



[KidsHealth.org/classroom](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom)

## Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

## Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:  
[nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State\\_Policy.asp](http://nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp)

Lately, you've been feeling sad for no reason at all, are more tired than usual, have difficulty concentrating, and don't feel like being with your friends and family. These are all signs that you might be depressed. The following discussion questions and activities will help your students learn what depression is, how to recognize its signs, and what to do about it.

## Related KidsHealth Links

### Articles for Kids:

#### Why Am I So Sad?

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/sadness.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/sadness.html)

#### Talking About Your Feelings

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/talk\\_feelings.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/talk_feelings.html)

### Articles for Teens:

#### Depression

[KidsHealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/feeling\\_sad/depression.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/feeling_sad/depression.html)

#### Why Am I in Such a Bad Mood?

[KidsHealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/feeling\\_sad/bad\\_mood.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/feeling_sad/bad_mood.html)

#### Talking to Your Parents – or Other Adults

[KidsHealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/families/talk\\_to\\_parents.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/families/talk_to_parents.html)

#### Suicide

[KidsHealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/feeling\\_sad/suicide.html](http://KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/feeling_sad/suicide.html)

## Discussion Questions

*Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

1. Think about some times you felt sad. What did you do to make yourself feel better? How is depression different from feeling sad? Write a brief description of what depression is.
2. Anyone can get depressed. Do you know someone who has been depressed? What are some ways to tell that someone is feeling depressed?
3. Why is it so important for someone with depression to get help? What might happen if they don't get the help they need?
4. People who are depressed tend to withdraw from others. Why do you think this happens? How does this affect their depression?



## Activities for Students

*Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

### Understanding Depression

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn what depression is and why it occurs
- Identify signs and symptoms of depression
- Determine strategies to overcome depression

#### Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Pen and paper

#### Class Time:

2 hours

#### Activity:

The counselors in your school are very concerned about the growing number of students who seem to be depressed. One way they would like to assist the students is to create an informative presentation for parents that helps explain depression. This is where you come in. The counselors have asked a group of students for help in developing the presentation. To accomplish the task, conduct some research at KidsHealth on the following topics:

- What depression is and what causes it
- Signs and symptoms of depression
- How parents can help if their child is depressed

Although depression is a serious topic, be creative with your presentation. Also remember that the counselors have asked for your help because you can teach parents how to talk to their kids so that the kids will listen.

#### Extensions:

1. For the last few days you have been feeling blue. Your best friend just moved away and you got a bad grade on a science test. Make a list of ways you can prevent this sadness from becoming depression.
2. For the last few weeks you have been feeling more than sad. You're tired all the time, want to sleep a lot more than usual, and just don't feel like doing anything. As a result, your grades are starting to slip. Your friends and parents are even starting to notice changes in you. Role-play a conversation in which you talk to your parents about your feelings and ask for some help.



## Recognizing Depression

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Recognize the signs of depression
- Determine the causes of someone's depression
- Recommend strategies to help someone who is depressed

### Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Recognizing Depression handout (available at: [KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/conditions/depression\\_handout1.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/conditions/depression_handout1.pdf))

### Class Time:

1 hour

### Activity:

Take some time to think about how depression is portrayed around you. Select a character from a book, short story, TV show, or movie that you think is depressed, and use the Recognizing Depression handout to examine how his or her depression is depicted. Using the articles at KidsHealth, first identify the signs and symptoms of this character's depression. What does the character do that makes you think he or she is depressed? Does this person even realize he or she is depressed? Next list the cause(s) of this character's depression. Did certain events lead up to it? Finally, discuss how the character is handling his or her depression. Develop a list of ways that a friend could support this character, as well as what kinds of help might be available.

### Extensions:

1. Your best friend has been showing signs of depression for a while now. You know depression is serious and want to help her. Role-play a conversation in which you talk about ways she can help herself, as well as how you can support her.
2. Time goes on and your friend is getting worse. In a recent note, she wrote that she just wanted to escape from all the bad feelings and that there wasn't much reason to go on. You know this is more serious than ever. What do you do now? Role-play a scenario with your friend or an adult demonstrating how you would help.

## Reproducible Materials

**Handout: Recognizing Depression**

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/depression\\_handout1.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/depression_handout1.pdf)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Recognizing Depression

Instructions: Select a character from a book, short story, TV show, or movie that you think is depressed. List the character's name and the title of the book, story, TV show, or movie. List the signs and symptoms of his or her depression. Next list the causes or events that have led to his or her depression. Finally, discuss how the character is handling his or her depression, what kinds of help might be available, and how a friend might be able to offer support.

Character's name:



Book, movie, or TV show title:



Depression signs and symptoms:



Causes:



Help and Support:

