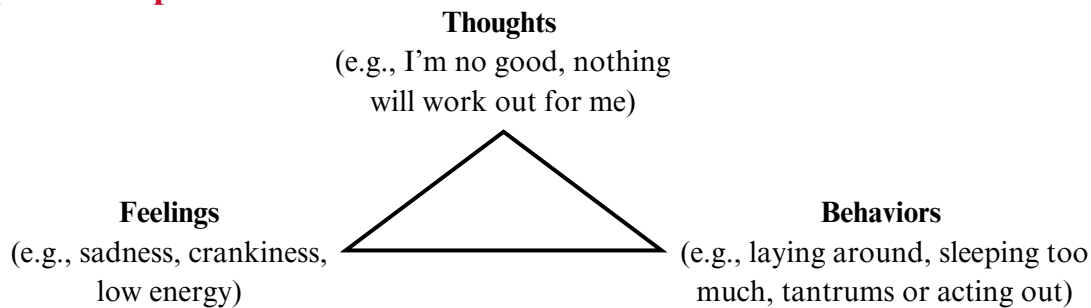




Quick Tips for Providers: *Educating Families about Depression*

Everyone experiences sadness sometimes. It may happen after the loss of a loved one, after a good friend moves away, or other situations. However, depression is more than just feeling sad and persists for a long period of time. For example, kids with depression may lose interest in things they usually enjoy or be unable to get out of a down mood. They might also feel like things are not going to work out for them in the future.

There are three parts to depression:



Depression is a disorder that affects our emotions, behavior, thoughts, and bodies. When some people are depressed, besides feeling extremely sad, they might also be more irritable than usual. Kids and teens with depression feel that way nearly every day, for most of the day, for two or more weeks. Youth with depression often struggle in school, with peers, and at home. Without help, depression can last into adulthood leading to trouble in relationships, with work, at home, and with self-care tasks. People with depression are also more likely to have anxiety and to abuse substances (e.g., alcohol and/or drugs).

What to do if your child is experiencing depression symptoms:

There are several treatments available to help with depression:

- **Therapy:** Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the gold-standard psychotherapy for youth with depression. CBT involves teaching coping skills and identifying and changing unhelpful thoughts. Most importantly, CBT helps kids and families start to re-engage with enjoyable and everyday activities to improve mood. This is called behavioral activation and has been shown to be helpful in improving mood.
- **Medication:** Selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are the gold-standard medication option for youth depression.
- **Combination of CBT and medication:** For youth with moderate to severe depression, the combination of CBT and medication has been shown to be the most helpful with improving depressive symptoms.