

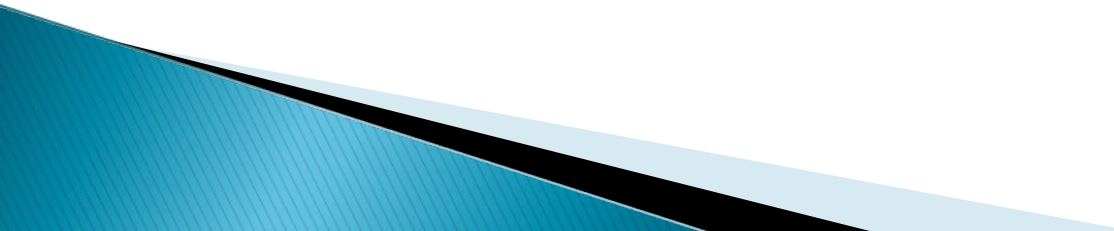
Worrisome Behaviour: Signs and Symptoms of Depression

What Can Parents Do?

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W.O. Mitchell School Council

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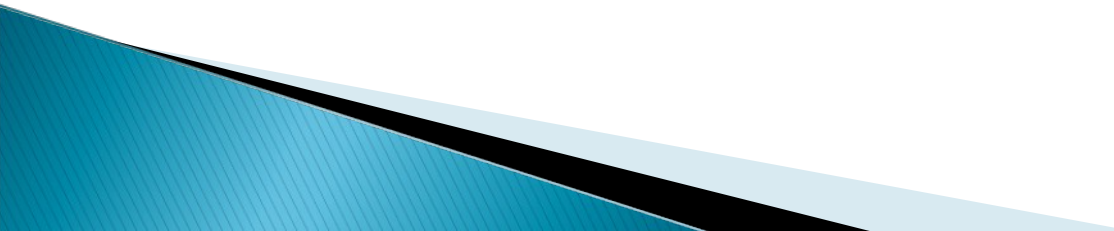
Outline

- ▶ Statistics
 - ▶ Mental Health Disorders
 - ▶ Causes of Depression
 - ▶ Signs & Symptoms of Depression
 - ▶ What Parents Can Do
 - ▶ Healthy Lifestyle Habits
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Statistics

- ▶ As many as 15% of children and youth experience mental health disorders that cause **significant impairment** at:
 - Home
 - School
 - Community
- ▶ W.O. Mitchell = 100 students live with anxiety, attention-deficit disorder, depression, addiction, and other disorders

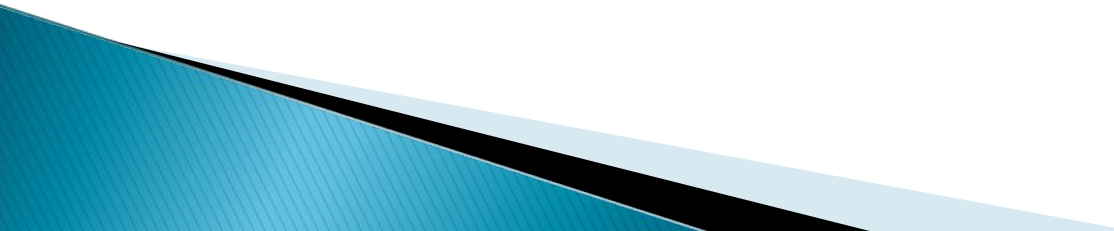
Statistics

- ▶ Up to 20% of children and adolescents suffer from a mental illness
 - ▶ Teenage girls are twice as likely as boys to suffer from depression – more vulnerable to depression than teen boys because girls are more likely to derive self-esteem from relationships
 - ▶ Use of alcohol or other drugs only makes depression worse.
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Statistics

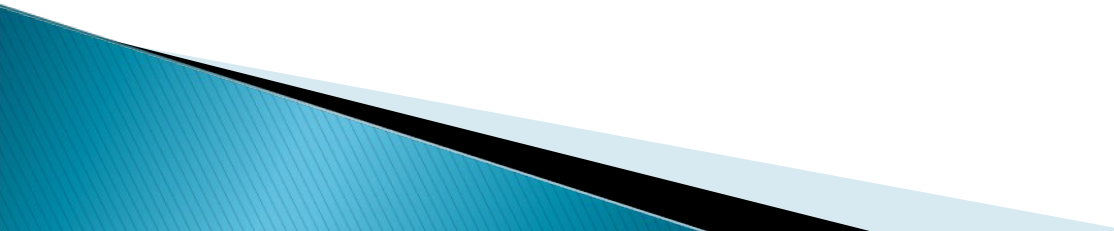
- ▶ For youth who are questioning their sexual identity (homosexuality, bisexuality), feelings of loneliness and rejection lead to a greater risk of depression and suicide

Statistics

- ▶ About one out of four high school students in America have seriously thought about killing themselves in the past year.
 - ▶ Untreated depression can lead to suicide.
 - ▶ Suicide the 3rd leading cause of death among adolescents
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Mental Health Disorders

Most common (children & youth):


- ▶ Anxiety – 7 %
 - ▶ Depression – 5%
 - ▶ Attention issues – 5 %
 - ▶ Conduct Disorders (Behaviour) – 3 to 5%
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Mental Health Disorders

Less common (children & youth):

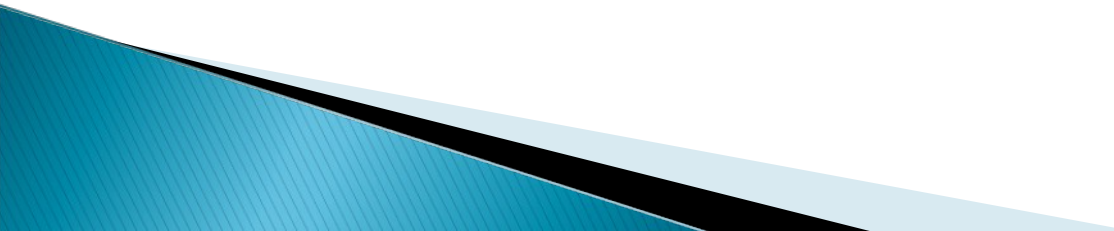
- ▶ Eating disorders:
 - Anorexia – 1%
 - Bulimia – 3% girls
- ▶ Schizophrenia – less than 1% (0.1 per cent of children but it can be severely disabling)
- ▶ Bipolar disorder – less than 0.1 %

Causes of Depression

- ▶ Genetics
 - ▶ Circumstances:
 - Social isolation
 - Poverty
 - Family violence/family conflict
 - Sexual or emotional abuse
 - Alcoholism in the family
- 

Causes of Depression

Triggered by loss

- ▶ Death of friend
 - ▶ Death of family member
 - ▶ Breakup with boyfriend or girlfriend
 - ▶ Loss of an important person in their life
 - ▶ Divorce
 - ▶ Family move
 - ▶ Failing a test
 - ▶ Being cut from a team
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Signs & Symptoms

How do I know if my child is depressed?

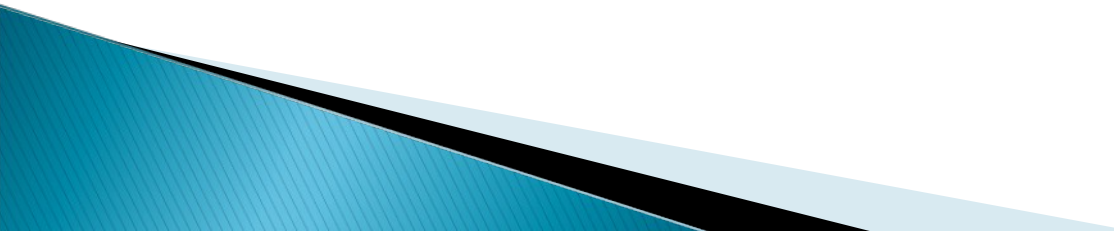
Changes in behaviour

Duration – feels down for more than two weeks



Changes in Behaviour

Teenagers face a number of pressures:

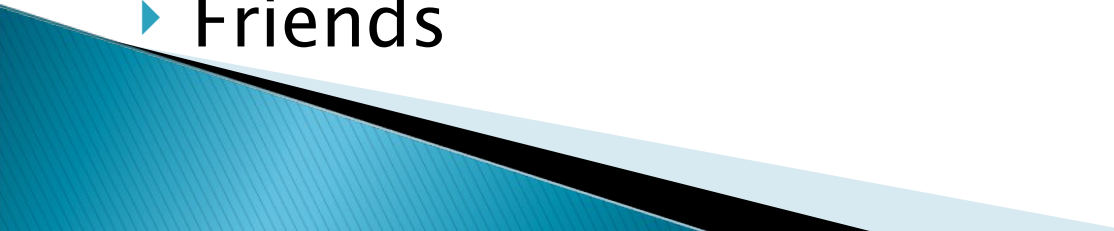
- ▶ academic pressures
 - ▶ puberty
 - ▶ developing their sense of self
 - ▶ assertion of independence
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Changes in Behaviour

Occasional sadness is normal

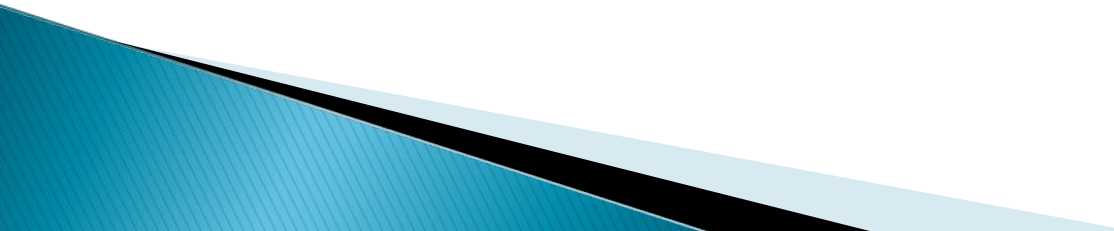
- ▶ Depression is diagnosed when sadness:
 - persists
 - interferes with a person's ability to function
 - leads to thought of death or suicide.

Changes in Behaviour

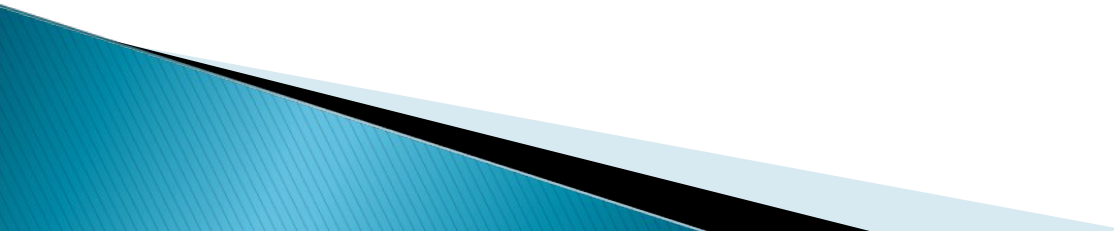
- ▶ Temperament – crying, grumpy, irritable, sensitivity
 - ▶ Academic performance
 - ▶ Eating, sleeping, hygiene
 - ▶ Interests
 - ▶ Friends
- 

Symptoms of Depression

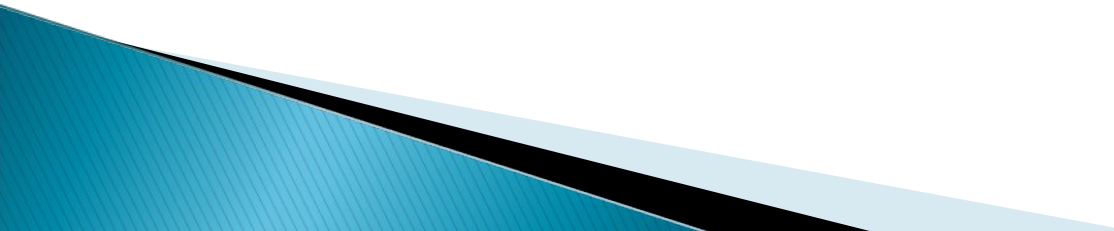
A depressed person experiences:

- ▶ Feelings of Sadness
 - ▶ Feelings of Hopelessness
 - ▶ Tearfulness or frequent crying
 - ▶ Restlessness and agitation
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Depressed Teens

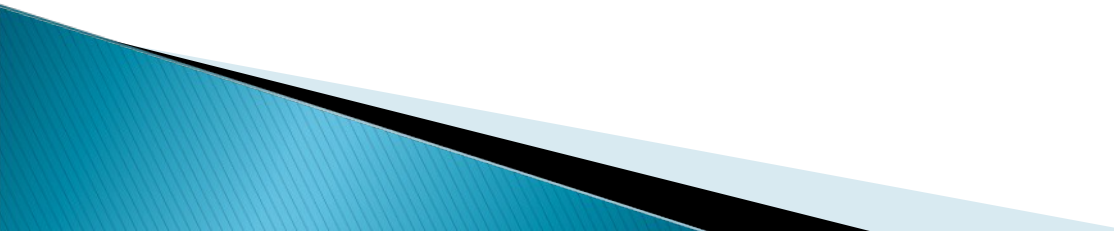
- ▶ Depressed teens do not necessarily appear sad, nor do they always withdraw from others.
 - ▶ For some depressed teens, symptoms of irritability, aggression, and rage are more prominent.
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Depression

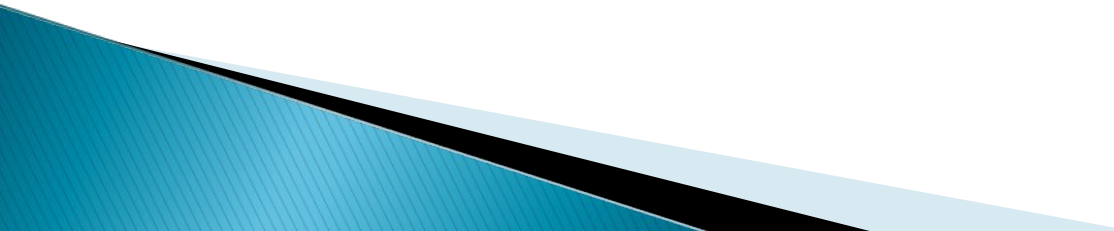
- ▶ Left untreated, teen depression can lead to problems at home and school, drug abuse, self-loathing, suicide
 - ▶ Youth can exhibit classic signs of depression and/or they can present with atypical signs
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Classic signs, changes in:

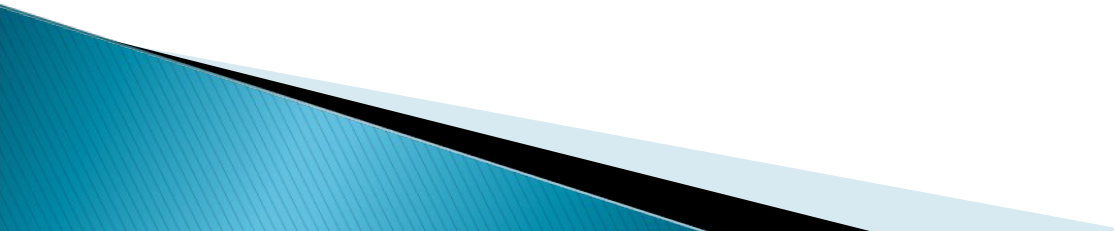
(for both adults and teens)

- ▶ Sleep
 - ▶ Interests
 - ▶ Worthlessness/Guilt
 - ▶ Energy
 - ▶ Concentration
 - ▶ Appetite
 - ▶ Psychomotor retardation
 - ▶ Suicidal ideation
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Sleep


- ▶ Insomnia – trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
 - ▶ Hyper-somnia – sleepiness during day – excessive sleeping (not due to late nights)
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Interests

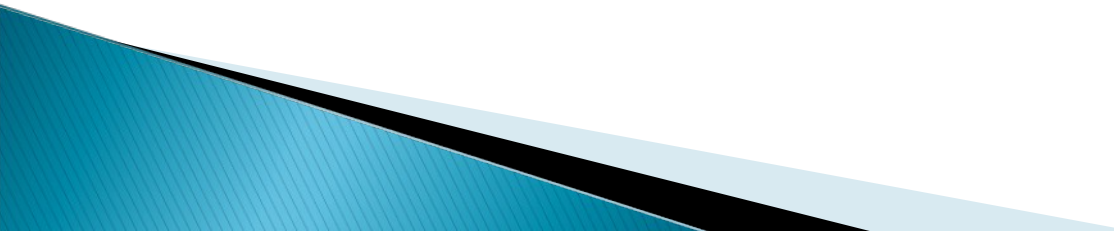
- ▶ General loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
 - ▶ Youth – can be atypical presentation e.g., selective loss of interest
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Worthlessness / Guilt

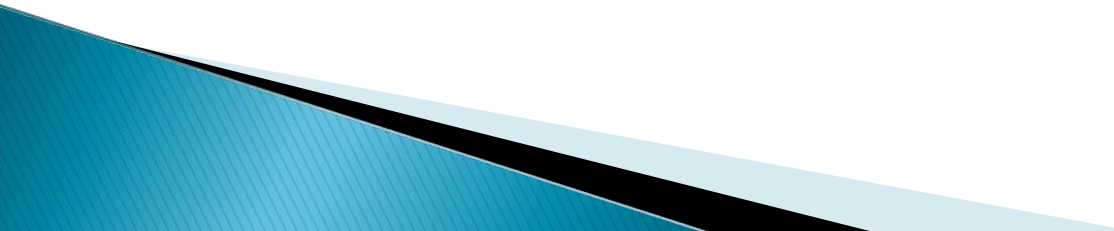
Feelings of uselessness, worthlessness, guilt

- ▶ "I'm not good at anything"
 - ▶ "It's all hopeless anyway, what is the point in going on?"
 - ▶ "Everything is terrible, there is nothing good in my future."
 - ▶ "I'm ugly."
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Energy

- ▶ Fatigue or lack of energy (more pronounced in adults)
 - ▶ Inability to gain pleasure from normally pleasurable experiences
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Concentration

- ▶ Inability to concentrate
 - ▶ Indecision
 - ▶ For youth, drop in concentration may manifest itself in a drop in academic performance
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Appetite

- ▶ Adults, typically see a loss of appetite
- ▶ Teens – loss of appetite, but can also show signs of overeating or bulimia

Psychomotor Retardation

- ▶ Adults typically present with lethargy
- ▶ Teens may be lethargic or may present with agitation

Suicidal Ideation

Suicidal Thoughts

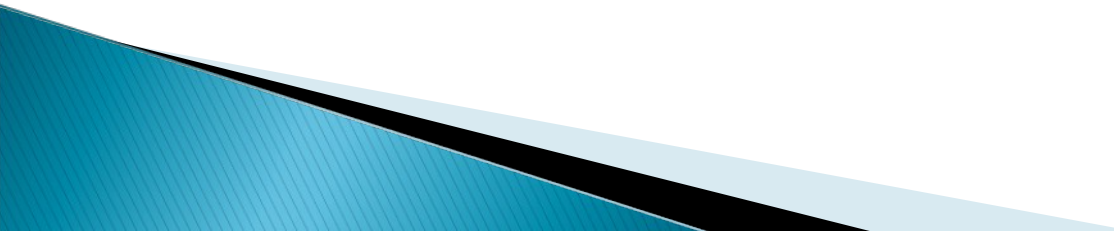
- ▶ Recurring thoughts or talk of death, suicide or self-destructive behaviour
- ▶ Teen journals and drawings may reflect dark images and/or thoughts

Teens may behave aggressively towards themselves (i.e. cutting) or others

- ▶ Teens may also present with risky behaviours – reckless driving, binge drinking, hanging out with a bad crowd, cutting, experimenting with drugs/alcohol

Teens & depression

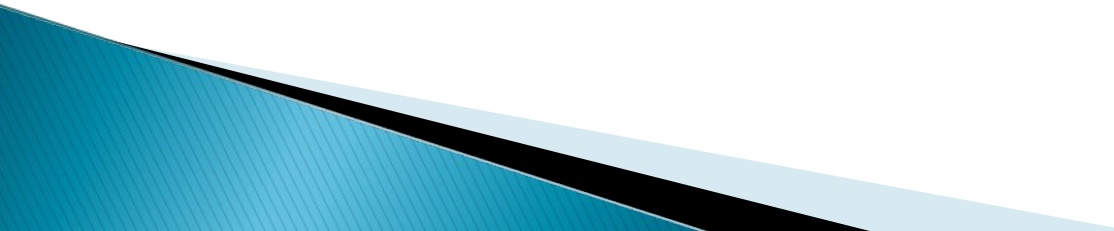
What parents may also see:

- ▶ Irritable/angry
 - ▶ Aches & pains
 - ▶ Sensitivity to criticism
 - ▶ Withdrawal
- 


Irritable or Angry Mood

Irritability, rather than sadness, is often the predominant mood in depressed teens

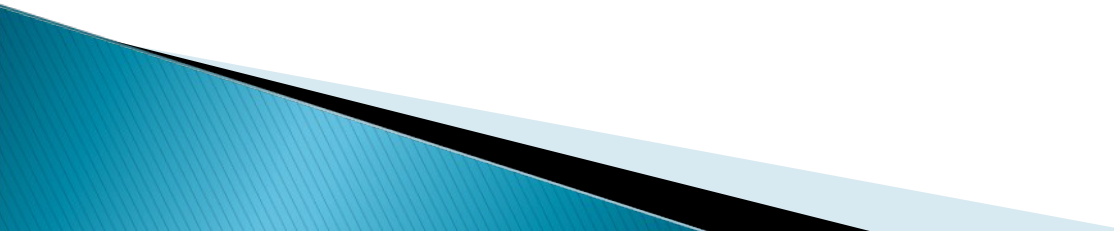
A depressed teenager may be:

- ▶ grumpy
 - ▶ hostile
 - ▶ easily frustrated
 - ▶ prone to angry outbursts
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Unexplained Aches & Pains

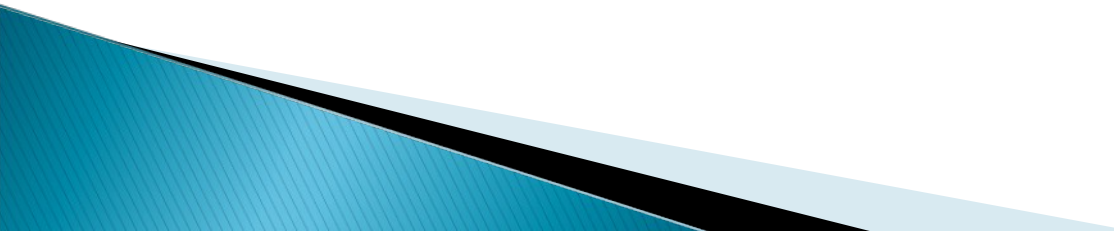
- ▶ Depressed teens frequently complain about physical ailments such as headaches or stomach aches.
 - ▶ School aged children – this is often the most visible signs of depression
 - ▶ If a thorough physical exam does not reveal a medical cause, these aches and pains may indicate depression.
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Extreme Sensitivity to Criticism

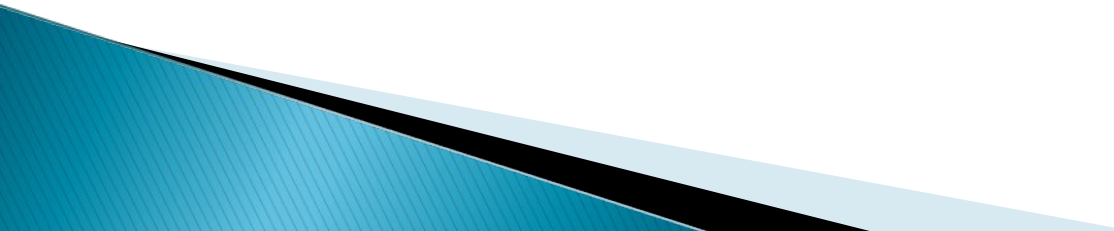
- ▶ Depressed teens are plagued by feelings of worthlessness, making them extremely vulnerable to criticism, rejection, and failure
 - ▶ This is a particular problem for high-achievers.
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Withdrawal

Withdrawing from some, but not all people

- ▶ Adults tend to isolate themselves when depressed
 - ▶ Teenagers usually keep up at least some friendships
 - ▶ Teens may socialize less than before, pull away from their parents, or start hanging out with a different crowd
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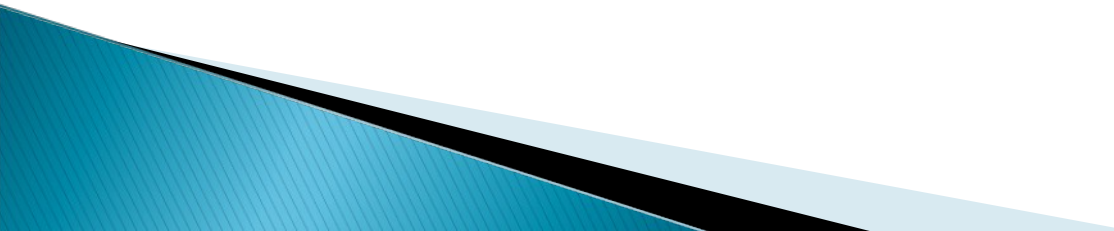
What Parents Can Do:

- ▶ Love
 - ▶ Understanding
 - ▶ Communication
 - ▶ Seek medical help
 - ▶ Seek professional counseling
 - ▶ Promote healthy lifestyle habits
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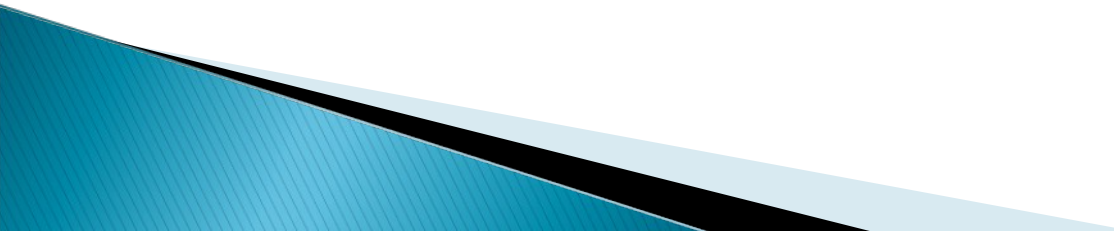
Healthy Lifestyle Habits

- ▶ Positive Attitude
 - ▶ Connect with your child

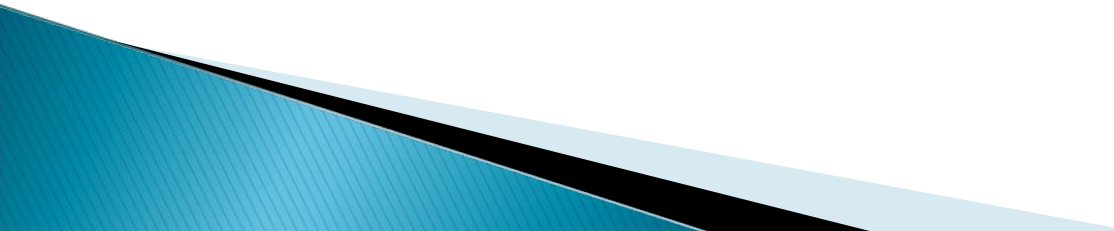
 - ▶ Physical Exercise
 - ▶ Healthy Eating

 - ▶ Limit use of media
 - ▶ Sleep
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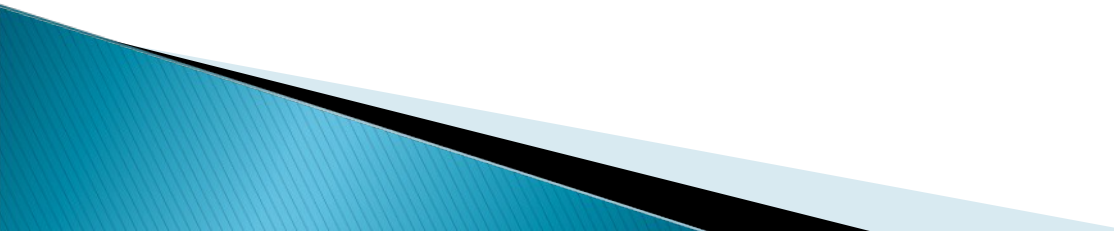
Positive Attitude

- ▶ It is difficult to be hopeful when you feel depressed
 - ▶ Remind your child that things will get better in time – improvements occur gradually
 - ▶ Model positive attitude – be hopeful about feeling better
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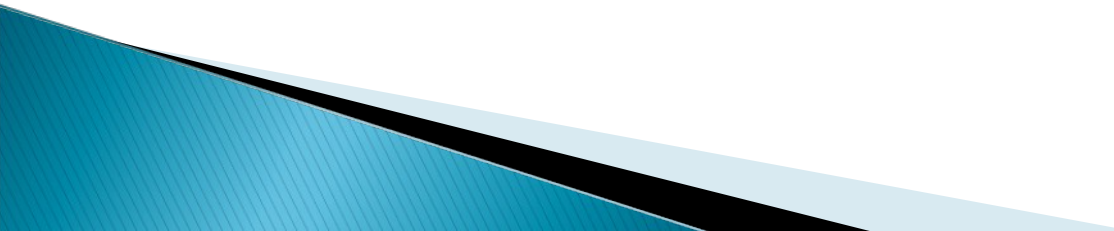
Connect

- ▶ Eat meals together
 - ▶ Limit use of electronic devices at mealtimes, in the car
 - ▶ Family game night
 - ▶ Family vacations – no friends allowed
 - ▶ Choose outdoor vacations – no cell service
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Connect

- ▶ “Date your child” – arrange special time together
 - ▶ Plan regular 1:1 time with your child
 - ▶ Parent must do the inviting
 - ▶ Find things in common with your kids
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Physical Activity

- ▶ Get regular exercise: swimming, walking, biking, dancing etc.
 - ▶ Promote participation in organized activities
 - ▶ Encourage involvement in extracurricular activities
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Healthy Eating

- ▶ Eat a balanced diet
- ▶ If your child lacks an appetite, try to get them to eat small snacks rather than large meals

Media Use

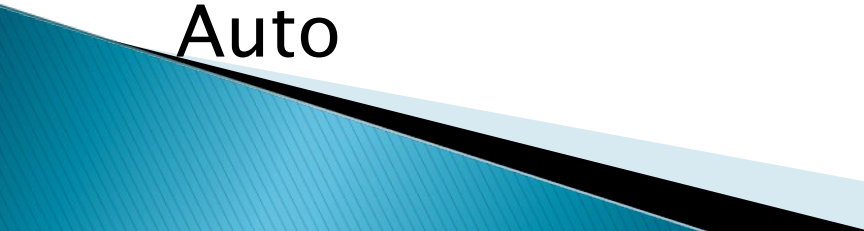
- ▶ Limit surfing online
- ▶ Limit gaming
- ▶ Limit Facebook/Social Media use

These may be ways of escaping and/or numbing their feelings


Media – boys

- ▶ Average boy spends 13 hours per week playing video games
- ▶ More than 6 hours of video gaming per week leads to decreased marks in school

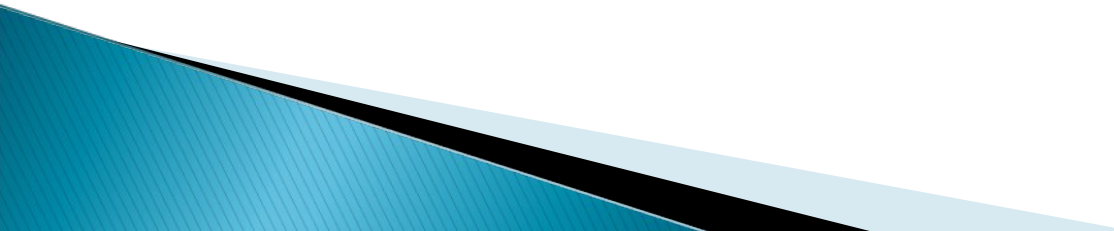
Gaming Guidelines

- ▶ Less than 40 minutes per day on school nights
 - ▶ No more than 1 hour per day on weekends
 - ▶ Cannot bank up hours and use them all at same time – this feeds addictive behaviour
 - ▶ No games rated “M” (Mature) – these include Medal of Honour, Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto
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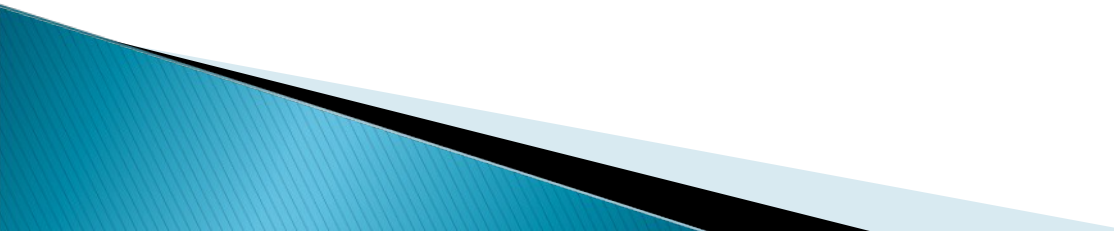
Media – girls

- ▶ Facebook makes girls sad
 - ▶ More time spent on Facebook – more likely girl will be depressed
 - ▶ Girls become hyper-connected to peer girls and disconnected from themselves and adults
 - ▶ “Co – rumination” amongst female peers – leads to drama amongst girls
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Facebook Guidelines

- ▶ Discuss “Public and Permanent”
 - ▶ Monitor postings
 - ▶ Limit to 30 minutes per day
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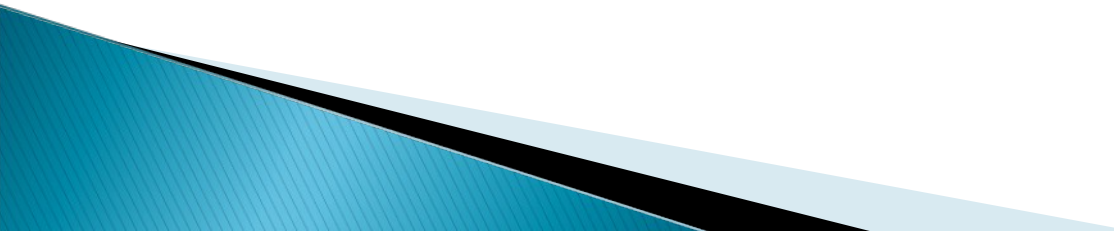
Sleep

- ▶ Sleep deprived kids more anxious and less emotionally balanced
 - ▶ Being tired affects memory, concentration and motivation
 - ▶ Lack of sleep increases risk of depression
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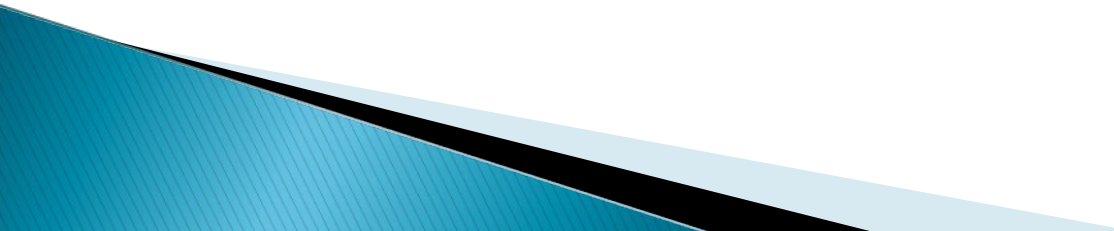
Sleep

- ▶ School-Age kids and preteens need 10 to 12 hours of sleep a night (asleep at 8 pm - awake 7 am = 11 hours)
- ▶ Adolescents require 9 to 10 hours of sleep per night (asleep at 10 pm - awake at 7 am = 9 hours)

Sleep

- ▶ No TV or gaming in bedroom
 - ▶ Remove cell phones from bedroom at night
 - ▶ Limit internet access
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Sleep Resources

- ▶ Kidshealth.org
 - ▶ Caringforkids.cps.ca
 - ▶ eMentalHealth.ca, a comprehensive portal of mental health services in your community
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Mental Health Resources

- ▶ eMentalHealth.ca, a comprehensive portal of mental health services in your community
 - ▶ Handout
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