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Welcome to today's Infopeople Webinar!

Why We Are Here Today

"Unfortunately we live in a world where when you break your arm, everyone runs over to sign your cast. But if you tell people you’re depressed, everyone runs the other way. That’s the stigma. We are so so so accepting of any body part breaking down, other than our brains."

Kevin Breel: Confessions of a Depressed Comic at TEDxKids@Ambleside
Teen Mental Illness 101

Without Intervention (and Professional Help when appropriate), Teens May Turn to.....

- Self-injury
- Truancy
- Alcohol or other substances
- Extreme rebelliousness
- Risk taking behaviors
- Promiscuity
- Suicide

Adult Vs. Teen Brain

- Most of the activity in the adult brain is in the frontal lobe
- Thinking, reasoning, planning

- Most of the activity in the teen brain is focused in the center
- Pleasure reward center
“Normal” teen behavior

- Moodiness
- Less affection and attention with parents
- Increased desire for autonomy
- Self-involved
- Testing limits
- Exploring identity
- Experimentation with drugs/alcohol/sexual behavior
- Peer conflicts

“Red flags” or “cries for help”

- Suicidal/homicidal ideation
- Self-injury
- Frequent angry outbursts and excessive aggression
- Change in behavior/attitude/appearance/school performance
- Lots of somatic complaints
- Hopeless, worthless comments
A lot of people think depression is just feeling sad all the time and dressing in black, and for some it may be. But for me, depression is feeling nothing. It's crying at 3 am for no reason... It's losing any interest you once had for something. I'm not sad all the time. I just feel nothing and sometimes I think that's worse.

15 year old girl
Types of Anxiety Disorders

- **Specific Phobia**: Fear of a specific situation or object.
- **Social Phobia**: Fear of social or performance situations.
- **Agoraphobia**: Fear of open spaces or places where escape might be difficult.
- **Panic Disorder**: Sudden attacks of intense fear or anxiety.
- **Phobia**: Fear of a specific object or situation.
- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder**: Excessive worry or anxiety about various aspects of daily life.
Teen Mental Illness 101

MANIA
- Inflated self-esteem or grandiosity
- Decreased need for sleep
- Distractibility
- Flight of ideas
- Grandiosity
- Agitation
- Excessive involvement in business ventures

Fact: 25% of those diagnosed with bipolar disorder are under 18.

DEPRESSION
- Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, such as teary eyes, empty, hopeless, or slowed
- Can appear as a shift in mood
- Worked-off interest or feeling depressed
- Significant weight loss or gain or change in appetite
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Fatigue

Characteristics of Eating Disorders

BULIMIA NERVOSA
- Fear of gaining weight
- Obsession with shape or weight
- Use of laxatives
- Bulimia

ANOREXIA NERVOSA
- Obsession with overeating
- Pathological weight loss
- Bulimia

Nervous eating disorders are often associated with adolescence or early adulthood.

50% of teenage girls think they're FAT.
**What is self-injury?**

- Teens self-injure as a way to COPE with intense emotional pain, anger or frustration.
- Teens who self injure are often NOT suicidal.
- Intense SHAME exists around self-injurious behaviors.

**What is Schizophrenia**

Schizophrenia is a serious chronic brain disorder. There is no single symptom that defines schizophrenia. Usually patients have “positive” symptoms including:

- Delusions
- Hallucinations
- Disorganized speech
- Disorganized behavior or “negative symptoms”

There is marked impairment in:

- Self-care
- Work
- Interpersonal relationships as a consequence of the disease.

[www.gmeded.com](http://www.gmeded.com)

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**Common Teen Reactions and Replies**

- "I can handle this by myself" You are incredibly strong, but this seems like more than one person can handle.
- "I'm not crazy" No, you're not, but you seem to be struggling right now. I want to help you feel better.
- "I feel fine," "nothing’s wrong" I have noticed changes in you (give concrete examples) and I am concerned.
- "I don't want to talk about this" I understand this is uncomfortable. It must be hard to talk about. I want to make sure you're safe, and get you the help you deserve.
How Can You Help a Struggling Teen?

- Know the signs!
- Don’t be afraid to use words like depression or suicide.
- Take words like “crazy” and “mental” out of our vocabulary
- Be a listening ear and/or role model
- Correct misperceptions
- Educate yourself and others around you!
- Listen
- Empathy

What if you think they may be suicidal?

**Ask**  
Are you thinking of killing yourself?  
**NOT**

“Are you thinking of hurting yourself?” (too vague) or “You’re not thinking of killing yourself, are you?” (sounds judgmental)
Teen Mental Illness 101

What if they say YES?

**ASSESS!!!**
- Do you have a plan?
  - Is it a realistic plan?
- Do you have a specific time frame?
- Have you attempted before?
- If they answer YES to these questions, call 911 or the PET team.
- If they answer NO to these questions, this still needs to be taken seriously, and professional help should be obtained ASAP.

Types of Help Available

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Behavioral Therapy
- Medication
- Hospitalization
- Wilderness Programs or Intensive Inpatient Therapy
- 12 step meetings
- Apps/hotlines

How Do We Advocate for Teens Suffering from Mental Illness

- Educate ourselves and others
- Dispel myths and assumptions
- Provide resources and support
- Encourage mental health conversations
- Support organizations like NAMI that advocate for decreasing stigma
Teen Mental Illness 101

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw

BRENE BROWN EMPATHY

Sometimes we need someone to simply be there. Not to fix anything, or to do anything in particular, but just to let us feel that we are cared for and supported.

Unknown
Follow-Up Questions?

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Cheryl Eskin, Teen Line
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!