

TEEN DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

You know your teen's baseline. Do any of the following seem unusual?

- Spending significantly more time **alone**?
- **Sleeping** significantly more or less?
- Not as engaged with **friends** (including via text and social media)?
- Not as interested in **favorite activities**?
- Changes in overall **mood** (smiling less, more irritable, quieter)?
- Seem **hopeless** about the future?

WHAT TO ASK

Take a private moment to express your concern. Use an approach that works best for your teen.

- **Open-ended:** "I've noticed that you just don't seem as happy. Can we talk about that?"
- **Personal example:** "In this stressful situation, I've been more anxious, and had a harder time thinking about the positives. Is that something you're feeling too?"
- **Daily "weather check":** "Scale of 1 to 10, how are you feeling today?"
- If you're worried about your child, ask directly if they ever have suicidal thoughts or thoughts about harming themselves or others. If the answer is yes, get help right away.*

WHAT TO DO

- **Build coping strategies.** These have been shown to help with anxiety and depression.
 - Get enough sleep
 - Get exercise
 - Eat nutritious meals
 - Establish daily routines
 - Practice relaxation techniques
 - Spend time outdoors and in nature
 - Strengthen relationships
- **Find a therapist.** Reach out to your child's pediatrician or insurance provider for help.
- **Keep your home safe.** Make sure your teen doesn't have access to household items like cleaning products or medications.
- ***Get help right away** if your teen may put themselves or others in danger. Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1.800.273.8255 or text "HOME" to 741741 to text with a crisis counselor. In Connecticut, you can call 2-1-1 for in-person crisis support.

To learn more, visit connecticutchildrens.org/teendepression.