An estimated 14.3% of adolescents had any mood disorder, and an estimated 11.2% had severe impairment.

Adolescent emotional health and wellness matters.

As children and adolescents develop, their emotional wellness is greatly vulnerable to trauma and stress, making feelings of sadness or depression more intense and long-lasting.

Your child or teen could be suffering from a mood disorder.
**What is youth mood disorder?**

Youth mood disorders are characterized by a serious change in mood that causes disruption to life activities in children and adolescence. Typically defined by episodes of Mania, Depression or a combination resulting in Bipolar Disorder.

**Chemical Imbalance in the Brain**

Mood disorders may be caused by the imbalance of neurotransmitters, chemical signals, in the brain that affect mood. This imbalance can be triggered by environmental factors such as chronic stress and traumatic life events.

**What are the causes of youth mood disorder?**

The causes of mood disorders in adolescents is not well known, but are believed to be influenced by many factors.

**Mood disorders in adolescents puts them at risk for other conditions, that can also persist even after initial depressive episodes are resolved**

**Family History**

Mood disorders can run in families and be considered multifactorially inherited meaning that many factors are involved. This includes the combination of genetic traits from both parents where a mood disorder trait can be inherited from mother to daughter or father to son.

**Anxiety**  **Stress**  **Trauma**
What are the signs & symptoms of youth mood disorder?

**Emotional Symptoms**
- Persistent feelings of sadness
- Feeling Hopeless or Helpless
- Low Self-Esteem or Inadequacy
- Loss of Interest in usual enjoyed activities
- Running Away from home, or threatening to do so
- Difficulty with Relationships
- Hypersensitivity to Failure/Rejection
- Suicidal Thoughts or Ideation

**Physical Symptoms**
- Decreased Energy and Fatigue
- Difficulty Concentrating or Holding Focus
- Frequent Physical Complaints (Headache, Stomachache etc.)
- Physical and Verbal Aggression or Hostility
- Self-Harm or Attempted Suicide
- Extreme Changes in Sleep Patterns
- Changes in Appetite or Weight

What are the treatment options for mood disorders?

**Medications**
Antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications are commonly prescribed to individuals coping with mood disorders to alleviate emotional distress. Most mental health professionals recommend them in combination with psychotherapy.

**Psychotherapy**
Psychotherapy, or talk therapy, is focused on changing thought patterns and behaviors. Cognitive behavioral therapy is often considered the benchmark therapy treatment for individuals living with mood disorders. It has been found to have significant positive treatment effects.

MHA Georgia's Six Tips and Tricks to Mental Health Wellness!

1. **Know Your Triggers and Early Warning Signs of a Manic or Depressive Episode**
2. **Create Your Emergency Action Plan with Contacts, Medications and Preferred Treatment Plan**
3. **Don't Isolate! Join a Support Group or Build New Relationships for Face to Face Connection**
4. **Develop an Active Daily Routine with Healthy Lifestyle Choices**
5. **Keep Stress to a Minimum by using Relaxation Techniques and making Leisure Time a Priority**
6. **Watch what you put in your body by avoiding harmful substances and eating right!**
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For Immediate Access to Routine or Crisis Services
Georgia Crisis & Access Line
1-800-715-4225
mygcal.com

This information was provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. For additional information, please visit www.nimh.gov