

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_



# Erika's Lighthouse

## Student Workbook

Teen depression  
is a common and serious  
mood disorder— but  
there is hope and help!



# Discussion Guide

## Who is Erika?

This program was inspired by a young person named Erika. Erika was a bright light who, sadly, lost her battle with depression in 2004 at age 14.

Erika's Lighthouse was founded in her honor and is dedicated to helping other young people learn about depression and overcome the stigma surrounding mental health disorders.

### | OVERALL PROGRAM GOALS |

The goals of this program are for you to learn and understand that depression is a common and serious mood disorder and it is treatable.

You can make a difference in not only your own but someone else's life by learning how to get help as well as the skills for maintaining good mental health.

### | LESSON 1 OBJECTIVES |

**By the end of this lesson, I will be able to:**

- define that depression is a mood disorder\*. (You will hear the term "brain disorder" in the video.)
- describe the signs/symptoms, risk factors, and resources for depression.
- access a reliable, trusted adult at school.

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*There is nothing to be ashamed of.  
You deserve to feel better.*

# Discussion Guide

## | INSTRUCTIONS |

As you watch Part 1 of the video, begin answering the questions below.  
Be prepared to participate by sharing what you have learned.

**Depression is a common and serious mood disorder that can happen to anyone.  
It is not your fault if you have it and you are not alone.**

1. *How common is depression in teens?*

- 15-20% of young people will experience depression before they reach adulthood. That is about 5 students in a class of 25.       Teens do not experience depression.

2. *Can you tell someone is depressed by looking at them?*

- Yes       No

**Depression is serious and is the #1 risk factor to suicide.**

3. *Is suicide common?*

- Yes       No

**Depression is marked by a chemical imbalance in the brain that impacts moods, thoughts and behaviors. Sometimes genetics can play a role in whether or not someone gets depression.**

4. *If there is a history of depression in your family, does that mean that you will get depression?*

- Yes       No

**Sometimes stress in the environment can trigger depression.**

5. *Does this mean that everyone who experiences stress will get depression?*

- Yes       No

**Depression is more than a feeling of sadness. In order to have the diagnosis of depression you need at least five symptoms present most every day for at least two weeks. However, it is possible to have occasional moments of enjoyment with depression.**

6. *What are the symptoms of depression? Give an example of what that would look like in a teen.*

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# Accessing Information

**Trusted Adult:** someone who is reliable, dependable, trustworthy and can help you.

**Validity:** a source of information that is offering correct information and can be trusted.

**Reliability:** a source of information that can be accessed easily and consistently.

| QUESTIONS RELATED TO BOOKMARK ACTIVITY |

1. Describe how you know the trusted adult you put on your bookmark is valid and reliable.

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2. How can you access/find that trusted adult?

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**Erika's Lighthouse**  
A Beacon of Hope for Adolescent Depression

### Teen Depression

**Know the Signs**

Depression is an illness that affects our moods, thoughts and behaviors.

**Five or more of these symptoms** must be present most of every day for at least two weeks or more:

- Sad, depressed or irritable mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in favorite activities
- Significant weight loss or gain or change in eating habits
- Change in sleep patterns
- Restlessness or agitation
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Repeated thoughts of death or suicide

**Depression is common, can be serious and is treatable.**

If you think you may have depression, **you are not alone**. Understand that it can get better but you need to take action. Tell a caring adult who can help you to get an evaluation from a doctor or mental health professional.

**IN CRISIS AND ALONE?**  
Call 1.800.273.8255 or text "LISTEN" to 741-741.

**IMMEDIATE RISK OF SAFETY?** Call 911.

**Where to Go for Help**

Miss Smith  
123-456-7890

**Write down the name of a caring adult**  
you can go to if you need help.

Aunt Mary  
123-987-6543

Help Educate Your Parents  
Download our Parent Handbook  
Available at [ErikasLighthouse.org](http://ErikasLighthouse.org)

