



PROGRAM

SUPPORT NOTES

Dark Days: Shedding Light on Depression

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For Teachers

Introduction

Major depression will be experienced by one in five adults at some point in their lives, and up to two fifths of Australia's youth experience depressed mood in any six month period. Depression is a condition that has reached concerning levels. As many as two thirds of people with depression do not realize that they have a treatable illness and therefore do not seek treatment. In addition, persistent misperceptions surrounding depression leads to stigmatization and avoidance of the diagnosis by many of those affected. This program examines in detail what depression is, the various symptoms and treatment options. A close look at adolescence and depression is also included.

Timeline

00:00:00 What is Depression?
00:06:08 Who is at risk?
00:12:05 Signs and Symptoms
00:15:31 Myths and Treatment
00:20:37 Credits
00:21:32 End Program

Related Titles

Anxiety Disorders
Health Inequities in Australia
Global Health and Human Development
Adult Health and Development
Health Risks to the World's Young

Recommended Resources

www.pbs.org/mix/depression_index.html
<http://www.nmha.org>
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>
<http://www.depression.org>
<http://www.afsp.org>
<http://www.nami.org>
<http://www.mentalhealth.org>
<http://www.spanusa.org>

Student Worksheet

Initiate Prior Learning

1. Brainstorm ideas that relate to depression.

2. Recall a time in your life when you felt depressed. Answer the following questions about that time of life or event.

The life event or situation that made me feel really sad was:

a) When did it happen?

b) Where were you at the time?

c) Who else was involved?

d) List "feelings words" that describe how you felt when you were really sad.

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e) How did you act differently when you were really sad?

3. Describe your thoughts and feeling about an illness such as heart disease compared to a mental health disorder such as depression. If you knew two people with these illnesses, would you perceive one person differently than the other? How would you treat them? Why?

Active Viewing Guide

1. What is the difference between feeling depressed and having generalized depression?

2. a) What are the five types of depression examined in this program?

b) Which of these types of depression do you think would more likely affect teenagers? Why?

3. The causes of depression can be hard to pinpoint. Why do you think this is?

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4. Fill in the following table, the first example is provided for you.

Causes of depression	Example
Genetics	It is passed on from parents

5. What do MRI Scans indicate about those suffering depression?

6. Why do you think women have higher rates of depression? Try to include points beyond just those provided in the program.

7. Fill in the missing number to complete this statistic:

1 in _____ young adults will have experienced some form of depressive episode by the age of 18.

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8. The above rate has increased substantially over the years. Compare lifestyle differences experienced by teenagers today and 50 years ago. Evaluate these lifestyle changes on increasing depression rates.

9. Retell Nicholas' story about when he started dating a girl.

10. Propose reasons why diet and exercise may be linked to depression.

11. What lifestyle diseases and illnesses occur from overweight/obesity and low physical activity levels?

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12. How might men and women cope differently with depression?

13. Signs and symptoms vary from person to person. What were Nicholas' symptoms?

14. What is a misconception around depression?

15. Brainstorm five ways we can decrease the stigma and misconceptions around depression.

16. Fill in the missing word/s to complete the following sentence:

_____ are the most common medications used to treat depression.

17. What are the two other treatments mentioned?

Extension Activities

1. Research the prescriptions available for clinically depressed teenagers: how they work, side effects, and programs used in conjunction with medications.
2. Lead a discussion on ways to stay healthy, both physically and mentally.
3. Brainstorm solutions for relieving stress in healthy ways
4. How can you help a friend who is depressed?
5. Recipe metaphor activity: Create an original 'recipe' that provides ingredients and instructions on overcoming depression.
6. There are many websites and health services available for people suffering depression. Research a range of 10 websites and services in your school and in your local area that may assist people. Which of these would be most effective for adolescent sufferers?
7. Design a pamphlet (on Microsoft publisher) about generalized depression that could be distributed by your school counselor to sufferers of depression.

Suggested Student Responses

Active Viewing Guide

1. What is the difference between feeling depressed and having Generalized Depression?
Thoughts and feelings are much more severe and last for a longer period of time.
2. a) What are the five types of depression examined in this program?
**Clinical
Bipolar
Reactive
Psychotic
Post-Natal**

b) Which of these types of depression do you think would more likely affect teenagers? Why?
Answers will vary but may include clinical, reactive and bipolar
3. The causes of depression can be hard to pinpoint. Why do you think this is?
Answers will vary

4. Fill in the following table...the first example is provided for you

Causes of depression	Example
Genetics	It is passed on from parents
Environmental	More vulnerable from a certain situation i.e. Break-up
Biological	Stress, personality type

5. What do MRI Scans indicate about those suffering depression?
Different size and look of brain
6. Why you think women have higher rates of depression? Try to include points beyond just those provided in the program.
Answers will vary but may include women seeking medical help, are more hormonal, go through menopause, emotionally attached to family, maternal emotions etc.
7. Fill in the missing number to complete this statistic:

1 in **5** young adults will have experienced some form of depressive episode by the age of 18.
This above rate has increased substantially over the years.
8. Compare lifestyle differences experienced by teenagers today and 50 years ago. Evaluate these lifestyle changes on increasing depression rates.
Answers will vary.
9. Retell Nicholas' story about when he started dating a girl.
Had a relationship for 1.5 years, split up, after-effects made him implode...started drinking heavily, having suicidal thoughts etc

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10. Propose reasons why diet and exercise may be linked to depression.
Unhealthy diet and not exercising is a risky behavior leading to mental illness as confidence, self-esteem, ego decreases as a person becomes less in tune with their body, and start putting on weight. The more weight gained, the less an individual will want to socialize, exercise and be positive.
11. What lifestyle diseases and illnesses occur from overweight/obesity and low physical activity levels?
Diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, high blood pressure and cholesterol levels
12. How might men and women cope differently with depression?
Men self medicate and women tend to seek medical help.
13. Signs and symptoms vary from person to person. What were Nicholas' symptoms?
Going to school just to socialize, and then fall asleep in class, poor concentration. When he broke up with his girlfriend, he was full of fear and self-doubt that everyone would run away and ignore him (stemming from when his Dad left).
14. What is a misconception around depression?
Person is just lazy, depression is a weakness, is not a real illness
15. Brainstorm 5 ways we can decrease the stigma and misconceptions around depression.
Answers will vary.
16. Fill in the missing word/s to complete the following sentence:

Anti-depressants are the most common medications used to treat depression.
17. What are the two other treatments mentioned?
CBT (looking at the unhelpful thinking patterns – and change them to be more adaptable and more helpful) & Interpersonal Therapy (IPT).