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College Depression: What Parents Need to Know transcript

Message parents might need to give

“The president of some colleges in their introduction to the freshman class will reassure them that you might not think you can do this or you may be worried about it, but we know you can or we wouldn’t have selected you. You wouldn’t be here and that’s the same sort of message that parents might need to give their kids.”

Symptoms of depression

“Some of the symptoms would be self isolation, sadness, eating changes – too much or too little, also drugs, alcohol, if you have ADHD, if you have a history of abuse, or you have a family history of depression, if there have been recent upheavals in the family such as divorce in the parents, this would put you at increased risk.”

Listen to the symptoms

“For the parents, first of all, don’t discount the symptoms. Listen to the symptoms acknowledge the symptoms, don’t try to, quote unquote, fix it real quick because its painful for you to hear about. Allow the pain to be there. Experience it empathetically with your child and then encourage them to talk to you about anything and eventually some of their stresses and their reactions to what’s happening at school and the way they feel and their thoughts will reveal to you that they are having a problem with depression.”

Getting professional help

“The next step is to formulate a plan and that plan is almost 100 percent of the time is going to involve some Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, talk therapy with a psychologist or a psych counselor. It may also involve a medication, but starting with a pill would not be an appropriate start. The evaluation, establish a relationship, get going on the talk therapy and then let the professional guide you in terms of whether or not an anti-depressant might be helpful.”

Things students can do

“Being involved socially, finding some sort of activity, some sort of interest, some sort of group. Being involved physically, getting good sleep, having a healthy lifestyle in terms of diet. All of these things will both be preventive or help with the treatment.”