

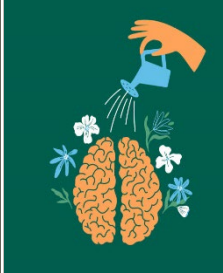


January 2024 issue:

- Depression
- Supporting young people with depression
- Local community mental health resources

A monthly newsletter for Berkeley Institute parents promoting Wellness & Mental Health

Healthy Mind



Supporting young people with depression

- Talk non-judgmentally with your son or daughter about his / her feelings and what may be causing depression. Be aware that he / she may not know the answer.
- Look at your child's diet. There are specific foods that can help with depression - (**see second page for a resource book title**).
- Walk with your child in nature (in a park or by the water). Practice mindfulness.
- Contact your child's medical doctor, year level counselor, adjustment counselor, or a professional therapist who can offer guidance and support.
- Decrease any external pressures so that your child feels less burdened – (for example, request temporary, flexible deadlines from teachers for assignments).



Depression – What is it?

Life challenges can make people feel sad sometimes, and normally these feelings go away after a little while. However, sometimes feelings of sadness become intense and strong, lingering for weeks or even months, and some people may feel like they are in a depressed state. As a result, they may start over-sleeping or have insomnia. They may feel consistently exhausted, hopeless, irritable, angry, and become socially withdrawn from friends and family. There is often a diminished interest or pleasure in activities that they used to enjoy. Their appetite may decrease drastically or they may over-eat. In more severe cases, individuals who feel depressed may develop poor hygiene by not showering, washing their hair, or cleaning their teeth, and they may engage in self-harm behaviors or contemplate suicide. Depression occurs when the nervous system collapses, becomes numb, and shuts down. Individuals who suffer from it often

report feeling so overwhelmed, exhausted, and unable to concentrate that they cannot function effectively on a daily basis. The body's energy levels become depleted and it goes into survival mode. In order for a person to be diagnosed with depression, **at least five** of the symptoms mentioned above must be present during a two-week period or longer and a person must show a change from his or her usual functioning. (APA, 2013). Between 280 and 300 million people worldwide experience depression (WHO, 2023). In the United States, 3.1 million young people between the ages of 12 and 17 have reported at least one major depressive episode. In addition, women are twice as likely

to develop depression than men (WHO, 2023). Risks for developing this illness include a family history of mood disorders, poverty, trauma, unemployment, social isolation, and other stressful life events. Regular drug and alcohol use can also lead to depression. The good news is that there are effective treatments that include talk therapy, exercise, and sometimes medication. There are also holistic approaches such as yoga, nutritional education, acupuncture, and energy healing. Resources have been provided on page two of this newsletter to assist your child if he or she is struggling with depression.

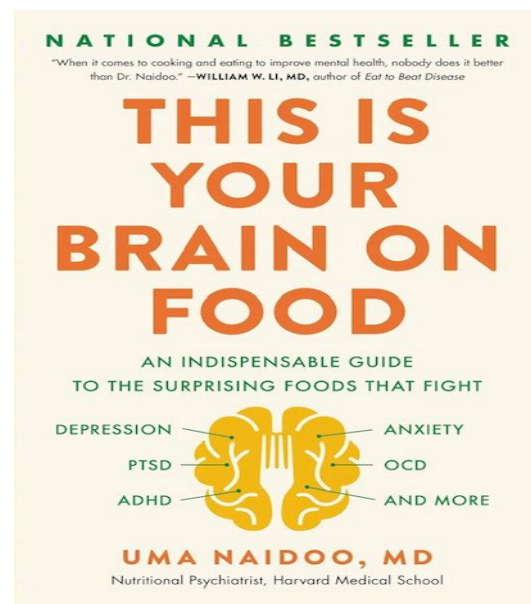
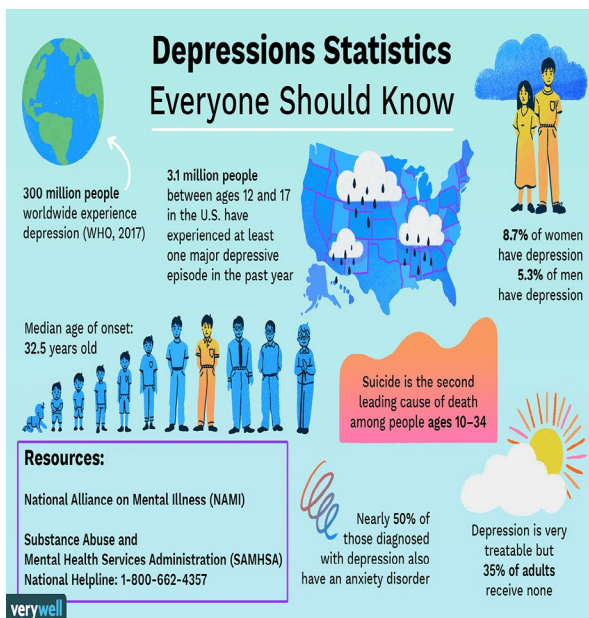
References

American Psychiatric Association (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th Ed.). Arlington, VA.

The World Health Organization (2023, 30 March) "Depressive Disorder" Taken from <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/>

What community & online resources can I use to help my child with depression?

- ❖ **The Family Center** – Free mental health programs, individual therapy, groups for youth, & family counseling. Website: www.tfc.bm Call 232-1116 or e-mail: info@tfc.bm
- ❖ **Employee Assistance Program** (for government employees) - Free individual counseling for students and their families www.eap.bm Call 292-9000
- ❖ **Child and Adolescent Services** – Comprehensive assessments and free mental health services for children and teens with clinical mental health challenges. Call 239-6344.
- ❖ **Soham Yoga** – Teen yoga classes (ages 14-18) after school at The Bermuda Society of Arts, City Hall. Each session is taught by youth yoga instructor Tiffany Paynter and involves dialogue, movement, journaling, breathing techniques, and meditation to help teens with emotional regulation, resilience, and a positive mindset. Website: <https://www.wearsoham.com/> Call: 737-1311 or email: connect@tiffanypaynter.com
- ❖ **Shambhala** – A holistic center run by Shanell Vaughn that offers energy healing, reiki, sound bath healing, breath work, group and individual yoga classes. Website: www.healingyogini.com Call: 703-9644 or email through the website under “Contact.”
- ❖ **Free mindfulness apps:** Google “Shining Mind”, “Insight Timer”, or “Mindfulness Coach” to download the app onto a smartphone. There are hundreds of meditations and breathing exercises.



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