

DEPRESSION



Childhood Depression varies in its presentation and severity. Although the typical age of onset is adolescence, children may present signs prior to adolescence. Symptoms of depression can appear as a result of life transitions, family crisis, loss, seasonal changes, and/or health problems. Younger children who are depressed are more likely to show aggression, acting out types of behaviours, restlessness, and somatic complaints. Older children who are depressed are more likely to have a sad affect, feelings of hopelessness, and lack of energy and interest in activities. Early intervention is critical in preventing other problems from occurring (e.g., substance use, suicidal ideation). Counselling can help children improve their self-concept, learn coping skills, and develop a healthier view of themselves and others.

COMMON QUESTIONS

- *How do I know if my child is depressed rather than temporarily feeling down?*
- *What stressors and risk factors trigger feelings of depression?*
- *How do I know when it is time to seek professional help?*
- *Is my child predisposed to be depressed if there is a family history of depression?*
- *What do I do if my child has thoughts of suicide?*
- *Will my child have to take medication?*
- *How can I help my child manage their feelings of depression?*
- *How does play therapy work for childhood depression?*