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GIRLS & DEPRESSION

Depression is the most common mental health disorder in the United States among teens and adults. Girls are twice as likely as boys to be diagnosed with depression and often show symptoms at an early age. Research tells us that girls' sense of confidence and self-esteem peaks at age 9 making it vitally important to address signs of depression.

Most Common Signs and Symptoms of Depression

Changes in sleeping/eating habits
Feelings of sadness and despair
Guilt and shame
Hopelessness
Irritability and anger

Isolation and withdrawal
Loss of energy
Low self-esteem
Decreased school performance
Poor concentration

What distinguishes depression in girls?

- Anger, irritability, and mood swings may be more prominent than sustained periods of sadness
- Unexplained physical ailments, such as headaches and stomachaches, tend to show up more in girls and may result in frequent visits to the nurse's office
- Girls are more likely to develop depression as a result of interpersonal stressors and are at high risk for depression when conflicts arise in relationships or a relationship ends
- Extreme sensitivity to criticism and frequently feeling left out
- Feeling worthless and "not good enough" can often lead to striving for perfection and a decreased ability to cope with small mistakes or setbacks
- Increased risk for other mental health disorders such as substance abuse, eating disorders, and nonsuicidal self-injury

What can I do as a parent/teacher to help my student(s) with depression?

- Let her know you have noticed she might be struggling and demonstrate a genuine curiosity to listen to her and get her the help she needs
- Contact the student support counselor or social worker at your local school
- Focus compliments and motivating statements on behaviors rather than
- Encourage her to practice self-compassion and positive self-talk
- Children and adolescents are sponges so be sure to model healthy self-care behaviors
- Teachers are often the first to notice changes in children and adolescents, so keep lines of communication open and positive
- Monitor online behaviors: recent research suggests that girls are more likely to cyber bully – often through text
- Encourage physical activity and exercise or trying something new

For more information, please visit our website at Austintherapyforgirls.com or call 512-981-5279

For more information about groups and workshops, please visit:

AustinTherapyForGirls.com