

## **Youth Depression in the Family Context: Familial Risk Factors and Models of Treatment**

Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review

September 2005, Volume 8, Issue 3, pp 203-219

Youth Depression in the Family Context: Familial Risk Factors and Models of Treatment

Janay B. Sander, Carolyn A. McCarty

### Abstract

Research on parent risk factors, family environment, and familial involvement in the treatment of depression in children and adolescents is integrated, providing an update to prior reviews on the topic. First, the psychosocial parent and family factors associated with youth depression are examined. The literature indicates that a broad array of parent and family factors is associated with youth risk for depression, ranging from parental pathology to parental cognitive style to family emotional climate. Next, treatment approaches for youth depression that have been empirically tested are described and then summarized in terms of their level of parent inclusion, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and family systems approaches. Families have mostly *not* been incorporated into clinical treatment research with depressed adolescents, with only 32% of treatments including parents in treatment in *any* capacity. Nonetheless, the overall effectiveness of treatments that involve children and adolescents exclusively is very similar to that of treatments that include parents as agents or facilitators of change. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications of these findings and directions for further research.