

USPSTF recommends depression screening for teens

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(HealthDay)—The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening for major depressive disorder (MDD) in adolescents, but evidence is inadequate to assess screening tools for younger children. These findings form the basis of a draft recommendation statement published online Sept. 7 by the USPSTF.

Noting that children and adolescents with MDD typically have functional impairments in their performance at school or work, and in their interaction with their families and peers, researchers from the USPSTF reviewed the role of screening for MDD in children and adolescents.

The researchers found that there was adequate evidence that depression screening instruments could accurately identify MDD in [primary care](#) settings for adolescents aged 12 to 18 years, and recommended screening when adequate systems were in place for diagnosis, treatment, and

monitoring (Grade B recommendation). In children aged 11 years and younger there were no studies of screening instruments for depression in primary care settings, and consequently the evidence was inadequate to weigh the benefits and harms of [screening](#) (Grade I recommendation). These findings form the basis of a draft recommendation statement which is available for comment from Sept. 8 to Oct. 5, 2015.

"Major depressive disorder can be a debilitating condition for [adolescents](#) and their families," USPSTF member Alex Kemper, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement. "Screening in a primary care setting can help to identify youth with depression who might not otherwise be identified."

More information: [Evidence Review](#)
[Draft Recommendation Statement](#)
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