

# Treating Teen Depression Might Improve Mental Health Of Parents, Too

August 14, 2018

An estimated [12.8 percent](#) of adolescents in the U.S. experience at least one episode of major depression, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. According to previous [studies](#), many of those teens' mental health is linked to depression in their parents.

But new research suggests there's a flipside to that parental effect: When teens are treated for depression, their parents' mental health improves, too.

We tend to think of depression as affecting individuals. But Myrna Weissman, a psychiatry professor at Columbia University, says, "Depression is a family affair."

Weissman has studied depression in families for years. "We know that there's high rates of depression in the offspring of depressed mothers," she says.

And her previous work has shown that when mothers are treated for depression, their [children feel better](#) as well.