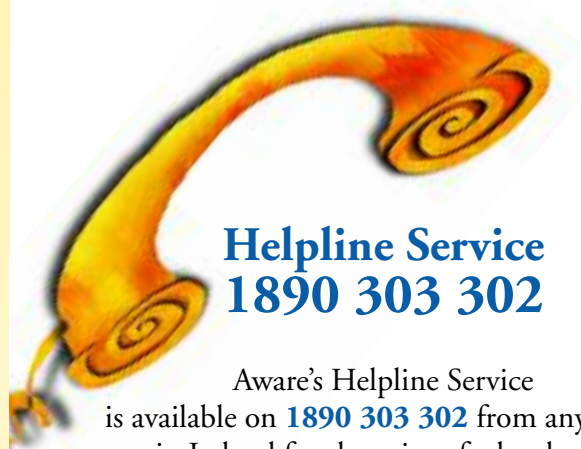


## Signs that may be associated with Depression in Adolescents

- Frequent absences from school
- Poor performance in school
- Feeling low
- Talk of, or efforts to, run away from home
- Increased irritability, anger or hostility
- Outbursts of shouting or complaining, unexplained irritability or crying
- Frequent vague physical complaints: headache, muscle or stomach ache
- Tiredness, lack of energy
- Sleep disturbance
- Being bored
- Lack of interest in friends or hobbies
- Difficulty with relationships
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Social isolation
- Poor concentration, slowed thinking
- Reckless behaviour
- Thoughts of suicide or preoccupation with death

Depression is an illness, which affects a person's mood, thinking and behaviour, and also manifests itself in a physical way. When a young person is depressed, some of the above signs may be persistent, and when present for two weeks or more, may indicate that they are depressed and need help.

Crucially, it is through actively listening to young people that we gain an insight into their thoughts and can offer appropriate support.



### Helpline Service 1890 303 302

Aware's Helpline Service is available on **1890 303 302** from anywhere in Ireland for the price of a local call. This provides a listening ear for people in distress, and helps people with depression and their families explore solutions to their difficulties.

#### Contact Aware at:

**Aware Defeat Depression**  
72 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2  
**Tel:** 016617211  
**Fax:** 016617217  
**Helpline:** 1890 303 302  
**Email:** [info@aware.ie](mailto:info@aware.ie)  
**Website:** [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie)



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TEACHERS EDITION

# Beat the Blues

*information*

*facts*

*help*



## DO STUDENTS GET DEPRESSED?

### The simple answer is YES.

We all feel depressed from time to time - feeling down in the dumps, moody, irritable and not easy to live with. These feelings may last for a few hours or days, and may be as a result of some loss or disappointment in life, or may occur for no apparent reason.

However, apart from these normal depressions that we all get and can cope with, some people experience abnormal depression. The difference here is that these are deeper and more intense than normal depression, and they render the person unable to cope.

This type of depression is a recognised illness that requires treatment.

- Approximately 320,000 Irish people currently suffer with depression.
- 10% of adolescents aged between 13-19 years also experience depression

## ABOUT AWARE

Aware is a voluntary organisation, founded in 1985, which aims to help those affected by depression.

It does this by providing support to those with experience of depression through support groups and a telephone helpline. It also provides factual information about the illness, and fosters an increased public awareness about the nature, extent and consequences of mood disorders, and funds research into its causes and treatment.



## BEAT the BLUES

Aware's *Beat the Blues* programme arises from its core objective of raising awareness of depression and providing factual information about the illness.

It is primarily targeted at Transition Year and Senior students. It is delivered in the school, and is of approximately 75 minutes duration.

**It aims to:** Educate young people about depression and mood disorder, the treatments available, and to nurture a more positive attitude to dealing with the illness.

### The Programme itself:

- is interactive, encouraging questions, amid an open and positive approach to depression.
- emphasises that depression is not a character flaw but a biological illness.
- seeks to heighten students sensitivity to recognising depression in themselves or others.
- informs them of available treatments.
- underlines the importance of seeking help early, by talking to an adult they trust, and of getting appropriate medical help.

Following the presentation the students are given a bookmark outlining the main symptoms of depression, and listing Aware's helpline number and website address.

## GUIDELINES for SCHOOLS

We feel it is beneficial, either prior or subsequent to the students' presentation, for the school to host **an information session for teachers/parents**. Aware is happy to provide this as a part of the overall programme.

In order for students to obtain maximum benefit from the programme, we recommend it be presented to **groups of not more than 35 students**. The optimum length of time for the presentation is usually two class periods, **approximately 70-80 minutes**.

It is essential for at least one **teacher to be present** for each presentation and desirable that they remain for its entirety. This facilitates a follow up contact for students after the presentation when Aware representatives have left the school. We consider this to be a very important resource.

**The cost** of the programme is €120 per school.