

# Emotional instability proves key in half of the depressive traits among teenagers

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Research directed by lecturers Generós Ortet and Manuel Ignacio Ibáñez, from the Department of Basic and Clinical Psychology and Psychobiology of the Universitat Jaume I, has concluded that a large part of the depressive symptoms shown by teenagers and young adults have

their origin in the neuroticism/emotional stability dimension. The study has evaluated the personality variables and other types of psychological or social variables "and how they impact the person, making them more vulnerable to the development of common problems in adolescence," explains Ibáñez.

The research has been carried out with a sample of almost a thousand adolescents from the Caminàs and Bovalar [secondary schools](#) in Castelló, which has been combined with collaborations with other countries, based on a study with more than 3,000 university students from four different countries. The results obtained highlight "the enormous importance of personality characteristics in the development of symptoms associated with internalizing disorders (such as depression or anxiety) and externalizing disorders (substance use, addictive behaviors, aggressiveness or psychopathic traits) both in young people as in adults."

The [analysis](#) on which this research was based incorporates the evaluation of other basic dimensions of personality, understood as the different degrees that a person shows in the dimensions of extraversion/introversion, kindness/antagonism, responsibility/disinhibition and open-mindedness/close-mindedness. The [research](#) shows how "personality is interrelated in a complex way with multiple psychological and social factors" in the development of a wide spectrum of psychopathological symptoms. Thus, aspects of personality such as a low degree of kindness and responsibility can interact with other risk variables such as affiliation with antisocial friends to predict aggressive behaviors or substance use. In this regard, Ibáñez says that "[young people](#) with personality traits such as low friendliness or antagonism who, in addition, have friends that we can consider anti-normative, tend to carry out more aggressive and violent behaviors."

Another example of this complex interrelation between personality and

the environment that the study has also shown points out that negative life events can increase the possibility that a teenager will develop depressive symptoms, "but not for everyone equally. Rather, it depends in part on their neuroticism, on their emotional instability, a detail that has already been observed in adults, showing how personality can be a multiplier of symptoms."

Provided by Asociacion RUVID

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