



Depression and Bipolar Wellness Guides for Parents and Teens

Setting
Healthcare Providers, Families

Type of Program
Awareness

NSSP Goals Addressed
7.6, 7.8

Program Description

This fact sheet describes two wellness guides: one for parents, and one for teens. Families for Depression Awareness developed these guides to help parents and their teen children better understand and monitor treatment for depression and bipolar disorder.

The *Depression and Bipolar Wellness Guide for Parents of Children and Teens with Depression or Bipolar Disorder* is intended for use by parents of children or teens diagnosed with major depression, dysthymia, or bipolar disorder. This guide addresses mood disorders, treatment, monitoring of treatment, working together as a family, and a three-step wellness approach. The guide also includes descriptions of worsening signs such as suicidal thoughts, and includes a diary for tracking mood, medications, and other aspects of treatment, which can be reviewed with a therapist or doctor. The *Depression and Bipolar Wellness Guide for Teens with Depression or Bipolar Disorder* is intended for use by teens diagnosed with major depression, dysthymia, or bipolar disorder. This guide addresses practical questions that teens often have regarding these disorders and their treatment, including: "How can treatment help?" "How are these disorders treated?" "What if I don't want to talk to my parents or doctors about this?" and "What if I feel worse?" Recommendations for enhancing treatment effectiveness, including a three-step wellness approach, are also included.

Program Objectives

After using one of the guides, parents and teens should:

1. Have increased understanding of depression, bipolar disorder and their treatment.
2. Have increased knowledge of a three-step wellness approach that may increase treatment adherence and effectiveness.
3. Have increased awareness of suicidal behavior, including symptoms and preventive interventions, as they relate to young people diagnosed with depression or bipolar disorder.

Implementation Essentials

- The parent and teen *Guides* are intended for use by those already in treatment.
- Parents and their children should use these guides together, in collaboration with their therapist or doctor.

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Costs

The *Guides* are available for free. They can be downloaded from the Families for Depression Awareness website at www.familyaware.org.

*The content of practices listed in Section III (Adherence to Standards) of the SPRC/AFSP Best Practices Registry address specific goals of the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* and have been reviewed by a panel of three suicide prevention experts and found to meet standards of accuracy, safety, and programmatic guidelines. Practices were not reviewed for evidence of effectiveness. Additional information about the Best Practices Registry can be found at www.sprc.org.

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