

Depression in children

CASE STUDY

PREVIEW

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Jenny is a 14 year old teenager who has gradually become withdrawn over the past 2 months, no longer participating in the activities she used to enjoy. Her friends have noticed Jenny's persistently low mood and that she has been missing school on a regular basis. Her teachers have noticed her frequent absence from school, scruffy presentation and lack of concentration; worried about Jenny they have alerted her mother. These features have been present on most days during the 2 month period, progressively becoming worse. Her mother had initially thought Jenny was staying up late and studying due to increased demands from school and exam preparation, unaware that Jenny was persistently exhausted and had stopped socialising with her friends.

What are the core symptoms of depression?

Core symptoms of depression are a persistently low mood, loss of interest in normal activities, and feeling deflated with little or no energy. These negative feelings and thoughts interfere with daily life becoming an illness. The presence of a single core symptom for more than 2 weeks warrants investigation for any associated symptoms of depression.



The **BNF for Children depression treatment summary** contains further information

Which symptoms has Jenny shown that indicate possible depression?

Jenny has shown all three core symptoms for a significant period of time.

