

# Teen Health Kit for Parents

## ✓ Teen Depression Warning Signs

Many parents don't realize that children and teens can suffer from depression. But they can. In fact, according to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, depression affects an estimated 14 percent of adolescents in the United States. Symptoms of depression in teens, however, can differ from those in adults. The following behaviors or conditions may be symptoms of depression in your teen. If your child displays any of these warning signs, call a pediatrician, mental health professional, school counselor or the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433). Remember that depression is a treatable illness. But, if left undiagnosed and untreated, depression can lead to suicide, which is now the third leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds in the United States.

- Noticeable changes in personality or in eating and sleeping habits
- Sustained sadness, irritability or boredom
- Unexplained violent or rebellious behavior, significant problems with parents
- Withdrawal from family or friends
- Substance use, such as tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
- Significant weight gain or loss and unusual neglect of appearance
- Difficulty concentrating or unexplained drop in schoolwork quality
- Unplanned pregnancy
- Problems dealing with sexual orientation, which may put teens at greater risk for developing depression
- Unusual interest in themes of death or giving away prized possessions
- Talking about suicide, or threatening or attempting to kill oneself
- Running away or being incarcerated

Sources: *American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics*

### Local Resources:

#### Useful Web sites:

American Academy of Child  
& Adolescent Psychology  
[www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org)  
Nat'l Alliance of the Mentally Ill  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

Livingston County Mental Health Services  
(585) 243-7250  
[www.co.livingston.state.ny.us/community\\_svcs.htm](http://www.co.livingston.state.ny.us/community_svcs.htm)

Mental Health Assoc. of Livingston County  
(585) 226-3150  
[www.mharochester.org](http://www.mharochester.org)

Genesee Valley Health Partnership, Inc.  
Healthy Communities that Care  
(585) 748-5146  
[www.gvhp.org](http://www.gvhp.org)



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