

GLOBAL NATIONAL

Broadcast Date: Wednesday, January 23, 2008

Time: 17:30:00 ET

End Time: 18:00:00 ET

Network: GLOBAL

TARA NELSON: A panel of international experts is preparing to meet in Vancouver tomorrow to discuss a frightening health crisis for Canadian young people - depression. Statistics reveal one in five teens will experience depression, yet almost half of them will go undiagnosed, in some cases, with terrible results.

DEANNA KOURIS (Suffered From Depression): Hi, Jess.

NELSON: Eighteen-year-old Deanna Kouris is a university student in Kelowna, BC with aspirations one day of becoming a teacher, but there was a time when Deanna felt she had no future at all.

KOURIS: I felt very, sort of, apathetic towards life. I had no motivation to do anything. I started losing interest in things that I loved doing before.

NELSON: She was suffering from depression. For months, she tried to hide it. A drama student, she was good at acting happy, but when it didn't go away, she finally told her parents something was wrong.

KOURIS: It's a very lonely illness, and you feel very sort of helpless, I guess.

NELSON: As alone as Deanna felt at the time, she couldn't have been further from the truth. A fifth of Canada's teens will suffer at least one episode of depression. That means 600,000 kids feeling not just blue, but in some cases suicidal.

DR. JANE GARLAND (Psychiatrist): Actually, more for anxiety.

NELSON: Dr. Jane Garland is a psychiatrist at BC Children's Hospital. She says depression in teens is usually triggered not by one, but by several factors.

GARLAND: But we know that the key environmental risk factors for depression are losses. Losses through death, losses of faith, loss of humiliation, rejections, medical illness.

NELSON: Unlike Deanna, most kids don't go to their parents for help, meaning parents have to recognize the warning signs themselves.

NASIMA NASTOH (Mother of Depressed Teen): They feel guilty, why I missed that?

NELSON: Nasima Nastoh has devoted her life to talking to kids, and adults about recognizing depression. Her own son, Hamad, took his life almost eight years ago.

NASTOH: We are deeply sad and they argue, they are resentful, and they don't have any concern or empathy for hurting other people's feelings.

NELSON: The treatment for depression isn't always easy. It generally takes more than just pills.

GARLAND: Also psychological treatments, either group or individual psychotherapies for changing some of the thinking patterns and giving them coping skills.

KOURIS: And there's so many people out there who are willing to help you, but when you're in that state, you don't realise it.

NELSON: Ask Deanna now, though, finding a successful treatment worked.

KOURIS: See you guys later. Bye.