



Understanding Depression

Depression is relatively common in children and adolescents, and can look very different than it does in adults. For example, children who are depressed may seem cranky rather than sad, or lose interest in doing activities they once enjoyed. They may show changes in their sleeping or eating habits, say negative

We are all affected by the things we think to ourselves and by the things we do in response to our feelings. If it is raining and you think to yourself, “Oh, no! Now all my plans are ruined!” you might feel pretty bad, and in response you might just get back into bed and sleep all day. If you did

Depression in children and adolescents has many different causes, including biological factors, psychological factors (such as thoughts and feelings), and social factors (such as school and friends). Depression can often result when a child with a “sensitive personality” loses a sense of control and experiences multiple stressors.

“Sensitive personality” means that some children tend to be more easily irritated, upset, or sad than others. They react

things about themselves or others, or expect bad things to happen in the future. Some depressed children seem tired and unmotivated, while others may seem restless. Almost all children can feel bad in these ways sometimes – that’s normal, but it’s a problem when kids get “stuck” feeling sad,

that, you might miss out on lots of chances to feel better. On the other hand, if you thought, “I’m glad it’s raining; now I can stay inside and finish that great book I’ve been reading!” you would probably feel happy, and do something you enjoy. Children who have difficulties with sad or cranky mood are more likely

more strongly to bad situations or to information that seem threatening. A child with a sensitive personality has an increased risk of negative emotions throughout life, which can lead to mood disorders.

Children who have a sensitive personality and who feel they cannot control the things that happen in their lives are more likely to have a negative response to bad experiences. Some children with epilepsy may feel a loss of control

down, or upset. The good news is, there are some effective ways to help children feel better and manage their feelings – so that they don’t get “stuck”.

to have negative thoughts about events in their lives, and also less likely to choose activities that will help them feel better. In this programme, your child will learn ways to improve his or her mood by changing thoughts, changing behaviours, or changing both.

around their seizures, which can happen unpredictably. This sense of things being out of control can be aggravated by situations that limit a child’s opportunities to experience the world, to master challenges, and to get help when necessary. Some parents may feel a need to protect their child, but a child needs to develop a sense that he or she has had some control over bad situations, either by making them go away or by learning skills to cope with them. We might not be able to take bad experiences like

