



# Points for Parents

## Early Identification and Intervention

### Signs of Early On-Set of Depression

- Persistent sadness and hopelessness
- Withdrawal from friends and from activities once enjoyed
- Increased irritability or agitation
- Missed school or poor school performance
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Indecision, lack of concentration, or forgetfulness
- Poor self-esteem or guilt
- Frequent physical complaints, such as headaches and stomachaches
- Lack of enthusiasm, low energy, or low motivation
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Thoughts of death or suicide

### Early Signs (Prodromal Phase) of Psychosis

- Social Withdrawal
- Reduced concentration, attention
- Depressed mood
- Sleep disturbances
- Anxiety
- Suspiciousness
- Skipping school or work
- Irritability

### Resources

- Canadian Mental Health Association [http://www.cmha.ca/bins/print\\_page.asp?cid=3-105-107&lang=1](http://www.cmha.ca/bins/print_page.asp?cid=3-105-107&lang=1)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness [http://www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Helpline1Facts\\_About\\_Childhood\\_Depression.htm](http://www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Helpline1Facts_About_Childhood_Depression.htm)
- PsychosisSucks <http://www.psychosissucks.ca/epi/whatispsychosis.cfm>
- Eating Disorder Resource Centre of BC <http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/publications/factsheets/eating-disorders>
- Children's Mental Health Ontario [http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/get\\_help/anxiety.php](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/get_help/anxiety.php)
- Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/disasterrelief/publications/allpubs/CA-0007/default.asp>
- National Institute of Mental Health - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Booklet <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder/index.shtml>

### How can I help?

- **Learn** about the signs and symptoms in order to identify early
- **Encourage** those who may be experiencing mental health difficulties to get help without delay. Contact a family doctor or a mental health professional.
- **Educate** yourself about the disorder.
- **Work** to dispel myths about mental illness and reduce fear and stigma that can deter people from seeking help.

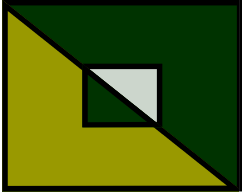
### Benefits of Early Intervention

- Reduced disruption of activities
- Reduced disruption of family and social relationships
- Reduced likelihood of hospitalization
- Reduced disability and fewer relapses
- Reduced risk of suicide
- Improved capacity to maintain self-identity and self-esteem
- Faster and more complete recovery
- Improved capacity to maintain life course



Midland Youth Project  
705-725-5491

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### Signs of an Eating Disorder

- Often gains and/or loses large amounts of weight
- Always thinking about food, dieting and weight
- Avoids food even when they are hungry
- Feels guilty and ashamed of eating
- Often feels out of control when eating
- Feels better when not eating
- Gorges themselves on food
- Feels fat even though others tell them they're not
- Feels worthless when they think of their body and their weight
- Feels they will never be happy unless they reach their ideal weight
- Does not like eating with other people
- Rarely/never gets their menstrual period
- Often "gets rid" of food by using laxatives, exercising vigorously or making themselves vomit

### Signs of Anxiety

- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder:** Excessive and uncontrollable worry about everyday life activities; Worry excessively about academic performance, sporting activities, or even about being on time.
- **Separation Anxiety Disorder:** Have difficulty leaving their parents at attend school, stay at a friend's house, or be alone. Children may "cling" to parents and have trouble falling asleep.
- **Phobias:** Excessive fears of certain situations or objects. Disorder usually centers on animals, storms, water, heights, or situations such as being in an enclosed space.
- **Panic Disorder:** Periods of intense fear accompanied by pounding heartbeat, sweating, dizziness, nausea, or a feeling of imminent death.
- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** Repetitive thoughts and behaviours. Compulsive behaviours may include repeated hand washing, counting, or arranging and re-arranging objects.
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:** Experience the event over and over through strong memories, flashbacks, or other kinds of troublesome thoughts. They try to avoid anything associated with the trauma. They may overreact when startled or have difficulty sleeping.

### Symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

#### Inattention Symptoms:

- Easily Distracted, miss details, forget things, and frequently switch from one activity to another;
- Difficulty focusing on one thing;
- Become bored with a task after only a few minutes, unless they are doing something enjoyable;
- Difficulty focusing attention on organizing and completing a task or learning something new;
- Trouble completing or turning in homework assignments, often losing things needed to complete tasks or activities;
- Not seem to listen when spoken to;
- Daydream, become easily confused and move slowly;
- Difficulty processing information as quickly and accurately as others;
- Struggle to follow instructions.

#### Hyperactivity Symptoms:

- Fidget and squirm in their seats;
- Talk nonstop;
- Dash around, touching or playing with anything and everything in sight;
- Trouble sitting still during dinner and at school;
- Be constantly in motion;
- Difficulty doing quiet tasks or activities.

#### Impulsivity Symptoms:

- Very impatient;
- Blur out inappropriate comments, show their emotions without restraint, and act without regard for consequences;
- Difficulty waiting for things they want or waiting their turn in games;
- Often interrupt conversations or others' activities.



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