

CASE STUDY OF PROTECTIVE FACTORS AGAINST DEPRESSION

Sharon is a bright, vivacious 13-year-old who has recently relocated with her parents to Sydney from rural Victoria. Her older brother, whom she is very close to, has not moved with the family but has instead remained in Victoria to work on a farm. Sharon has adjusted well to the challenges of relocating and the change in family structure. She states that

I am very fortunate to have a good relationship with both my parents. Mum and Dad are always there for me and always help me to work through my problems. We have dinner at about 7 p.m. and they always make it a point to ask me about my day at school and how I dealt with this or that – whatever has upset me at school. I remember one time when the kids teased me about coming from the country and not having seen a show on TV a few years back. Mum suggested that rather than worrying about what the other kids thought of me, I should try and tell them about what it was like growing up on a farm – all the really interesting things. Soon the kids stopped teasing me and, instead, became interested in my experiences back in Victoria.

Sharon's parents have also encouraged her to participate in extracurricular activities at school so that she can get to know some of her classmates better and develop some common interests.