



# HWDSB moodbusters PROGRAM

Moodbusters Program  
Offered by HWDSB Social Work Services

## *What is the Moodbusters Program?*

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The Moodbusters program targets students in grades 5 to 8 who are having difficulty with depressive symptoms, low mood and are motivated to make some changes. Moodbusters combines Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) skills and family education to reduce depressive symptoms and improve coping skills.

## *How Moodbusters can help?*

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The program focuses on teaching students how to manage their mood and improve coping.

### **Participants will Learn:**

- more about what depression is and how low mood is impacting their life
- activation strategies to help improve their mood
- how to challenge their negative thoughts and beliefs
- how to problem solve effectively
- how to manage difficult emotions

### **Caregivers will Learn:**

- more about what depression is and how it is affecting their child
- how to help their child challenge their negative beliefs and intense emotions
- how to support their child with problem solving
- how to identify problematic low mood



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## What is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)?

CBT is an evidence-based treatment approach that focuses on the way people think (“cognitive”) and act (“behavioural”). The idea behind CBT is that our thoughts about a situation affect how we feel (emotionally and physically) and how we behave in that situation.

Through Moodbusters, students will learn how unhelpful thoughts and behaviours can encourage depression and anxiety. They will then learn healthier skills and habits to reduce depressive symptoms.

## Who are the Group Facilitators?

HWDSB’s Registered Social Workers facilitate the group, employing their expertise in school-based mental health support.

## How Long is the program and when is it offered?

The program runs for 10 sessions, over five weeks, plus a booster session that is offered about three to six months after the group finishes. Each session runs for 1.5 hrs. Group sessions take place in HWDSB schools or the Education Centre. Caregivers of children accepted into the program will receive a call with the start date and location. A letter including all of the dates and facilitators’ contact information will be provided.

- Caregivers are asked to attend the last 10-15 minutes of each session to review the skills learned.
- Caregivers are asked to join three sessions in order to support their child’s learning and assist them in practicing their skills at home.



## Who attends the Moodbusters group?

The Moodbusters group is for students in grades 5 to 7 who are registered with HWDSB. Groups will be made up of 6 to 10 members.

## What topics does the program cover?

- CBT specific to depressive symptoms
- Social skills
- Problem solving strategies
- Goal setting
- Stress management techniques

## Referral Process

Interested caregivers are asked to contact your child’s school Social Worker.

## What if my child is not in the age range of program participants?

Social Work support is available for students of any age having difficulties with anxiety and depression. Please speak with your child’s Principal or Learning Resource Teacher if this is a concern.