

# Depression in adolescence: ins titutional affiliation research paper sample

[Sociology](#), [Bullying](#)



Depression is a medical condition, causing a wide array of physical, as well as psychological symptoms. According to an article entitled “ Depression in Adolescence” published in The Lancet, nearly 8 percent of all adolescents will experience depression before they reach their teens . Nearly 4% of them will remain depressed through their teenage years. Unfortunately, many times this mental illness goes undiagnosed because the symptoms can be difficult to recognize in this age group (2012). Regardless of whether it is diagnosed or not, if untreated, it can become a significant problem in the adolescent’s life.

Though the exact cause of depression is unknown, there are many speculations. Studies published in European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry suggest that bullying is a primary trigger for adolescent depression. In an article entitled “ Involvement in Bullying and Depression in a 2-year Follow-Up in Middle Adolescent”, researchers studied two groups of students as they entered adolescence: one group was not bullied while the other was. They studied their mannerisms and how they interacted with others. They also conducted interviews to assess the student’s feelings and perceptions of themselves . 2 years later the researchers revisited the students in an effort to determine if bullying had any impact on their well-being. Unsurprisingly, the students who had not been bullied had more friends, were more sociable, and were better adjusted. 80% of the students who were bullied in the beginning of the study were still being bullied, were shy, soft-spoken, and uninterested. They did not see themselves as anything special. They did not have many interests; the interests they did have were kept secret. Essentially, the students who had been bullied showed more signs of

depression than the students who had not been bullied .

Researchers also speculated whether depression was a biologic disorder, resulting in a chemical imbalance in the brain. Three chemicals in the brain responsible for good feelings, serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine, allow the cells to communicate . They also help with movement, function, memory, and emotion. It was discovered that when there was an imbalance or insufficiency of these chemicals, the individuals would begin to feel sadder or more depressed. If there was no imbalance, most individuals did not experience depression. Memories and emotions would become amplified and overwhelming, this evidence supported by the research done with SSRIs (2012). Unfortunately, it is typically not safe to give SSRIs or antidepressants to an adolescent because according to an article entitled “ Depression in Childhood and Adolescence” published in Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, their brain is still being formed. SSRI’s are not a viable option because there is no conclusive way to tell how the interaction will affect them when the adolescent is older. Because there is no conclusive evidence on how the interaction will impact them when they are older, there is no conclusive evidence on whether or not it is a chemical imbalance that causes adolescent depression . Again, it is only speculation. Seemingly obvious causes can include the death of a friend or close family member, lose self-esteem, a learning disability, poor parenting, divorce, anxiety disorders, and many other traumatic events

Regardless of what causes depression, it is still a serious matter that can occur due to many risk factors. According to studies published in Comprehensive Psychology, often occurs as a response to a stressful event,

such as bullying or death. Sometimes, however, it can occur for no reason which may leave the adolescent feeling confused, angry, or ashamed. There are certain risk factors that increase the likelihood of an individual becoming depressed. Depression can be a familial trait. Studies show if the adolescent has a parent or sibling that has experienced depression, they are 50% more likely to experience depression (Thapar, Collishaw, Pine, & Thapar 2012). A prior history of depression in the adolescent themselves is also a risk factor. If an adolescent has a learning disability, has been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, an eating disorder, or ADD/ADHD, these are also risk factors (Olino, Klein, Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seeley 2010). As the adolescent nears their teen years, conflicts with parents may begin to increase as the individual seeks independence. This identity crisis can also be a risk factor for depression. Any difficulties making friends, getting along with schoolmates, or understanding classwork can also lead to depression. The studies published in *Comprehensive Psychology* also mention that poor parenting can lead to depression. Poor parenting may give the child a lack of coping skills, rendering them unready for most “real-life” situations. This anxiety can cause depression. The poor homelife created by bad parenting can also cause depression. If an adolescent is diagnosed with a chronic illness that can also make them predisposed for experiencing depression. Most curiously, though all of these risk factors are important, it seems that the greatest deals with which sex you are. “Obesity, Body Dissatisfaction, and Emotional Well-Being in Early and Late Adolescence: Findings from the Project EAT Study”, published in *Journal of Adolescent Health* suggest the greatest risk factor for becoming depressed is being born a female (Mond,

cen den Berg, Boutelle, Hannan & Neumark-Stainzer 2011). The media and society attempt to put a great amount of pressure on females today; adolescents are very susceptible to this pressure. Most do not meet what is considered the “ ideal” standard for beauty. They believe themselves to be ugly and fat (2011). Though this is not the case, obesity, eating disorders, and the pressure to be perfect every hour of the day have created a generation of depressed adolescent young girls, with female adolescents 75% more likely to be depressed than their male peers.

While there is no treatment for an adolescent that is considered quick, as there are with adults, it is important to know when it is time to seek help for their depression. The warning signs may be difficult to see, but they are present. Parents and caregivers who are unsure should always consider whether the teen’s behavior is different from normal behavior, because this is often the first clue. They should also assess the whether or not the change is severe . If an adolescent is bothered or irritated by everyone and everything, that is also another red flag, according to studies published in European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry . Unnecessarily angry or moody outbursts are also something to watch over. A significant sign of depression is if the adolescent withdraws from friends or interactions from people in general or if the adolescent’s grades rapidly decline (2010).

In sum, concerning adolescent depression, there is much to take into account. The exact cause of depression is unknown. Speculation surrounds chemical imbalances in the brain though it is more likely that depression is sparked by traumatic events such as bullying, divorce, or death. The risk factors for depression are numerous. If an adolescent has anxiety, poor

social skills, bad parents, a learning disability, or is a female, they are predisposed to developing depression. Fortunately there are signs to observe. If the adolescent withdraws suddenly, becomes moody for no apparent reason, or drastically changes their behavior, it is time to seek help.

## References

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