

Red Ladder Optimized Learning

Red Ladder Optimized Learning is a private practice psychology service. Fees for our services are covered by most extended health plans. As well, psychological fees may be deductible as a medical expense with Revenue Canada.

We will be glad to discuss this with you.

For more information or to contact us, visit our website at www.redladder.ca, phone us at (204) 88-LEARN (885.3276) or fax us at (204) 489.1748.



633-1445 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 3P4

ph: 204.88.LEARN (885.3276)
fx: 204.489.1748
email: info@redladder.ca
website: www.redladder.ca

DEPRESSION AND LEARNING

One step at a time.



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(204) 88.LEARN or redladder.ca

DEPRESSION AND LEARNING

Depression is the most common mood disorder, and affects people of all ages. In general, a person with depression feels sad or blue most of the day, nearly every day, or feels a loss of pleasure or interest in daily activities which used to be enjoyable. However, instead of presenting as sad, children are often irritable and angry when they are depressed. Other symptoms of depression include significant weight change (or failure to gain appropriate weight in children), and sleep disturbances (insomnia, trouble staying asleep, sleeping too much). Psychomotor changes, fatigue and loss of energy are common in depression, as are feelings of worthlessness or guilt, and thoughts of death, with or without plans for suicide.

People who are depressed typically see negative events as resulting from their inadequacy, even when this cannot be the case. People with a depressive outlook may be perfectionists in school or elsewhere, and very sensitive to criticism. Not being invited to play with a peer may be viewed by a child with depression as proof that he or she is not likable nor attractive.

In contrast, a person with depression may unreasonably view positive events as accidents. For example, if a depressed child receives a good grade on a test, he or she might assume that the test was easy or the teacher marked too generously, rather than attribute it to hard work or ability. Children who are depressed may experience more victimization at school than other children.

Depression and Learning

Depression can interfere with learning or working because it results in decreased concentration and reduced attention. When depression affects sleep, a sufferer can feel exhausted during the day. Processes that have become automatic start to take more time for those who are depressed, as a person has to think more consciously through problem-solving steps. The demoralization that goes along with depression can represent a major problem in learning, causing some individuals to give up completely.

Identifying Depression

It is common for parents not to realize that their child or teen is depressed. Parents may notice that their child is not as happy or as easy-going as usual, but may not consider depression. It makes sense to ask a medical doctor or psychologist about depression if a child shows the kinds of signs listed earlier in this brochure, if there is a significant decline in a child's marks in school or success in an extracurricular activity, less interest in seeing friends or going out, or certainly if the child or teen expresses feelings of wanting to run away or die.

Evaluation of Depression

Evaluation of depression can be performed by your doctor, or by a psychologist or psychiatrist. Depending upon the age of the person with depression and their current life circumstances, evaluation may involve interviews with the person suffering, as well as with parents, teachers, and others. Psychological testing may help to clarify the nature of the problem and for developing a treatment plan.

Intervention for Depression

Depression is treatable. Counselling, skills training, family therapy, lifestyle changes, as well as medication are possibilities.

Want to Know more?

If you would like to know more about depression and learning, feel free to call Red Ladder Optimized Learning, or speak to your child's resource teacher, guidance counsellor or with your doctor.

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