



FACTS AND FABLES

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE?

	True	False
1. Only adults can get truly depressed.		
2. Depression is a weakness.		
3. Depression is mostly a white, middle class problem.		
4. People who are depressed always feel sad.		
5. People who talk about suicide don't kill themselves.		
6. There's really nothing you can do to help someone who's truly suicidal.		
7. Discussing suicide may cause someone to consider it or make things worse.		
8. Telling someone to cheer up usually helps.		
9. It's best to keep someone's suicidal feelings a secret.		
10. If someone promises to seek help, your job is done.		





ANSWERS TO FACTS AND FABLES WORKSHEET

1. Only adults can get truly depressed. **FALSE**
Kids as young as eight or nine can get severely depressed. Depression is epidemic among teens today.
2. Depression is a weakness. **FALSE**
Depression is a serious but treatable medical illness that has nothing to do with moral strength or weakness.
3. Depression is mostly a white, middle class problem. **FALSE**
Depression is an "equal opportunity illness" that can affect anyone, regardless of race or socioeconomic level. Depression and suicide rates among young African-American males and Hispanic teenage girls, in particular, have dramatically increased in the past 20 years.
4. People who are depressed always feel sad. **FALSE**
Other symptoms of depression can be irritability, lack of energy, change in appetite, substance abuse, restlessness, racing thoughts, reckless behavior, too much or too little sleep, or otherwise unexplained physical ailments.
5. People who talk about suicide don't kill themselves. **FALSE**
People who are thinking about suicide usually find some way of communicating their pain to others – often by speaking indirectly about their intentions. Most suicidal people will admit to their feelings if questioned directly.
6. There's really nothing you can do to help someone who's truly suicidal. **FALSE**
Most people who are suicidal don't really want their lives to end – they just want the pain to end. The understanding, support, and hope that you offer can be their most important lifeline.
7. Discussing suicide may cause someone to consider it or make things worse. **FALSE**
Asking someone if they're suicidal will never give them an idea that they haven't thought about already. Most suicidal people are truthful and relieved when questioned about their feelings and intentions. Doing so can be the first step in helping them to choose to live.
8. Telling someone to cheer up usually helps. **FALSE**
Trying to cheer someone up might make them feel even more misunderstood and ashamed of their thoughts and feelings. It's important to listen well and to take them seriously.
9. It's best to keep someone's suicidal feelings a secret. **FALSE**
Never, ever keep your or someone else's suicidal thoughts and feelings a secret – even if you're asked to do so. Friends never keep deadly secrets!
10. If someone promises to seek help, your job is done. **FALSE**
You need to make sure that any suicidal person stays safe until you can help them connect with a responsible adult.

