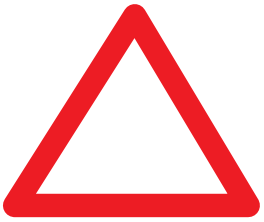
A parent's guide to DEPRESSION

Feelings of hopelessness and pessimism



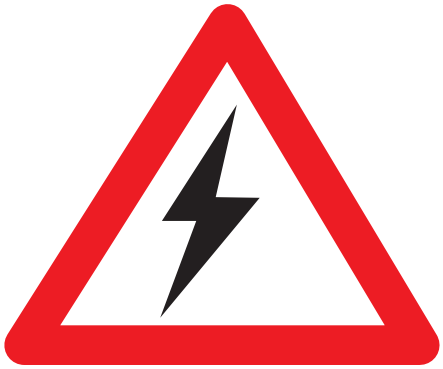
Feelings of worthlessness guilt, and helplessness

Irregular sleep

Decreased energy

Tearfulness

Persistent, sad, anxious or empty mood



Restlessness

Insomnia

Changes in mood

Difficulty making decisions

Thoughts of death or suicide

Appetite and weight loss

THE WARNING SIGNS.

These warning signs are recognised by mental health professionals as being the common signs and symptoms of depression.

Some of these signs may be also part of normal adolescent moody and difficult behaviour. Look out in particular for any CHANGES in behaviour, and keep a note of these.

1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 - 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder, but early diagnosis and support can help for a lifetime.

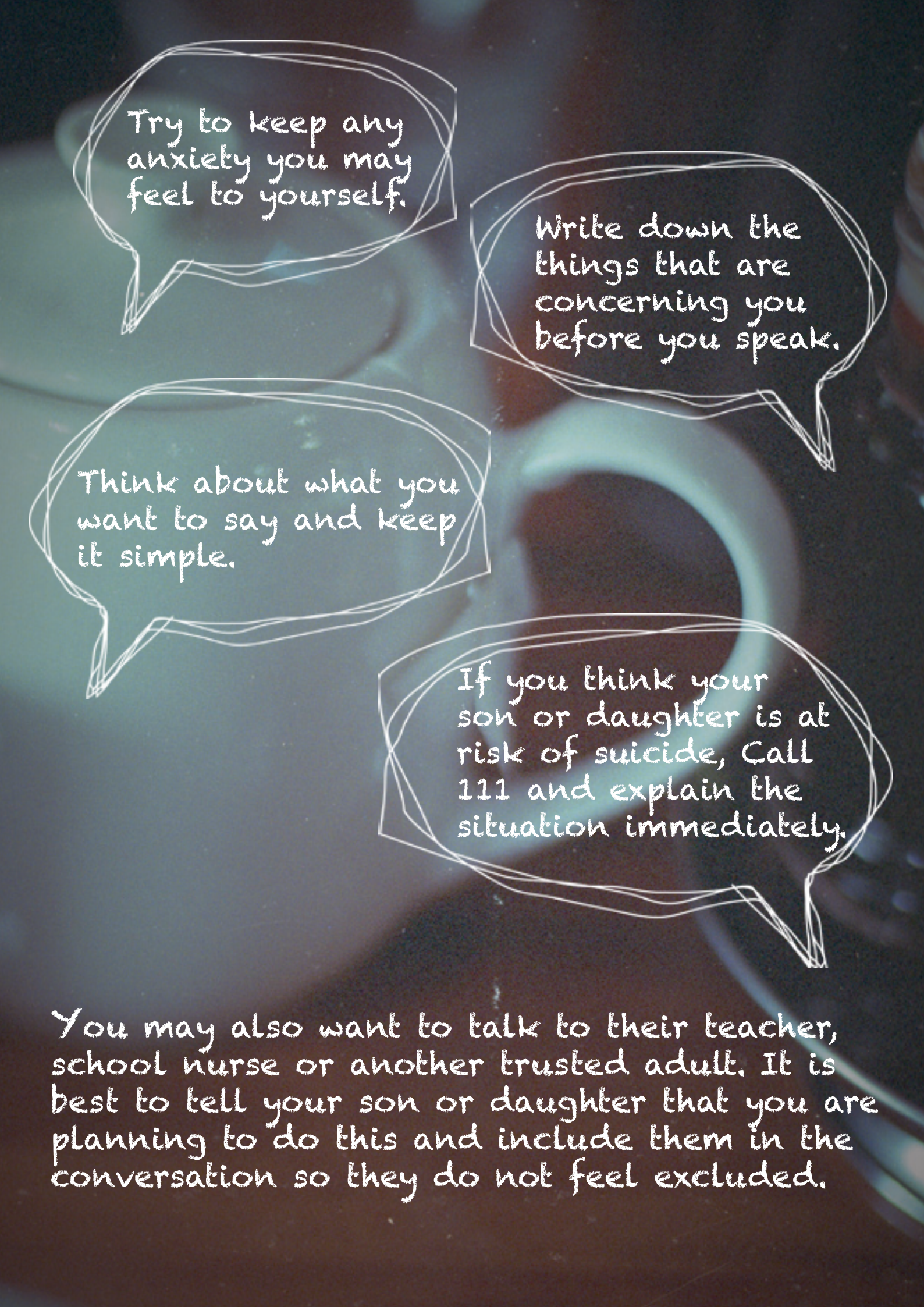
TIME FOR A CHAT

If you are worried, you will want to talk to your son or daughter. But asking them how they feel can be very difficult and may need some planning. You may be worried that your son or daughter is thinking of harming themselves or is feeling suicidal. It is better to ask about this than ignore it.

Choose statements that are facts and not judgements.

Try to ask 'open questions' which allow them to say how they are feeling.

Be calm and supportive and allow plenty of time.



You may also want to talk to their teacher, school nurse or another trusted adult. It is best to tell your son or daughter that you are planning to do this and include them in the conversation so they do not feel excluded.

After talking with your son or daughter, your GP is the main place to raise your concerns, to diagnose the problem and offer talking therapies, support and advice.

What will your GP ask you?

Any triggers to the depression.

How long it's been going on and how severe it seems.

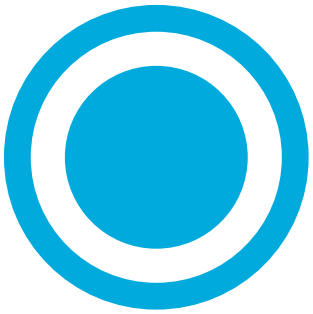
Whether there are any self-harm or suicidal thoughts.

How is home, school, social life, any bullying or abuse?

Any changes in self-care, eating, sleeping, exercise, drug or alcohol usage.

Is there a family history of depression?

Are there any new risky behaviours or impulsive acts.



Pharmacy Stamp

Age

D.o.B

Title, Forename, Surname & Address

Information and Self Help materials

Please don't stamp over age box

Number of days' treatment
N.B. Ensure dose is stated

Endorsements

What should the doctors recommend?

* * * * * *

Signature of Prescriber

Date

For dispenser No. of Prescns. on form

NHS

FP10SS

2942423

Your GP may recommend "watchful waiting" and arrange a two week follow-up appointment.

The next step will be a referral to a psychological service for "talking therapy", mainly CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy).

If your son or daughter is under 16, they will be referred to the local CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

If your son or daughter is over 18, they will usually be referred to adult services.

If there is a long wait for local services, your GP should keep in touch.

If depression is severe your GP may prescribe medication alongside therapy.

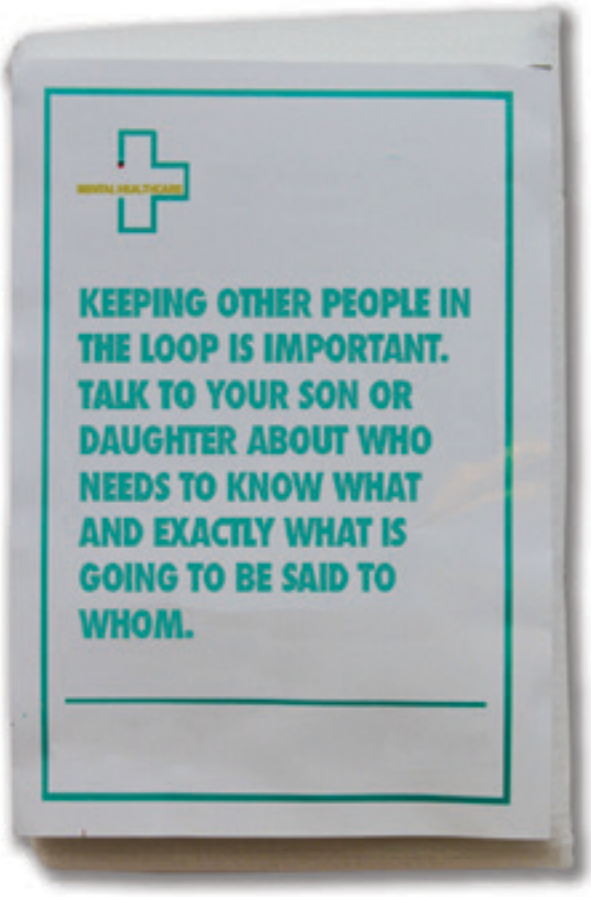
You may choose to find your own private therapist. Make sure they are registered and accredited by a professional body such as the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Therapies (BABCP).

Your son or daughter may be able to visit a school or university counsellor.

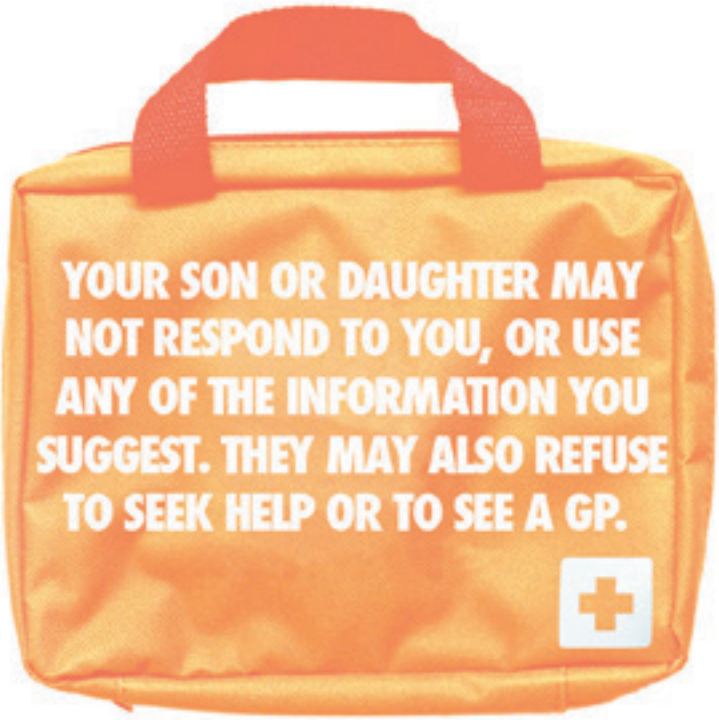
Local voluntary groups also sometimes offer counselling.

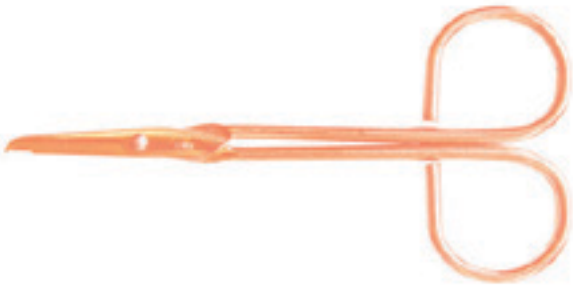
PATIENTS – please read the notes overleaf

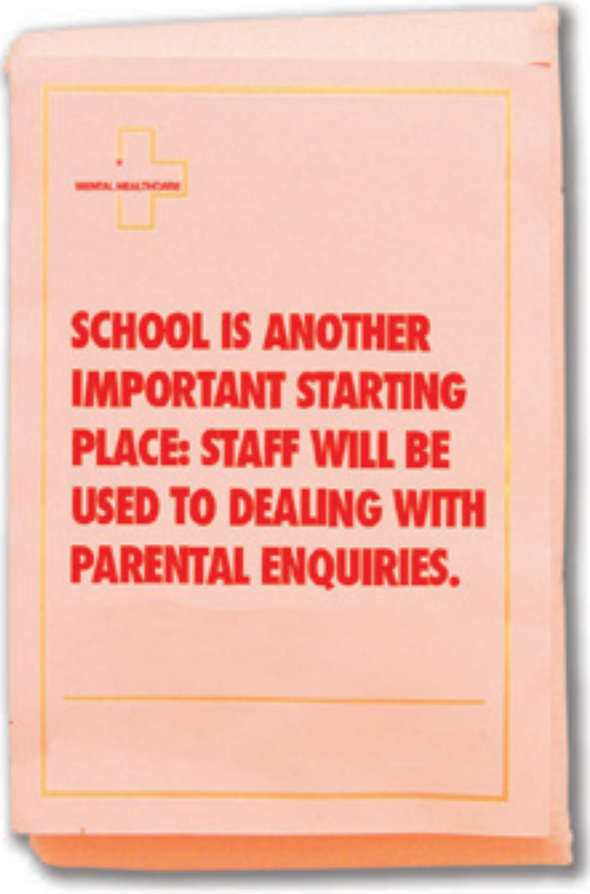
WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP



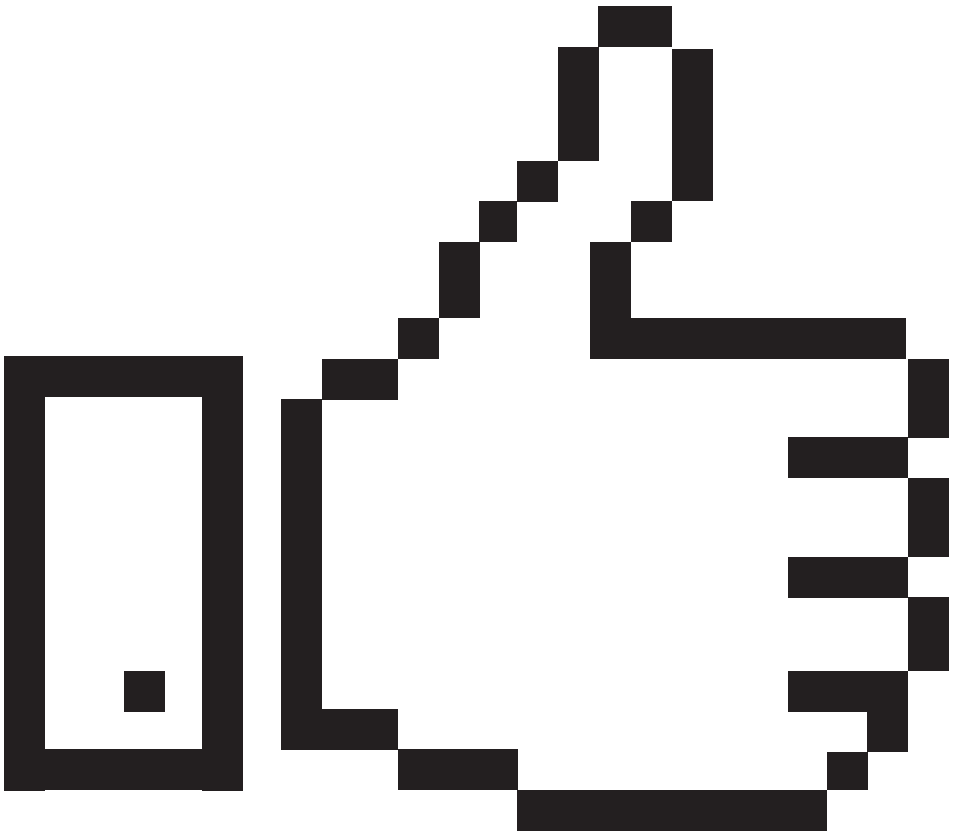
IF YOUR CHILD REFUSES HELP







Search for help



There is an extended version of this Guide at
www.cwmt.org.uk/category/parents-guide/

Visit us online for more information, advice and links.

www.cwmt.org.uk

To read more about how depression can appear in young people see this website:

www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents

Samaritans have help on dealing with difficult conversations.

www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/what-speak-us-about/if-you're-worried-about-someone/how-start-difficult

The charity Papyrus has useful information about talking about suicide on its website

www.papyrus-uk.org/support/for-parents
"HOPEline" 0800 068 4141 (which anyone can call)

Students against depression is a clinically based website, it includes information on depression and workbooks to help young people to take action and stories by others about what has helped.

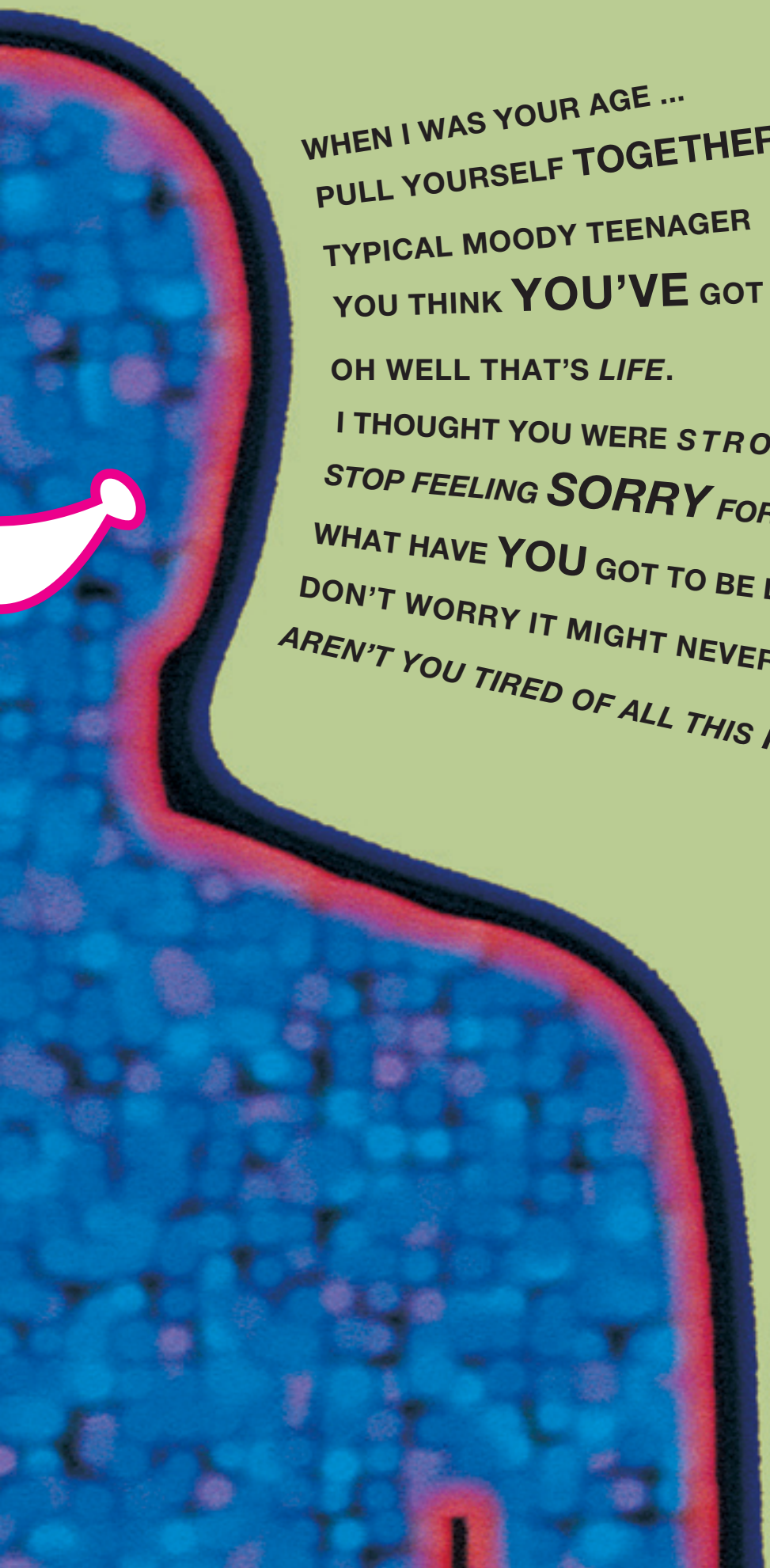
www.studentsagainstdepression.org

Student minds have information for students on support groups, events, training and resources.

www.studentminds.org.uk

cheer up!

and other things a parent should NOT say to their depressed child.


WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE ...
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
TYPICAL MOODY TEENAGER
YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS.
OH WELL THAT'S LIFE.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE STRONGER THAN THAT.
STOP FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF.
WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO BE DEPRESSED ABOUT?
DON'T WORRY IT MIGHT NEVER HAPPEN.
AREN'T YOU TIRED OF ALL THIS ME ME ME STUFF?

This leaflet contains web addresses that have useful information about depression.

We are grateful to the organisations that have provided access to their information.

The information has been reviewed by:
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Professor Roz Shafran and Pamela Myles of
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Advice based on questions asked of us,
not a definitive guide.

Endorsed by:

SAMARITANS YOUNGMINDS PAPYRUS prevention of young suicide student minds

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Raising awareness fighting depression

REMEMBER, LIKE OTHER ILLNESSES, DEPRESSION CAN BE TREATED.
WITH TIME AND SUPPORT MOST PEOPLE MAKE A COMPLETELY FULL RECOVERY.