

What teachers & community workers need to know about Disruptive behavior & aggression



WHAT IS IT?

Disruptive behavior disorders, which include Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) and Conduct Disorder (CD), involve behaviors such as temper tantrums, physical aggression, and excessive arguing. They are often first noticed when they interfere with school performance and relationships. Symptoms of aggression and disruptive behavior often result from other conditions or problems. ODD and CD usually coexist with another disorder, especially Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Treatment approaches may include therapy and parent and family training. Medication is not usually used for ODD or CD, except in extreme cases.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Work with the student's parent to establish consistent communication
- Post clear and specific classroom rules and send a copy home to the student's parents
- Engage the student by asking questions rather than issuing directives
- Avoid escalating prompts such as shouting, nagging, or cornering the student
- Use praise and positive reinforcement
- Establish behavioral goals
- Encourage the student to avoid situations that trigger an emotional response
- Help the student develop coping mechanisms
- Above all, be safe and do not put yourself in danger; if it can be done safely, when students become violent, try removing them from the provoking situation

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Tantrums/rages
- Fighting/bullying
- Angry outbursts
- Persistent arguing with adults and authority figures
- Frequently annoys others on purpose
- Repetitive, persistent, excessive aggression or defiance
- Criminal acts such as vandalism, stealing, and truancy



HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

A doctor will evaluate the student to consider the child's development level, culture, and stress in the child's life at home and in school.

WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

- Establish clear procedures for handling serious behavioral problems such as bullying, angry outbursts, and aggression
- Seek support from school administration and other teaching staff