

# DEPRESSION: CREATING AWARENESS AND PROMOTING MANAGEMENT AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- Depression has become a global threat to society and the economy as it is a highly prevalent, disabling and recurrent disorder.
- Mental health conditions account for 16% of the global burden of disease and injury in the adolescent age group. According to WHO, depression is the fourth leading cause of illness and disability among adolescents aged 15-19 years.
- Half of all mental health conditions start by 14 years of age but most cases are not detected and not treated.
- The consequences of not addressing adolescent mental health conditions extend into adulthood, impairing both physical and mental health therefore limiting opportunities to lead fulfilling lives as adults.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- Increasing incidence of depression among adolescents in the past 5 years. (NHMS)
- Escalating reports of depression and complaints through helplines during the COVID-19 pandemic especially in the Movement Control Order period.

### MENTAL HEALTH STATISTICS

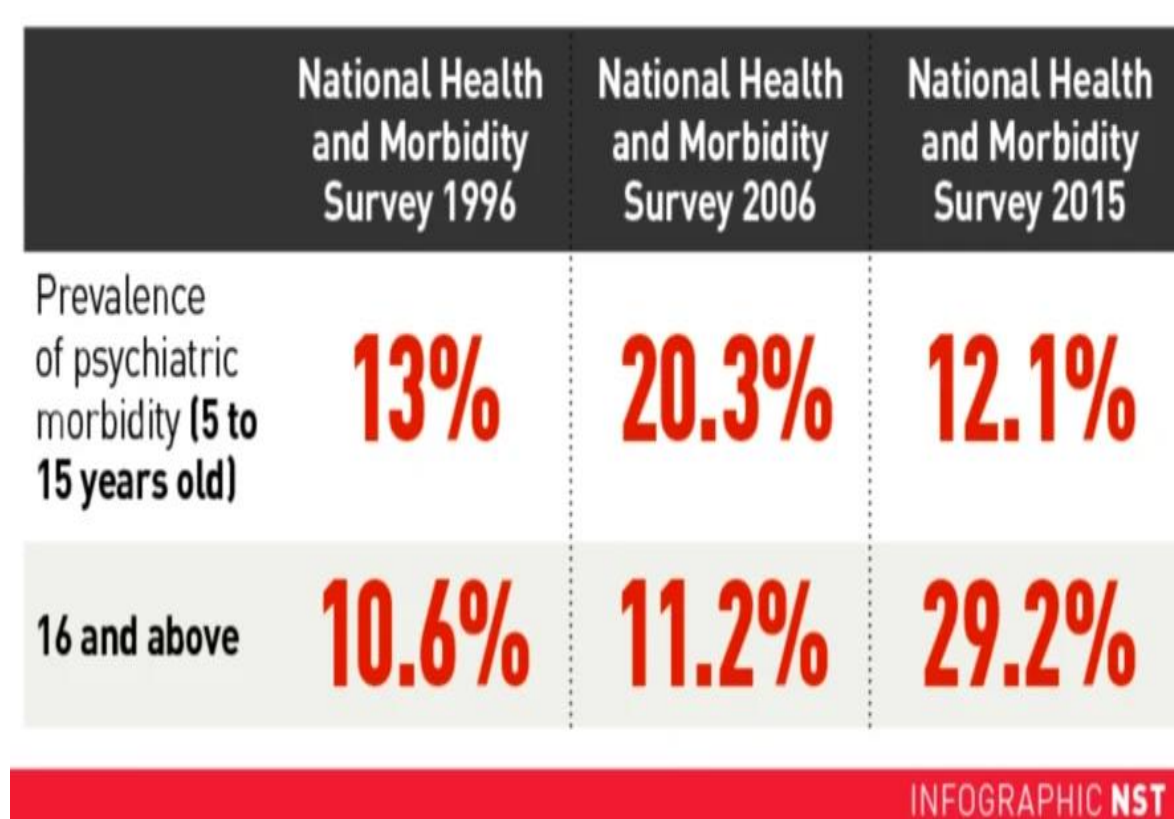


Figure 1: Mental health statistics for adolescents in Malaysia according to the NHMS reports 1996, 2006 and 2015

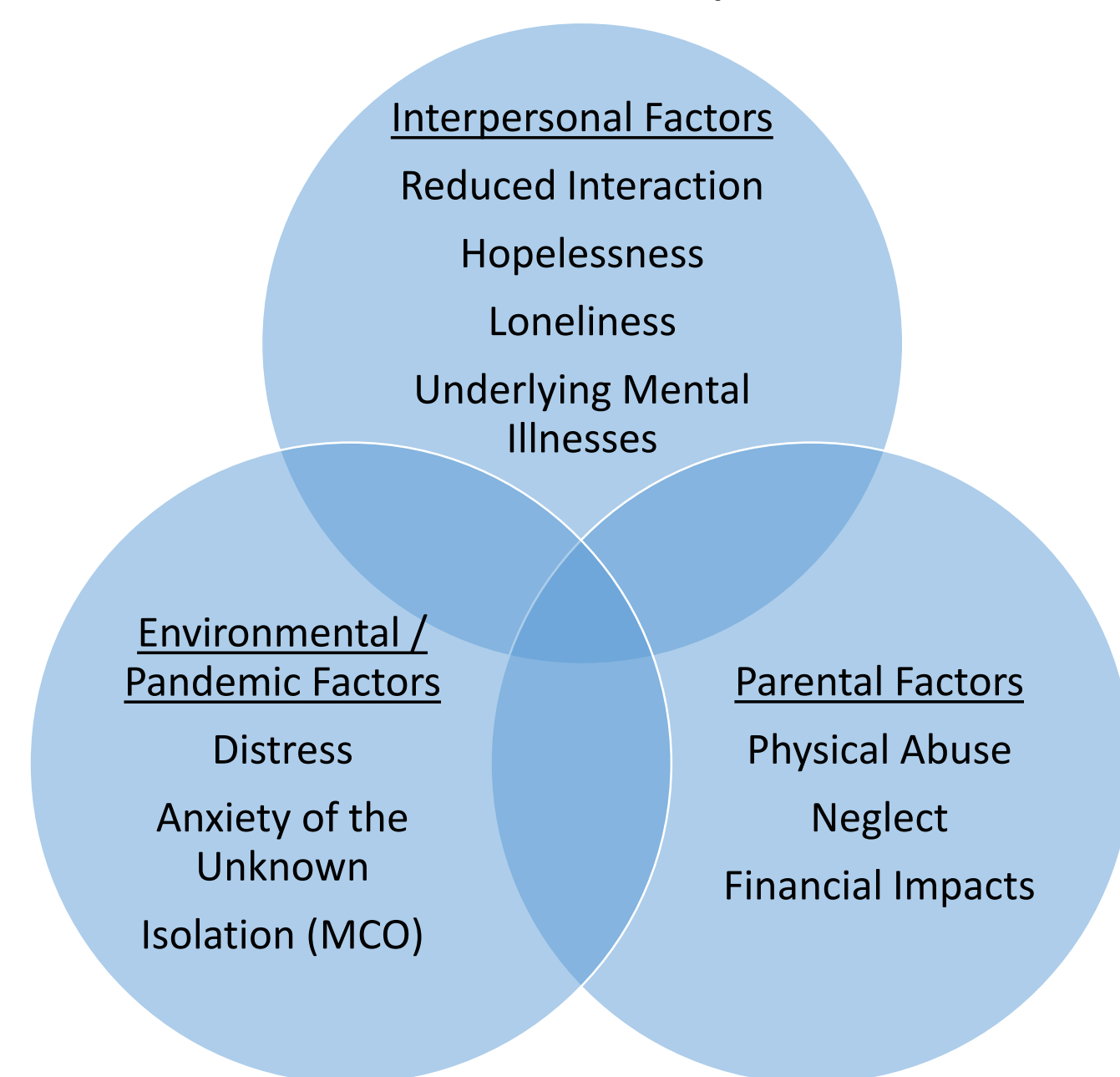
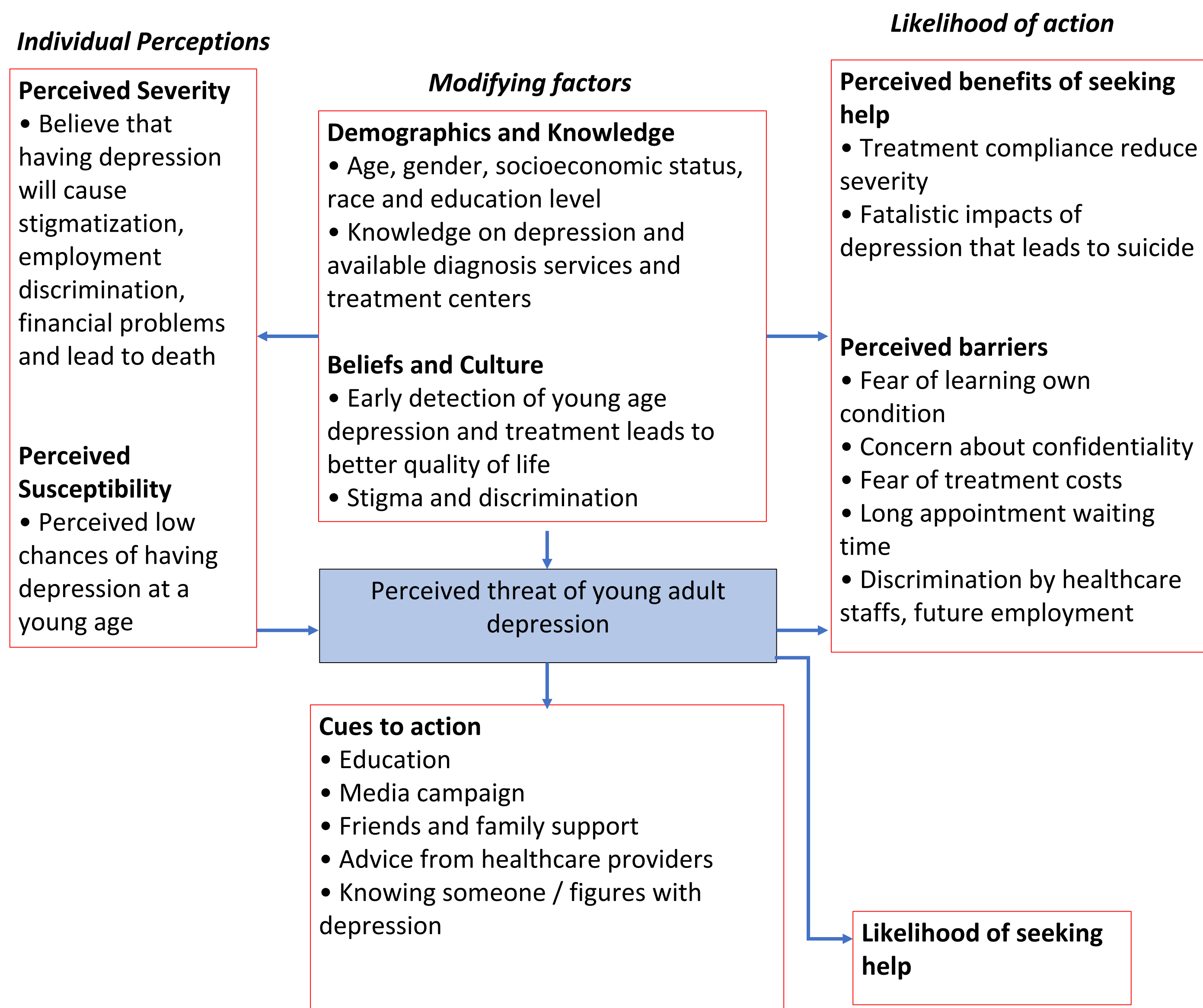


Figure 2: Factors contributing to depression among adolescents during the MCO period of COVID-19 pandemic

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF HEALTH PROMOTION POSTER

- To create awareness on signs and symptoms of depression among adolescents.
- To spread knowledge on increasing helplines and support during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To eliminate barriers that can hinder one from getting help due stigma and negative relations.
- To decrease the prevalence of depression among adolescents.

## 4. IMPLEMENTATION: HEALTH BELIEF MODEL



## 5. STAKEHOLDERS

### Governmental Bodies

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry Women, Family and Community Development
- Ministry of Youth and Sports

### Community Support

- Researchers
- Education system – Schools, Colleges, Universities
- NGOs – Befrienders, Mercy Care Helpline, Green Ribbon Project
- Public figures – Royalties, Social influencers, Artists

## 6. STRATEGIES OF HEALTH PROMOTION POSTER

| Strategies                           | Activities  | Objectives   | Indicators  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Develop Personal Skills</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide mental health information and knowledge to target group</li> <li>• Self-development sessions</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help adolescents learn more about depression</li> <li>• To increase the ability to cope with family life, school or the wider world</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre- and post- tests results of knowledge</li> <li>• Total hours of sessions for each</li> <li>• Times of participating in the discussion during the sessions</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Strengthen Community Action</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up community mental health helplines and reporting systems for adolescents</li> <li>• Provide knowledge and awareness to the community on adolescent mental health</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide more helplines/ reporting systems in the community</li> <li>• To improve mental health literacy</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of reported cases</li> <li>• Numbers of calls through helplines</li> <li>• Questionnaires to parents/ caretakers to recognize depression among their children</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Create Supportive Environment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidelines and online communicating platform to parents on handling adolescents during pandemic / MCO</li> <li>• Training programs on adolescents' mental health among teachers</li> <li>• Set up mental health consultation centers in schools</li> <li>• More home visits of social workers to individual who have relative helpline/ medical records</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create a more supportive environment for adolescents at home and at school (to reduce the present barriers)</li> <li>• To increase the ability of parents, teachers and schools to tackle the issue</li> <li>• To let social workers and psychologists to intervene in time</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recording total times and frequency of home visits</li> <li>• Having feedbacks from parents/caretakers on guidelines and online platform: number of children that can be screened by parents/caretakers</li> <li>• Learning hours of training programs among teachers</li> <li>• Numbers of consultation provided in schools</li> <li>• Questionnaire to measure the satisfaction of adolescents on their support/environment</li> </ul> |
| <b>Reorient Health Services</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of helplines / channels to report</li> <li>• Employ more counselors at schools and psychologists at communities</li> <li>• Start special mental health clinics targeting adolescents in both private and public hospitals</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide adolescents more access to mental health professionals</li> <li>• To provide mental health services at different level of at home, at school and at hospitals</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of available helplines and channels</li> <li>• Numbers of mental health professionals at schools and communities (counselors/psychologists)</li> <li>• Numbers of special mental health clinics for adolescents</li> <li>• Numbers of visits in those clinics</li> <li>• Scores of satisfaction of each visit</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Build Public Health Policy</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more mental health programs and services incorporating collaborations between stakeholders</li> <li>• Have a new department in the local government: Adolescents depression fund</li> <li>• Start a mental health surveillance and research center</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase level of cooperation among organizations</li> <li>• To have better surveillance on mental health services provided to adolescents</li> <li>• To provide more financial and human resources to increase the awareness</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of activities / programs organized by multiple stakeholders</li> <li>• Budget and numbers of employees in the fund</li> <li>• Records of inspection: work reports written by public servants</li> <li>• Financial analysis and budgeting of research grants and funds</li> </ul>   |

## 7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS



## 8. SUSTAINABILITY

- Integrating with existing programs and community participation
- Increasing collaborative relationships and networks

## 9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Needs Assessment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data Collection : Statistics of Depression among adolescents</li> <li>- Resources : Adequate reports, Adequate staff salary</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Process</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing Research : DASS questionnaire on target groups</li> <li>- Barriers faced during implementation</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Outcome</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluation of program : Cost Benefit Analysis to stakeholders</li> <li>- Short term : Changes in healthcare system</li> <li>- Long term : Change in mental health status among adolescents</li> </ul> |

## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Prevention: Cognitive-behavioral depression prevention program for adolescents; introducing COVID-19 parenting tips / coaching courses to help caretakers deal with parenting challenges
- Initial intervention: CAMHS--preventive, Early intervention and specialist services provided in outpatient and community settings.

## 11. REFERENCES

- Burcusa, S. L., & Iacono, W. G. (2007). Risk for recurrence in depression. *Clinical psychology review*, 27(8), 959–985. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2007.02.005>
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