups also sometimes offer counselling.

PATIENTS – please read the notes overleaf

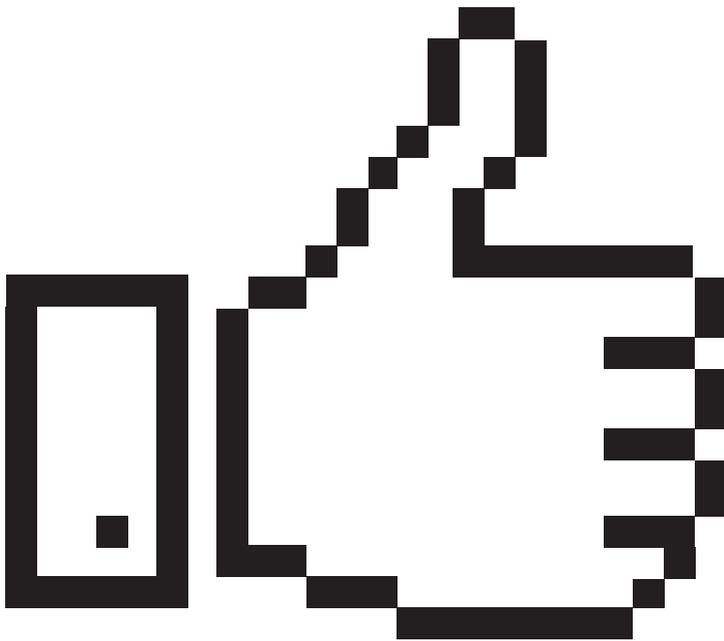
WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP



IF YOUR CHILD REFUSES HELP



Search for help



There is an extended version of this Guide at
www.charliewaller.org

Visit us online for more information, advice and links:

www.charliewaller.org

To read more about how depression can appear in young people see this website:

www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents

Samaritans have help on dealing with difficult conversations:

www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you

The charity Papyrus has useful information on talking about suicide on its website:

www.papyrus-uk.org/support/for-parents

Papyrus also has a confidential support and advice service which anyone can call:

HOPElineUK: 0800 068 4141

Students Against Depression is a clinically based website. It includes information on depression, workbooks to help young people to take action and stories by others about what has helped.

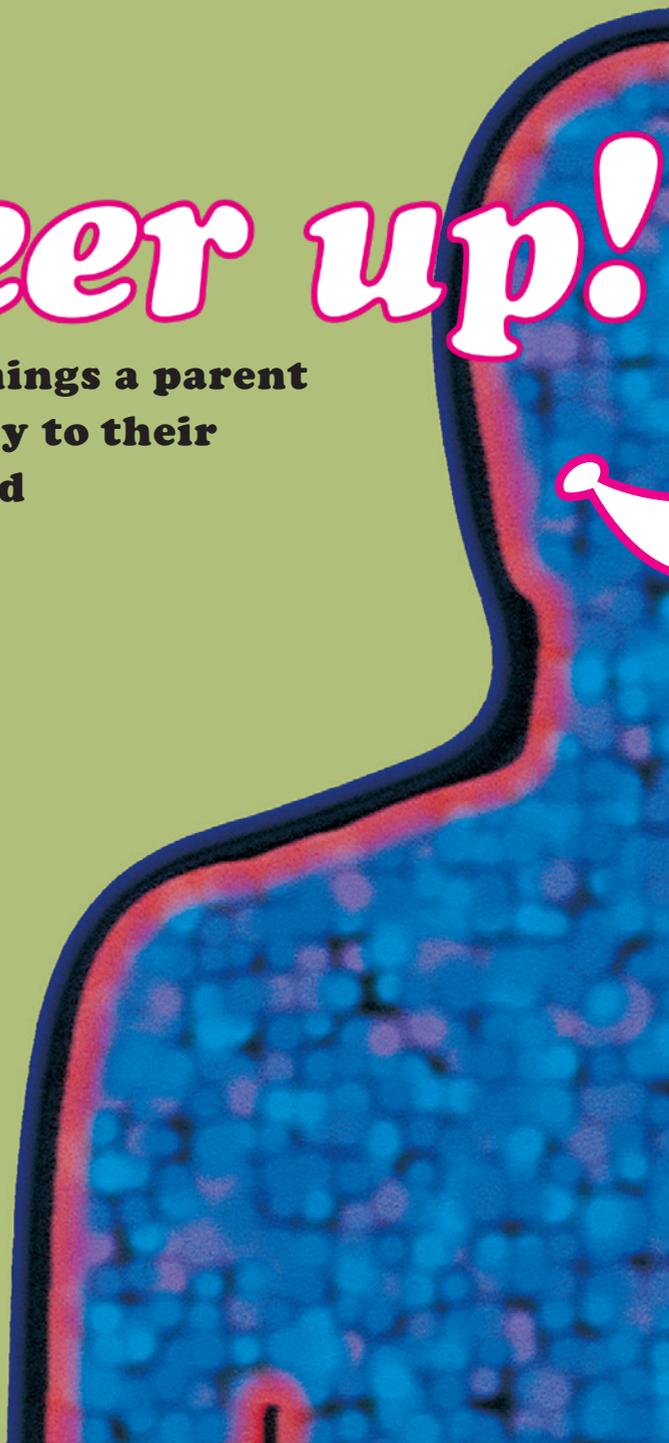
www.studentsagainstdepression.org

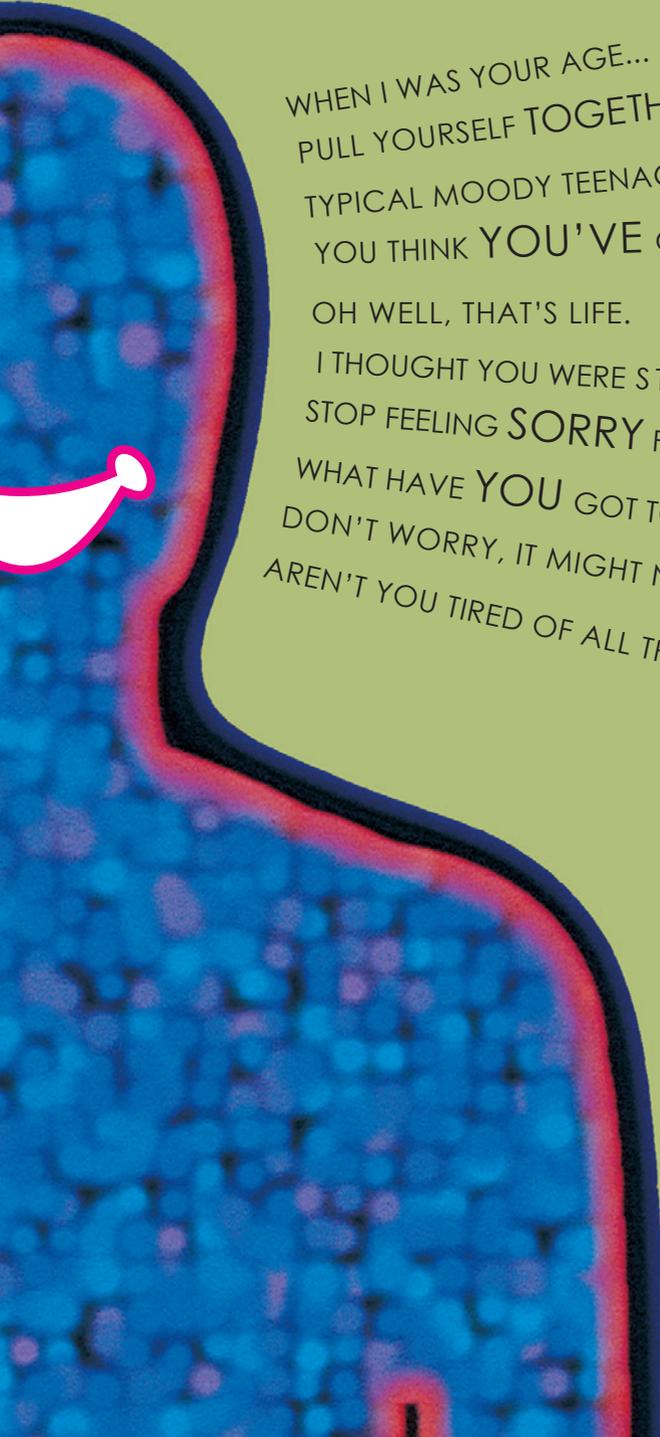
Student minds have information for students on support groups, events, training and resources.

www.studentminds.org.uk

cheer up!

**and other things a parent
should NOT say to their
depressed child**





WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE...
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.

TYPICAL MOODY TEENAGER.

YOU THINK **YOU'VE** GOT PROBLEMS.

OH WELL, THAT'S LIFE.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE STRONGER THAN THAT.

STOP FEELING **SORRY** FOR YOURSELF.

WHAT HAVE **YOU** GOT TO BE DEPRESSED ABOUT?

DON'T WORRY, IT MIGHT NEVER HAPPEN.

AREN'T YOU TIRED OF ALL THIS **ME ME ME** STUFF?

There is an extended version of this Guide at
www.charliewaller.org

This leaflet contains web addresses that have useful information about depression.

We are grateful to the organisations that have provided access to their information.

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Advice based on questions asked of us, not a definitive guide.

Endorsed by:



YOUNGMINDS



**student
minds**



Remember - like other illnesses depression can be treated.
With time and support most people make a
completely full recovery