



Mental Illness

Mental Illness is often referred to by it's suffers as a darkness in such times we remember that "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1: 5)



What is mental illness?

Mental illnesses effect the way people think, feel and some times act. There are lots of different types of mental illnesses but the most common that young people face are Anxiety and Depression.

Anxiety is where a fear of something makes it hard for a person to think about anything else, they might be so scared, they don't even want to get out of bed.

Depression is when someone is always sad, and so sad that they might not eat or eat too much, they may be always sleepy or not be able to get to sleep, they might be always crying or feel like no one loves them or they might think they are not good at anything. Sometimes Depression makes people grumpy or angry and often they can't or don't know how to ask for help.

Facts

- 1 in 10 children between the age of 6 and 12 experience persistent sadness that can last from 2 weeks to months. 2 in 10 become depressed.
- 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime.
- 1 in 20 people suffer from anxiety disorders



Personal Stories

I have a special best friend, and some other friends but when my special best friend is away, I get a sick feeling in my stomach, I know the other girls are nice but with out my best friend it's different and hard to explain, sometimes I hide in the library at lunch time. – Kate (age 12)

My dad never seemed to be happy anymore, he didn't want to play and wrestle like we used to, he was always cranky and tired. We started to fight a lot and it made me really sad. I'd wake up sad, go to school sad, some days I'd have fun at school and then get sad at home, other days I'd get sad at school too. One day I told mum that I was sad and she asked what makes me sad? I told her I was sad cause dad was sad and we never did anything fun anymore. She told me that dad was sick. She said that we needed to tell him we love him lots and make special him and me time, but we also needed to give him quiet time too so that he could get better. I'm glad I talked to mum cause now I know why dad is sad, he's sick and now I can tell when needs quiet time. I tell him that I love him and that when he is feeling a bit better I'll beat him at wrestling and best of all I'm not sad any more either. – James (aged 6)

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Find the below feelings in the word search.

ANXIOUS
SURPRISED
ANGRY
HAPPY
CHANGE
CONFUSING

FRIENDS
UNCERTAIN
POSITIVE
TALK
HELP
FAMILY

LISTEN
LONELY
SUPPORT
LOVE
SAD





★ Story of Good Works

The St Vincent de Paul Society has 2 programs that help adults suffering with mental illnesses one called Compeer and the other is the Mate Helping Mate program.

Compeer means an equal, a companion and a friend. It is based on the Power of Friendship,

People suffering from a mental illness are paired together with a volunteer who becomes their friend, similar to your school's buddy system.

Mate Helping Mate, is an arranged meeting where people from farms can get together and talk about the difficulties and stresses that they face how they feel and where to get help.



★ What causes mental illness?

Mental illness is different to other illnesses. If you have chicken pocks it's easy to see because of the rash and the itching. You can usually work out where you got it from, the Dr can give you some cream and after a few weeks the itching stops.

With mental illness the signs can be confusing, you really catch it off some-one and you can't always take medicine to make it go away.

Nearly everyone is afraid of something, and being afraid of something can make it hard for people to be happy,

and they might be really sad. It's alright to be scared of some things, as we grow up we often realize that we don't have to be scared of them anymore. And some times people get sad about other things as well, like school, friends, or what's happening at home.

It's okay to be sad, worried or scared about things but it can be a problem if you or your friend is sad, worried or scared more than they are happy or if you don't want to do the things that you used to like doing or if you start to act differently like getting into fights or not talking to your friends.



★ What can I do to help?

- **Look for the signs**- In yourself and others
 - Sad for a really long time
 - Always anxious, nervous or angry
 - Having trouble sleeping or concentrating
 - Or just feeling things aren't right and not knowing why.
- **Listen** – Listen to your friends if they are worried about you or your friend if they are trying to tell you about the things they are scared or sad about.
- **Talk** – Talk to your Friends, Family or a Trusted Adult.
- **Seek Help Together**

For more information go to:
Kids Help Line www.kidshelpline.com.au
Lifeline Australia www.lifeline.com.au 13 11 14
Youth Beyond Blue www.youthbeyondblue.com
Headroom www.headroom.net.au

