

Threshold Guidance - Depression (Low Mood)

Name of Young Person:

Staff member supporting:

Has this been completed in collaboration with the YP? Yes/NO

What we do, what we don't do and what you can do if you are worried about your child

All young people will feel anxious from time to time. Here's a guide to help you know how best to support your young person if they are experiencing symptoms of worry or anxiety. This is not an exhaustive list; young people will experience other types of worry and symptoms which may not be included on this guide:

Needs Specialist Treatment or a Crisis Response; These are difficulties that cause a significant impact and a young person may need specialist support.

Type and nature of mood issue

Episodes of low mood/depression are severe and enduring. These cause significant distress to a young person and significantly disrupt daily coping such as school/ college, socialising and even self-care activities (eg, sleep, bathing, eating). Despite trying advice in the green and amber stages, the young person still experiences depression symptoms. Examples of situations that may cause/contribute to a young person feeling low in mood or depressed:

- Chronic bullying or abuse (including neglect, emotional, physical, sexual)
- Social or family financial stressors (such as family breakdown, conflict or parental/sibling ill-health)
- Grief or loss
- Witnessing or experiencing a traumatic event
- Overwhelmed by pressures and stressors including individual factors, eg, health, social factors, eg, relationships, occupational factors, eg, school/college and environment, eg, living circumstances

Please note, there are occasions when there is no apparent trigger/cause/contributory factor as to why a young person may be experiencing episodes of low mood/depression. A young person can still be acutely depressed without clear reason.

What you might see or a young person might report As well as the features in Green and Amber, the following might also be present: (Tick all those that apply)	Date Completed	Date completed	Date completed	Date completed
Isolating self from friends and family				
Withdrawn and uncommunicative or not wanting to be left alone at all. This may seem uncharacteristic or age inappropriate for some teenagers				
Refusal to leave the house or attend/take part in activities such as school, hobbies, interests, seeing friends				

Significant impact on health and wellbeing such as not sleeping or eating for a sustained period of time. May show signs of physical compromise as a result.				
Appearing uncaring or unbothered about people or activities they previously would have cared about - may not honour commitments or responsibilities which is uncharacteristic				
Lack of insight or awareness that others may be concerned - this may lead to arguments or conflict at home				
May on occasion becoming agitated, distressed, oppositional or aggressive towards others				
Reactive and impulsive behaviour such as running away which may place them or others in danger				
Feeling hopeless about the future - not being able to see a future and appearing to give up on dreams, goals and hopes				
Thoughts, feelings, urges, plans or intent to harm self or end their life or harm others.				

Please note that not all young people who engage in self-harm behaviour are depressed or suicidal. There are many reasons why a young person may engage in self-harm behaviour.

Things to try, support and Next Steps

As well as the steps in Green and Amber, the following might be helpful:

- Speak with your child's GP
- Speak with the School Nursing Team
- Depending on the context and/or the origins of the low mood/depression being experienced, other services may be helpful. There may be a role for other services such as Children's Services or other statutory or voluntary organisations that can support if there are clear triggers for anxiety, eg, abuse, domestic violence, bullying, being a young carer, etc.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from Young Minds Parent Helpline:
0808802544
- Access the "Help I'm in Crisis" Button on our website during times of stress
- Consider making a self-referral to a CAMHS Service. If your young person is at risk of harm, please make this clear when making the referral.

Useful Resources:

- Stuff That Sucks, by Ben Edley
- Am I Depressed? And What Can I Do About It? by Shirley Reynolds and Monika Parkinson
- Beyond The Blues; A Workbook To Help Teens Overcome Depression, by Lisa Schab
- Stopping The Pain; A Workbook For Young People Who Cut and Self-Injure, by Lawrence Shapiro