



# Mental Health Bulletin December 2022

## Depression



Depression is a mental health difficulty that involves persistent low mood (continuing for a long time). It impacts on the way people feel, think and behave. Depression can happen as a reaction to difficult experiences such as bullying, bereavement or family relationship difficulties. It can also happen without any obvious trigger or reason.

People with depression can feel a range of emotions including sadness, stress, hopelessness, loneliness, irritability (anger), emptiness or numbness. People with depression often have negative thoughts about themselves, other people, the future or life in general. It can be hard to carry out usual routines and tasks including self-care (showering/ brushing your teeth), eating and sleeping. People with depression often stop enjoying activities or seeing friends as they can feel tired and have no energy or motivation.

It is common for children and young people to experience episodes of feeling sad, low or down as they develop through childhood and adolescence. The typical mood issues children and young people experience tend to be situation specific, short term and can be managed with the love and support of parents/ carers.

**Here are some examples of situations that may contribute to a young person feeling down or low in mood;**

- Adjusting to changes (such as a new class or home)
- Friendship/relationship issues
- Episodes of being teased or bullied
- Feeling left out or excluded
- Being physically poorly or in pain.
- Family breakdown or conflict
- Grief or loss (of a pet, family member or friend)
- Struggling with academic work.

**Here are some things that you might see or experience with your child whilst they are feeling this way.**

- Being clingy and not wanting to be separated from parent/carer
- Not wanting to be left alone.
- Seeking verbal reassurance and checking things are ok.
- Not wanting to go to school.
- Avoidance of seeing friends or doing things that they ordinarily enjoy.
- Having mild sleep disturbance.

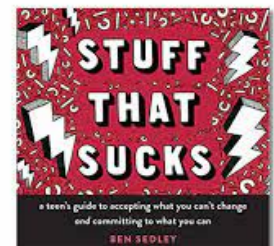
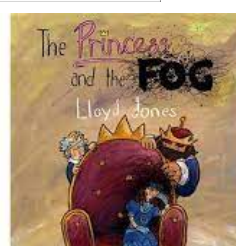
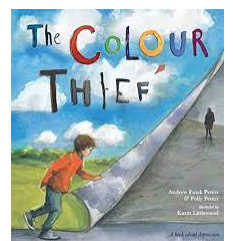
- Feeling tired or appearing lethargic, unmotivated and disinterested.
- May appear more challenging or oppositional/argumentative.
- Crying.

Remember, depression isn't something people can 'snap out of' or simply 'cheer up' from. It's a medical condition that can affect many aspects of a person's life. The good news is that depression is treatable and people can recover.

**Here are some useful things you could try to support someone you know who is suffering from depression.**

- Normalise that feeling sad or down is a natural emotion particularly in response to a sad, disappointing or difficult event
- Encourage them to do a range of tasks and activities including fun things and ones that they need to do such as school work
- Keep a routine and have nice things planned
- Break things down into small steps and do one at a time so tasks do not seem so overwhelming
- Role model and demonstrate that you can do things even when you are feeling sad or down.
- Be compassionate and validate how the young person is feeling.
- Use distraction techniques

**Here are some books that you might find helpful.**



Please come into school and speak to Mrs Allen (Mental Health lead) or Miss Newman (Federation SENDCO) if depression has become a problem for someone you know.