

About the book "Talk about it... with every child"

Depression is a widespread disease. Studies show that an estimated 150,000 Danes suffer from depression at any given time, which leads to significant suffering, long-standing sick leaves and risk of suicide.

It is also a very expensive disease for the society. The estimated costs in terms of productivity, sickness benefits and disability pension are more than 100 billions Euro annually in the EU.

Depression is disease of the brain. This means that e.g. psychological stress and traumatic experiences can trigger the disease, but once it has begun, it has its own life, because the processes that is derailed in the brain will continue to give symptoms even after a potential strain has disappeared. Fortunately, the disease can be treated with a good result both with medicine and with psychotherapy and often best with a combination of the two types of treatment.

But even though depression is a brain disease, it is much more than that. It is a disease between people, because the relationship to one's relatives and friends will be affected by the depression. This book is about how the diseases affect the children.

When you fight depression, treatment is not enough. Information is also vital. That is, information to the public about the disease and the treatment possibilities, and therefore, a large number of popular books on depression has been published in recent years. These books are important, and so is it when brave people come forward and talk about the course of their own disease. This plays an important part in reducing the stigma, guilt and shame connected with the disease. Hence, books which demystify the disease and the treatment are needed, particularly in relation to the children of the sick person, who understandably have difficulties comprehending the disaster which has hit their family. Because of the depression it is for instance very common that the sick person does not have the strength to be with his or her relatives, or is anxious or worried and wants to isolate him- or herself. Of course it is very important to understand that this happens because of the disease and not because ones mother or father not longer cares. It can also be very difficult for a child to understand that a person can be so sick that is it not enough to be comforted by ones dear ones, but has to go to the hospital and take medicine.

Therefore, this book meets a very large and important need.

Poul Videbech, Professor, Dr.Med.Sc, Consultant