Depression

by Claire Legg and Brooke Edwards

Depression is a mental health condition that can happen to anyone at anytime. Depression can happen anywhere such as the playground, workplace or even at home. Depression can make someone feel suicidal, unwell and even feel unsatisfied with themselves.

- **Statistics:** One in 16 young Australians is currently experiencing depression
  Breakdown: 6.3% of Australians aged 16 to 24 have experienced an affective disorder in the last 12 months. This is equivalent to 180,000 young people today.
- **One in six young Australians is currently experiencing an anxiety condition**
  Breakdown: 15.4% of Australians aged 16 to 24 have experienced an anxiety disorder in the last 12 months. This is equivalent to 440,000 young people today.
- **One in four young Australians currently has a mental health condition**
  Breakdown: 26.4% of Australians aged 16 to 24 currently have experienced a mental health disorder in the last 12 months. This figure includes young people with a substance use disorder. This is equivalent to 750,000 young people today.
- **Suicide is the biggest killer of young Australians and accounts for the deaths of more young people than car accidents**
  Breakdown: 324 Australians (10.5 per 100,000) aged 15-24 dying by suicide in 2012. This compares to 198 (6.4 per 100,000) who died in car accidents (the second highest killer).
- **Evidence suggests three in four adult mental health conditions emerge by age 24 and half by age 14**
  Breakdown: Half of all lifetime cases of mental health disorders start by age 14 years and three fourths by age 24 years.
- **Young people are most concerned about coping with stress, school or study problems and body image in that order**
  Breakdown: The top issues of concern to young people in 2013 were, in order, coping with stress, school or study problems, body image, depression and family conflict.
- **Concern about mental health among young people is growing**
  Breakdown: 15.2% identified mental health as a major issue facing Australia in 2013, up from 12.7% in 2012 and 10.7% in 2011.
- **Young people see mental health as a more important issue than things such as the environment, bullying, education and employment**
Breakdown: In 2013, young people saw mental health as a more important issue than things such as the environment, bullying, education and employment.

- **A quarter of young Australians say they are unhappy with their lives**

Breakdown: In 2013, almost one in four young people (24.3%) said they were sad, very sad or not happy when asked to report how happy they were with their life as a whole

**Signs and symptoms:** Some signs and symptoms of depression is:

**Behaviour**
- not going out anymore
- not getting things done at work/school
- withdrawing from close family and friends
- relying on alcohol and sedatives
- not doing usual enjoyable activities
- unable to concentrate

**Feelings**
- overwhelmed
- guilty
- irritable
- frustrated
- lacking in confidence
- unhappy
- indecisive
- disappointed
- miserable
- sad

**Thoughts**
- 'I’m a failure.'
- 'It’s my fault.'
- 'Nothing good ever happens to me.'
- 'I’m worthless.'
- 'Life’s not worth living.'
- 'People would be better off without me.'

**Physical**
- tired all the time
- sick and run down
- headaches and muscle pains
- churning gut
- sleep problems
- loss or change of appetite
- significant weight loss or gain

**Short and long term effects:**

**Short term:**

- In the short-term, depression is likely to cause loss of appetite, weight loss, and other physical symptoms. If you develop insomnia or hypersomnia (sleeping too much), you will be fatigued and lethargic

**Long term:**

In the long term, you can experience malnutrition from not eating enough or become obese from eating too much. You can also experience a drop in short-term memory, finding it easier to forget things. Long-term depression can also lead to suicide; EverydayHealth states that over 66 percent of suicides have depression as a factor.
“Robin williams wore a smile that no one could see past”.

“What is depression like?” he whispered.

“It’s like drowning.
Except you can see everyone around you breathing.”