



ACT

TO SAVE A LIFE

Middle School can be a challenging time for everyone. The independence and expectations can be a lot of fun, but they can also be stressful and scary. Your classes are more demanding, friendships can get complicated, and planning for high school can seem like a heavy weight. It's normal to feel overwhelmed and down at times. However, when you or someone you know feels that way for more than a couple of weeks, it might be a sign of depression and time to ACT®.

ACKNOWLEDGE

THAT YOU SEE SIGNS OF DEPRESSION OR SUICIDE IN A FRIEND.

CARE

SHOW YOUR FRIEND THAT YOU CARE BY LISTENING AND OFFERING SUPPORT.

TELL

A TRUSTED ADULT SO THAT YOU CAN GET HELP.

Everyone has bad days. If we didn't, we might not appreciate the good ones! But, what happens when those bad days stack up, or you don't seem to be able to stop feeling lousy? People will often say they are "depressed" about something but then they seem happy the next day, so it's hard to understand the difference between what's a bad day and what's depression.

WHAT DEPRESSION IS:

- **LASTING.** Feeling a strong mood that involves sadness, discouragement, despair, or hopelessness that lasts for weeks or more.
- **HAVING DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING.** It can be difficult to focus on school work or other things when someone is depressed.
- **NEGATIVE THINKING.** A person who is depressed may see everything as bad and not likely to get better.
- **LOW ENERGY.** Sometimes, people with depression do not have much energy to get up and do what they used to enjoy.
- **EASILY IRRITATED.** Depression can show up as a lasting mood of feeling irritable, easily annoyed, angry, or alienated.

WHAT DEPRESSION IS NOT:

- ✗ **DISAPPOINTED** one afternoon because you did poorly on a test.
- ✗ **FEELING SAD** over an argument with a friend.
- ✗ **DISCOURAGED** because your team is continuing its losing streak.

MORE INFORMATION:

[KIDSHEALTH.ORG/TEEN/YOUR_MIND/
MENTAL_HEALTH/DEPRESSION.HTML](https://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/mental_health/depression.html)