



PARENT OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR DEPRESSION

Parents often notice mood or behavior changes but may wonder whether those changes are typical developmental phases or signs of emotional distress. This checklist is designed to help caregivers observe patterns that may indicate a child or teen could benefit from additional emotional support.

This checklist is **not a diagnostic tool**, but it can help families decide when it may be helpful to seek guidance from a mental health professional.

✓ Parent Observation Checklist

Instructions Section

- ✓ Review behaviors over the past 4–6 weeks
- ✓ Mark items you have noticed occurring frequently or increasing
- ✓ Look for patterns across emotional, behavioral, and physical areas

Emotional Warning Signs

- Frequent irritability or anger
- Persistent sadness or tearfulness
- Appears emotionally numb or withdrawn
- Increased sensitivity to rejection or criticism
- Expresses feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Talks about feeling like a burden

Behavioral Changes

- Loss of interest in hobbies or favorite activities
- Avoids friends or family interaction
- Increased isolation or excessive screen time
- Declining academic performance
- School refusal or increased complaints about attending school
- Increased defiance, aggression, or emotional outbursts

Physical and Health Changes

- Sleeping significantly more or less than usual
- Noticeable appetite or weight changes
- Frequent headaches or stomachaches without medical cause
- Ongoing fatigue or low energy

Teen-Specific Concerns

- Increased risk-taking behaviors
- Sudden changes in friend groups
- Secretive or withdrawn behavior
- Expressions of hopelessness about the future
- Self-harm behaviors or statements about wanting to disappear

Early Childhood / Elementary Specific Concerns

- Increased clinginess or separation anxiety
- Loss of interest in play
- Emotional regression (bedwetting, tantrums, developmental setbacks)
- Increased meltdowns or mood swings

*** When to Seek Professional Support**

Consider reaching out to a therapist if:

- ✓ Symptoms last longer than several weeks
- ✓ Changes interfere with school, relationships, or daily functioning
- ✓ Your child seems overwhelmed or unable to cope
- ✓ Home support strategies are not improving symptoms

! Immediate Safety Concerns

Seek urgent help if your child or teen:

- ✓ Talks about suicide or wanting to die
- ✓ Engages in self-harm
- ✓ Shows sudden extreme personality or behavioral changes

Emergency Resources:

- ☎ Call or text **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**
- ☎ Call 911 or visit your nearest emergency room

💬 How Therapy Can Help

Counseling can help children and families:

- ✓ Build emotional coping skills
- ✓ Improve communication and family connection
- ✓ Process trauma or overwhelming experiences
- ✓ Strengthen resilience and confidence

📍 About Transform & Renew Counseling

We provide counseling for children, teens, adults, and families across Texas through in-person and telehealth sessions. Located in San Antonio Texas, we have two convenient office locations. Our therapists use evidence-based approaches including:

- ✓ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- ✓ Play Therapy

- ✓ Trauma-Focused CBT (TF-CBT)
- ✓ EMDR Therapy
- ✓ Parent and Family Support

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Give us a call to get started with treatment today.

