# Adolescent Coping with Depression Course (CWD-A)

## TARGET AUDIENCE
This program is for adolescents, age 14 to 18, who have been diagnosed with depression, and their parents.

## SUMMARY
The Adolescent Coping with Depression Course (CWD-A) is a psychoeducational, cognitive-behavioral group treatment program designed to teach adolescents a variety of skills to help them control their moods and to manage situations that contribute to depression. This treatment is presented as a class rather than as therapy in order to prevent participants from feeling stigmatized.

## EVIDENCE
This program is placed as Unclear due to mixed results across studies. One randomized trial of youth recruited from the community found that participants of CWD-A were significantly more likely to recover from depression (i.e., no longer meeting diagnostic criteria) compared to youth in a wait-list control group; this higher recovery rate was sustained 2 years post intervention. However, another randomized trial involving depressed adolescent offspring of adults who were receiving treatment for depression within a health maintenance organization (HMO) found no benefits for youth participating in CWD-A. The reason for the different outcomes of these trials is unclear; although, possibilities include a difference in the average number of sessions attended (i.e., 14 versus 10) and differences in target populations (e.g., parental depression).

## COMPONENTS
This program is facilitated by a mental health professional with groups of four to eight adolescents. CWD-A may be used as an after-school program or in other settings. Key topics include the following.

- Relaxation - Practice techniques for coping with tension and anxiety;
- Pleasant Activities - Develop plans for increasing positive experiences;
- Cognitive Therapy - Learn to identify and challenge negative thoughts and beliefs;
- Social Skills - Apply techniques to start and build friendships;
- Communication, Negotiation, & Problem-Solving - Build skills to prevent and manage conflict and challenging interpersonal situations; and
- Life Plan & Maintaining Gains - Integrate skills learned and create plans for managing future challenges.

Instruction tools include lectures, discussions, role-playing exercises, activities, and homework assignments.

CWD-A may be implemented with or without a parallel group or informational sessions for parents.

## PREVIOUS USE
CWD-A has been used in the United States and Canada in settings such as schools and juvenile detention centers. Over 500 therapists have obtained training in this program.

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**Adolescents**

**Parents of Teens**

**Community-Based**

**School-based**

**Anxiety**

**Communication**

**Depression**

**Emotional Competency**

**Recreation**

**Social Competency**
### Adolescent Coping with Depression Course (CWD-A)

**Training**

CWD-A should be implemented by, or under the supervision of, licensed mental health professionals. Additional qualifications and training recommendations for group leaders are provided in the Therapist Manual located at [www.kpchr.org/research/public/acwd/acwd.html](http://www.kpchr.org/research/public/acwd/acwd.html). Additionally, a training DVD is available at [http://www.abspress.com/catalog.html](http://www.abspress.com/catalog.html).

**Considerations**

Considerations for implementing this program include securing and training qualified and committed therapists, recruiting and retaining participants, and obtaining program space.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185, or email [Clearinghouse@psu.edu](mailto:Clearinghouse@psu.edu).

**Implementation**

If you are interested in implementing CWD-A, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185, or email [Clearinghouse@psu.edu](mailto:Clearinghouse@psu.edu).

**TIME**

CWD-A is conducted in sixteen 2-hour sessions for 8 weeks. Booster sessions are optional. The optional parent group consists of nine 2-hour sessions. Youth and parent sessions are conducted separately except for two sessions, which parents and youth attend together.

**Cost**

Leader manuals and participant workbooks are free; please visit [www.kpchr.org/research/public/acwd/acwd.html](http://www.kpchr.org/research/public/acwd/acwd.html). Other costs to consider include group leader payment and participant incentives such as snacks during sessions.

**Evaluation Plan**

To move the CWD-A program to the Promising category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence research would need to be conducted that clarifies for whom or under what circumstances positive results are found and sustained.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185, or email [Clearinghouse@psu.edu](mailto:Clearinghouse@psu.edu).

**Contact**

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program. Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: [Clearinghouse@psu.edu](mailto:Clearinghouse@psu.edu)

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**Source**