



ODD Resource Guide

Overviewⁱ

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is a behavior disorder that puts children persistently at odds with authority figures. Children with ODD are temperamental, disobedient, spiteful, or vindictive to a highly unusual degree. The disorder significantly undermines the child's ability to get along with family, peers, and other adults.

Symptomsⁱ

- Unusually quick to lose his temper
- Ignores or rebels against rules, at home or at school
- Quick to blame others for mistakes or misbehavior
- Prone to annoy others and be easily annoyed himself
- Disruptive behavior appears to be intentional rather than impulsive
- Refuses to cooperate reflexively—even before he knows what is being asked.

Causesⁱ

The disorder appears to run in families, and family behaviors may play a role. There is a strong association between authoritarian parenting and harsh or inconsistent discipline practices and the onset of ODD. The opposite is also true—not setting enough limits, or what professionals call "laissez-faire" parenting, is also associated with the onset of ODD.

Treatmentⁱⁱ

ODD is treatable, usually with behavioral therapy or a combination of behavioral intervention and medication.

Therapy: A popular evidence-based treatment is a type of behavior therapy called parent-child interaction therapy. The parent and child work together through a set of exercises while a therapist coaches parents through an ear bud. Parents learn to increase positive interactions with the child and to set consistent consequences for undesirable behavior. Children learn to rein in behavior and enjoy a more supportive relationship with parents

Medicine: Medicines are not specifically indicated for ODD. However, as many children with ODD have co-occurring conditions such as ADHD, they may be on medications for those other disorders. In addition, some children are so troubled by their own aggression, and their difficulties managing their painfully low frustration tolerance, that a clinician may recommend medication—like psycho-stimulants used to treat ADHD to help them control those responses and benefit more from behavioral therapy.



ⁱ Child Mind institute (2015). Quick Facts on Oppositional Defiant Disorder. <http://www.childmind.org/en/quick-facts-oppositional-defiant-disorder/>

ⁱⁱ Child Mind Institute (2015). Mental Health Guide: Oppositional Defiant Disorder. <http://www.childmind.org/en/health/disorder-guide/oppositional-defiant-disorder>