

Emotional Disturbance

Description

- Children and youth with emotional disturbance are a heterogeneous group of young people with a variety of strengths and needs.
- The term means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:
 - (A) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
 - (B) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
 - (C) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
 - ✎ (D) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
 - (E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
 - (F) The term includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance (defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law 101-476)
- Emotional Disturbance has been linked to Schizophrenia, Hyperactivity, Suicide, Panic Disorder, Behavioral Disorders, Manic-Depressive (Bipolar) Disorder, Anxiety Disorders, Depressive Disorders, Eating Disorders, and more.

Accommodations

- Keep child busy and active
- Provide emotional behavioral disability classroom instruction allowing for individual attention
- Give social skills instruction to address emotional issues
- Monitor behavioral and academic progress
- Offer behavior modification
- Present family with information about child's condition
- Make available psychologists and/or psychiatrists, and mental health professionals for child with emotional disturbance
- Provide youths with empowerment and individual help
- Offer functional community referenced assessments (assistance for choosing a job)
- Provide opportunities for natural consequences
- Accept and support who and what the child currently is

Treatment Centers

- Boulder Creek Academy is located within the state of Idaho and is licensed by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. The Academy was established to help students with emotional and learning disorders and provide a strong academic and college preparatory curriculum
- There are schools that are designed to help students who are emotionally disturbed such as the educational services provided at Rice Children's Center in Evanston Illinois. This is a residential treatment facility for severely emotionally disturbed children. This Center helps to aid students while they attend Evanston/Skokie School serving 6,998 students.
- Students with an emotional disorder may seek counseling to help them overcome their emotional disorders. At Loyola University in Chicago, counseling services are offered to students to assist them with their education at Loyola.
- Bear River Residential Treatment Center is a place where male teens making wrong choices can get the help they need. The clinical staff and director are experienced, educated and well trained. They have a highly successful track record of making positive changes with individuals that struggle with issues like oppositional defiant behavior, sexual abuse, depression, substance abuse and more.

Incidence

- Up to one in ten may suffer from a serious emotional disturbance.
- Emotional disturbance is the third largest category of students with disabilities
- For the school year 1994-95, 428,168 children and youth with a serious emotional disturbance received services in the public schools (Eighteenth Annual Report to Congress U.S. Department of Education, 1996).
- For the school year 1995-96, 438,217 children and youth with a serious emotional disturbance received services in the public schools (Nineteenth Annual Report to Congress U.S. Department of Education, 1997)
- For the school year 1998-99, 463,172 children and youth with a serious emotional disturbance received services in the public schools (Nineteenth Annual Report to Congress U.S. Department of Education, 2000)
- 2/3 of all young people with emotional disturbance are not getting the help they need
- Approximately 9 to 13% of children ages 9 to 17 have a serious emotional disturbance with substantial functional impairment, and 5 to 9% have a serious emotional disturbance with extreme functional impairment due to a mental illness.
- Boys tend to have more problems with emotional disorders than girls do. Some reasons why may be as follows:
 - When both boys and girls are equally misbehaving at school, boys receive more frequent and severe penalties.
 - Boys, particularly low-achievers, receive 8 to 10 times the reprimands of their female classmates. These reproaches are more likely to occur in front of classmates, where girls are more frequently taken aside in private.

- Boys are removed from classrooms and serve more detention than girls. They comprise 71% of all school suspensions and are expelled at even higher rates.
- Boys drop out of school 4-to-1 over girls, receive more "F's," have lower grade point averages, more grade repetitions and failures to graduate.
- The majority of school violence victims are males who also represent about 3/4ths of all assaults, homicides, and suicides.
- Boys are the minority of valedictorians, academic scholarship winners, and are in fewer clubs, student governments and school newspapers than girls.
- Males now number only 44% of college admissions and 41% of graduate students. Almost 2/3 of high school girls go on to college, only slightly more than 1/2 of high school boys do. Those without college degrees are killed on the job 20-to-1 over women.
- 7-14% of children will experience an episode of major depression before the age of 15.
- 20-30% of adult bipolar patients report having their first episode before the age of 20.
- Out of 100,000 adolescents, 2 to 3% will have mood disorders, and 8 to 10 will commit suicide.

Manifestations

- Hyperactivity (short attention span, impulsiveness)
- Aggression
 - Self-injurious behavior
 - Aggression towards other people
 - Aggression towards animals
 - Destruction of property
 - Acting out
 - Fighting
- Withdrawal (failure to initiate interaction with others; retreat from exchanges of social interaction, excessive fear or anxiety)
- Immaturity (inappropriate crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills)
- Learning difficulties (academically performing below grade level).
- Distorted thinking
- Excessive Anxiety
- Bizarre motor acts

- Abnormal mood swings
- Deceitfulness, lying or stealing
- Serious violations of rules

Unique Issues

- Depression is a disturbance in mood, thought, and body characterized by varying degrees of sadness, disappointment, withdrawal, isolation, loneliness, hopelessness, self-doubt, and guilt
- Hyperactivity has been defined as an impulse disturbance and is often called hyperkinesis. This is a group of symptoms, or syndrome, that is characterized by a higher than normal activity level. The children are highly excitable, impulsive and easily distracted and many have learning disabilities.
- Schizophrenia is a medical illness that causes strange thinking, strange feelings, and unusual behavior. Some of the common signs include:
 - Trouble telling dreams from reality
 - Seeing things and hearing voices which are not real
 - Confused thinking
 - Vivid and bizarre thoughts and ideas
 - Extreme moodiness
 - Odd behavior
 - Ideas that people are “out to get them”
 - Behaving like a younger child
 - Severe anxiety and fearfulness
 - Confusing television with reality
 - Severe problem in making and keeping friends
- There are many myths and facts about emotional disturbance. Some truths are:
 - Mental disability is **not** a contagious disease
 - Intellectually disabled people are **not** insane or mentally ill.
 - People with an emotional disability **do** have feelings.

Resources

1. <http://www.childpsychologist.com/emotiona.htm> (Brief descriptions and explanations. Lists many resources for future use.)
2. <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/depr.html> (Website designed to help identify people with depression.)
3. http://sd.essortment.com/hyperactivity_rlis.htm (Brief explanation of hyperactivity.)
4. <http://cecp.air.org/resources/20th/intro.htm> (Explanation of what is known and what is not about EBD.)
5. <http://www.nmha.org/children/green/Facts.pdf> and <http://www.nmha.org/children/index.cfm> (Includes some of the incidence rates.)
6. <http://www.nami.org/fact.htm> (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. Percentage of children with emotional disturbances.)
7. <http://www.parentpals.com/gossamer/pages/Detailed/608.html> (Details about schizophrenia in children and the effects.)
8. <http://members.aol.com/str8eagle/education/> (This website provides Myths and Facts about education and learning disabilities as found by Jules Ohrin-Greipp who is a school psychologist.)
9. <http://www.safefromthestart.org/facts.html> (On this website, facts are presented about the incidence of emotional disturbances and the factors that contribute to emotional disturbances.)
10. <http://www.dpa.org.sg/DPA/discond/mythMD.htm> (This website shows myths next to facts about mental disabilities. This showed a good comparison of what people believe and what is actually true.)
11. <http://www.vix.com/menmag/kipnboys.htm> (This website was very helpful in explaining why boys have more emotional disorders than girls do, and explains the incidence levels of different situations contributing to emotional disorders.)
12. <http://www.mhsource.com/narsad/childhood.htm> (Narsad Research into Mood Disorders in Children and Adolescents. Primarily concerned with depression and bipolar disorder, the symptoms, and suggested treatments.)
13. <http://www.4therapy.com> (Extensive list of mood disorders and links to additional information and sites. Diagnostic tests for seventeen different disorders.)
14. <http://www.merck.com> (The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy. An in depth description, epidemiology, and etiology of several severe mood disorders.)
15. <http://www.pitt.edu/research/city.htm> (A support group for children with mood disorders and a research source for parents and teachers.)