



Combined Funds, Inc.

CARPENTERS' COMBINED FUNDS, INC.

CHILDREN AND DEPRESSION

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Everyone feels sad and blue at times but if your child is sad most of the time and experiencing problems with grades and attendance, relationship with family and friends, alcohol, drugs, or sex and controlling behavior in other ways, the problem may be depression.

Approximately four percent of the adolescents get seriously depressed each year. Clinical Depression is a serious illness that can affect anybody, including teenagers. It can affect thoughts, feelings, behavior, and overall health.

Most people with depression can be helped with treatment. But a majority of depressed people never gets the help they need. And, when depression isn't treated, it can worsen, last longer, and prevent children from getting the most out of this important time in their life.

Here's how to tell if your child might be depressed. When children are depressed:

- They feel sad and cry a lot and it doesn't go away.
- They feel guilty for no reason; they feel like they're no good; they have lost confidence.
- Life seems meaningless or like nothing good is ever going to happen again.
- They have a negative attitude a lot of the time, or it seems like they have no feelings.
- They don't feel like doing a lot of things they used to do –like music, sports, being with friends, going out, and they want to be left alone most of the time.
- Decisions become difficult. They forget lots of things, and it's hard to concentrate.
- They get irritated often. Little things make them lose their temper; they tend to overreact.
- Their sleep pattern changes; they start sleeping a lot more or they have trouble falling asleep at night. Or they wake up really early most mornings and can't get back to sleep.
- Their eating pattern changes; they lose their appetite or they eat a lot more than usual.
- They feel restless and tired most of the time.
- They think about death, or feel like they are dying, or have thoughts about hurting themselves.

If your child has five or more of the above symptoms for more than two weeks or if any of these symptoms cause such a big change that they can't keep up their usual routine, they should get evaluated by a professional.

If you as a parent are concerned about depression in your child or a friend, talk to someone about it. There are people who can help them get treatment. A professional Psychologist, family doctor, clergy, school counselor or school nurse and a social worker all are qualified to evaluate your child and make treatment recommendations.

Having depression doesn't mean that a person is weak, or a failure, or isn't really trying, it means they need treatment.

For more information, please contact your [Member Assistance Program](#) at 1-888-MAP-6637