



healthy kids **NOW**



Could your teen be depressed?

Adolescence brings on physical, social, and emotional changes in young people. No wonder teens often act moody and test their parents' patience.

But it's not normal for a teen to feel sad or tired almost all the time or to prefer always to be alone. And teens who abuse alcohol or other drugs may be doing so to avoid feeling sad.

A teen who shows any of these signs may have depression, which affects about five teens out of 100.

Girls are more affected than boys. The greatest increase in this gender difference occurs between the ages of 15 and 18.

How to recognize depression

Other signs of depression include the following:

- Frequent crying
- Lack of energy
- Lack of interest in former favorite activities
- Irritability, loss of temper, or overreaction to criticism
- Changes in sleeping patterns, such as sleeping much more, having trouble falling asleep at night, or waking up too early and being unable to go back to sleep
- Poor school performance or frequent absences
- Changes in eating patterns, such as eating much less or much more
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Does your teen need help?

If your child shows five symptoms for more than two weeks, call your child's doctor. Do the same if any symptom affects your teen's normal routine.

But seek help immediately if your teen shows signs of suicidal thinking or planning. These may include:

- Direct or indirect suicide threats
- Drawing or writing about death
- Giving away belongings

Treatment may include medication. It often includes therapy. This can help teens understand and cope with painful feelings and events.

Teen depression is a serious but treatable medical illness. Parents who recognize its symptoms and seek out appropriate treatment can help a troubled teen get back on the right track.

Sources: National Mental Health Association, National Institutes of Health, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Journal of School Health, Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, British Medical Journal, American Journal of Psychiatry

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Immunizations: Is your child up to date?

Vaccines can protect your child from serious infectious diseases — and may save his or her life. Do you know if your child’s shots are up to date? Check out the following chart with recommended ages for routine childhood immunizations to make sure.

Keep in mind that in order to be fully protected against common childhood diseases, your child may need several shots spread out over months or years.

In most cases, children can have vaccinations even if they have a mild cold or have had a reaction to previous shots. A family history of reactions is also not a reason to withhold vaccination.

In rare cases, a child should not receive a vaccination. These include having an underlying illness (such as certain types of cancers) or taking medications that reduce the body’s ability to fight infections. So, be sure

to review these guidelines with your child’s pediatrician and talk about any concerns you may have. Other topics you may want to discuss with your child’s doctor include:

- A recommended schedule for your child’s flu shots;
- New vaccines that are available;
- Catch-up vaccines if your child has missed certain immunizations;
- Booster shots for older children;
- Possible side effects, such as mild pain and swelling at the injection site or a low-grade fever. Severe reactions are rare.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; American Academy of Family Physicians, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Pediatrics, JAMA, Pediatric Nursing

	Birth to age 4 months	Ages 6 to 18 months	Ages 4 to 6 years	Ages 11 to 18 years
Hepatitis B	X	X*	X**	X**
Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTaP)	X	X	X	X
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	X	X*		
Polio (IPV)	X	X	X*	
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)		X	X*	X**
Varicella (chickenpox)		X	X**	X**
Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)	X	X*	X**†	X†
Influenza		X	X	X
Rotavirus	X‡	X‡		
Human papillomavirus (HPV) ††				X
Meningococcal (MCV)			X†	X
Hepatitis A		X		

* Final dose.

** Vaccine needed if not completed earlier.

† Recommended for certain high-risk children.

‡ Depending on vaccine used, a third and final dose at 6 months may or may not be required.

†† Recommended for prevention of cervical cancer in females and protection against genital warts in males and females.

Most effective when given before exposure to HPV through sexual contact.



A-choo!

Kids have allergies, too

Just like adults, babies and young children can suffer from allergies. Simply avoiding allergy triggers — called allergens — can keep most childhood allergies under control. One of the most common childhood allergies is allergic rhinitis, or hay fever. Airborne particles — such as pollen, mold, pet dander, and dust — trigger hay fever symptoms, including:

- Runny nose
- Congestion
- Sneezing
- Itchy eyes and throat

Following these steps can reduce your child's exposure to common triggers and minimize symptoms:

- Wash bedding in hot water at least once a week.
- Use a dehumidifier to keep your home's humidity below 50 percent.
- Remove carpet from your child's room.
- If you smoke, quit, as exposure to smoke increases a child's risk.
- If you have a furry pet, keep it out of your child's room and vacuum frequently. But talk to your doctor about what's best for your child. Some new research suggests children who are around dogs and cats early in life are less likely to develop allergies.



Sources: *The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network, The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, Pediatrics, The American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, JAMA, The Lancet*

If your child has a fever

A fever means that your child is fighting a sickness. Do you know what to do if your child has a fever?

First, take your child's temperature. For babies and young children, rectal thermometers and oral pacifier thermometers are best. You can also take your child's temperature by holding a thermometer in her armpit for two minutes. Or put the thermometer under the child's tongue.

Your child has a fever if her oral temperature is above 99.4°. If you used a rectal thermometer, a fever is a temperature above 100.4°.

When your child has a fever, it is okay for her to eat. Lots of juice and water is especially good, too. Ibuprofen and other over-the-counter pain relievers can help. Don't use aspirin! It could cause a fatal illness called Reye's syndrome.

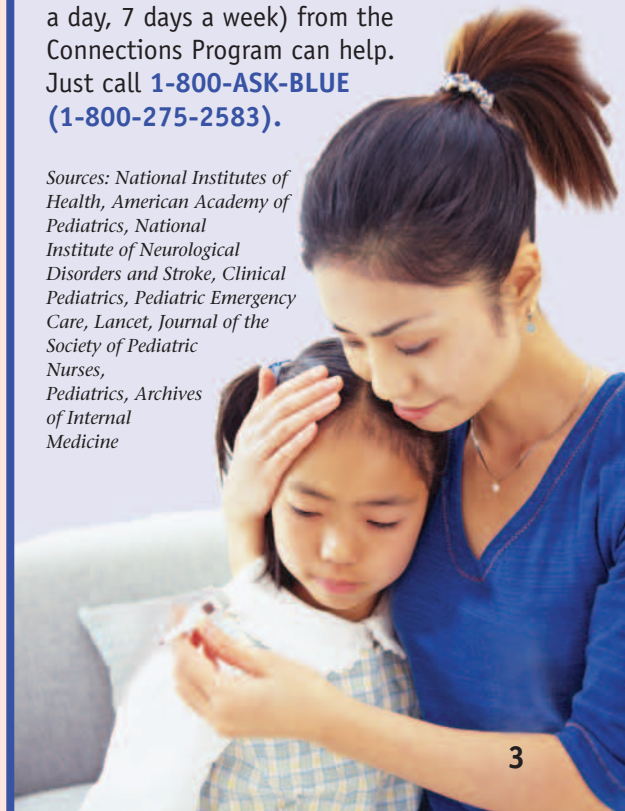
Here are some more ideas:

- Give your child a lukewarm bath (not cold water).
- Take blankets off the bed.
- Keep your child lightly dressed.
- Make the room "comfortably cool."

Questions about your child's fever?

A Health Coach (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) from the Connections Program can help. Just call **1-800-ASK-BLUE (1-800-275-2583)**.

Sources: *National Institutes of Health, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, Clinical Pediatrics, Pediatric Emergency Care, Lancet, Journal of the Society of Pediatric Nurses, Pediatrics, Archives of Internal Medicine*



The skinny on childhood obesity

Set children up for a healthier tomorrow by addressing weight issues today.

Not getting enough physical activity plus eating too much unhealthy food can equal childhood weight problems. These can cause very grown-up health issues.

Try bringing back healthy habits — and getting kids excited about a lifetime of good health.

How big an issue is childhood obesity?

Over the past 30 years, the childhood obesity rate has more than

tripled. Extra pounds can lower self-esteem, hurt schoolwork, and put children at risk for immediate health problems. Extra weight has been shown to put a strain on young joints and raise the chance for leg, foot, and ankle injuries.

Children with extreme weight issues also have a greater chance of developing health problems usually seen only in adults, including type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure.

Plus, unlike their slimmer peers, overweight and obese children have a higher risk for serious health problems later in life. Heart disease is more common in adults who were heavy as children. And overweight children are more likely to develop metabolic syndrome, a group of health problems that includes high blood sugar, putting children at risk for heart disease and diabetes.

FAST FACT!

THE OBESITY-DEPRESSION CONNECTION

With childhood obesity skyrocketing, parents may be wondering how to help.

Encourage your child to exercise to promote physical health. But don't overlook your child's mental health.

One study showed that children who were depressed were twice as likely to become obese within a year.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, Circulation, Institute of Medicine, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pediatrics, National Diabetes Education Program, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, American Obesity Association, JAMA, The Lancet

Creating a virtual wellness world

Our Good 2 B Me website at www.good2bme.org gives tweens, teens, and parents wellness advice that is customized just for them. Kids can explore the virtual Good 2 B Me world, where they'll meet "friends" who give tips about staying safe and healthy, answer virtual cell phone texts from their parents, and play the "Immunizer" video game.

For parents, the site offers ways you can help your kids make healthy choices — even as they become more independent. It also gives strategies for talking with young adults about sensitive health issues, such as eating disorders and puberty.



Is your child at risk for obesity?

Beginning at age two, your child's doctor should monitor body mass index (BMI). This helps show how much body fat your child has. BMI is based on his or her weight and height. Whether your child is at a healthy weight depends on how his or her BMI compares with national averages for children of the same age and gender. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that children are overweight if their BMI is at or above the 85th percentile. Children are obese if their BMI is in the 95th percentile or higher.

Encourage your child's doctor to check your child's weight at every visit so you can track it, too. If weight concerns come up, work with your child's doctor to develop a weight-loss program.

Through the Healthy Weight, Healthy You program, parents of CHIP kids can get up to \$200 back when their children complete a hospital-based weight management program, Weight Watchers®, or H.I.P. Kids (developed by the YMCA, for children 8 years old and up). To learn more, just call **1-800-ASK BLUE (1-800-275-2583)**.

Weight Watchers is a registered trademark of Weight Watchers International, Inc., an independent company.

Focus on healthy habits

Help children avoid unhealthy habits to protect their health now and in the future.

Being active helps kids reach a healthy weight and boosts self-esteem. It also can help kids pay attention in school and earn better grades. Experts recommend that children exercise 60 minutes a day most days of the week.

Here's how you can help:

- **BE A ROLE MODEL.** Children are more physically active if their parents are active, too.
- **ENCOURAGE ACTIVE PLAYTIME.** Make time for play throughout the year, even when it's cold. *Check page 7 for ideas!*
- **MOVE MORE AS A FAMILY UNIT.** Go on weekly bike rides or take swim lessons with the whole gang. Do a charity run or walk as a family team.

Offer kids healthy food choices and teach them to make healthy choices themselves.

- **INSTEAD OF SODA,** juice, or sugary drinks, offer plain or flavored water.
- **INVOLVE CHILDREN IN PLANNING** and making meals. They're more likely to eat something they helped make.
- **STOCK THE REFRIGERATOR** with fruits and vegetables.



CHIP dental benefits update

Attached is the latest update to your child's CHIP benefits. Please review this information and keep the document with your child's CHIP Benefits Handbook (3/05). If you have questions about your child's dental benefits, contact United Concordia Customer Service at **1-800-332-0366**, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

You have the right to appeal

Appeals about your child's CHIP benefits for medical, dental, vision, behavioral health, or prescription drug services should be directed to Keystone Health Plan East. There are two kinds of appeals:

- **Complaints:** When you question limits or exclusions from the "CHIP Benefits Handbook," a provider's services or network status, or certain other non-medical necessary issues;
- **Grievances:** When you disagree with a request denied as experimental, cosmetic, or not medically necessary or for other reasons that mainly raise medical or clinical issues.

These appeals must be sent to:

Keystone Health Plan East
Member Appeals Department
P.O. Box 41820
Philadelphia, PA 19101-1820
Phone: **1-888-671-5276**
Fax: **1-888-671-5274**

If you have any questions about your appeal rights, or if you need assistance in filing an appeal, you may contact Customer Service at **1-800-464-5437**, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Listen up — nature is calling

Get your kids biking, hiking, and running in the great outdoors

Mother Nature would like to offer you a tip, one parent to another: Get the kids outdoors.

A family trip to a park, forest, or trail is a great way to get everyone moving and help youngsters embrace physical activity. With many kids struggling to control their weight, outdoor pursuits can be a fun and effective solution.

What's the key to getting kids to like outdoor activities? They have to be fun. Pick pastimes that work for your kids' ages — and give teens some freedom to pick their own.

Here's some advice on popular outdoor activities for children and teens.

Mountain biking

Make sure your children always bike with a helmet that fits properly and sits flat on the head. Gloves and knee guards offer added protection. The International Mountain Bicycling Association suggests kids shouldn't ride their own bikes until they're

at least seven, but younger children can ride in trailers behind bikes.

Many parks designate trails for mountain biking. You can find one at www.recreation.gov under the "Recreation Search" section.

Don't forget! CHIP kids are eligible for a reimbursement of up to \$25 toward the purchase of a bike helmet. To learn more, call **1-800-ASK-BLUE (1-800-275-2583)**.

Hiking

To help avoid getting lost, plan a route and research the trail before you set out. The proper footwear and plenty of water are vital. Boots should generally be a half size larger than other footwear to allow for two pairs of socks.

The American Hiking Society offers links to federal agencies and state parks with trails at www.americanhiking.org.

Trail running

Trail running is physically demanding, so it may not be for beginners. As with hiking,

research your route, wear proper shoes, and bring enough water. Trail running shoes generally provide more stability and traction than shoes made for running on hard surfaces.

The American Trail Running Association has information on trails in all 50 states and in 18 countries at www.trailrunner.com.

Kids' favorite outdoor activities

The five top outdoor activities for Americans ages 6 to 17:

Activity	Participants	Percent favored by American youth
Road biking, mountain biking, and bicycle motocross (BMX)	14.7 million	30%
Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing	11.3 million	23%
Car, backyard, and RV camping	10.9 million	22%
Running, jogging, and trail running	9.6 million	19%
Hiking	6.1 million	12%

Source: Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2009, Outdoor Foundation





Do it today!

CHIP: Remember to renew!

The Caring Foundation verifies children's eligibility for CHIP once each year. Your child's renewal form will be mailed to your home every year, 90 days before the anniversary of enrollment. To avoid your child's coverage being cancelled, it is extremely important that you complete the renewal form and return it to the Caring Foundation as soon as possible.

There are three ways to renew:

- Go to www.compass.state.pa.us and submit your child's renewal information online.
- Call **1-800-986-5437** and renew by phone.
- Complete the form you receive in the mail and return it to the Caring Foundation.

In all cases, you must sign the signature page and mail it back, along with copies of your current income documentation.



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Philadelphia, PA 19103-1480
1-800-464-5437
www.caringfoundation.com

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for Children

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Help your child stop bullies

It's hard to imagine that anyone would hurt your child. But more than one-quarter of children say they are bullied at school. And nearly one-quarter of public schools report that bullying is a daily or weekly problem.



Make learning about bullying — and ways to stop it — a family affair. The Stop Bullying Now! campaign's website, hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, features games, webisodes, ringtones, tips, and more. To check out the site, visit www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov.

Bullying is when a group or person picks on someone they think is weaker. It can involve teasing, name-calling, or physical acts such as punching. Your child might be a victim if he or she:

- Is afraid to go to school
- Has unexplainable cuts or bruises
- Is missing clothes or other belongings, or if these items are damaged
- Often cries or seems sad

To help your child, try to:

- Ask your child to tell you about the bully. Listen carefully. Let your child know it's not her fault.
- Teach ways to deal with bullies. Your child should walk away or find an adult. He or she should not react to the bully.
- Talk with a teacher or principal if it doesn't stop. They have a responsibility to stop bullying in school.

Sources: U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Justice, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Center for Education Statistics, American Academy of Pediatrics, Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine