Child Mental Health

URL of this page: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/childmentalhealth.html

It's easy to know when your child has a fever. A child's mental health problem may be harder to identify, but you can learn to recognize the symptoms. Pay attention to excessive anger, fear, sadness or anxiety. Sudden changes in your child's behavior can tip you off to a problem. So can behaviors like exercising too much, or hurting or destroying things.

Some common mental health problems in children are

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Behavior disorders
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

Mental health problems can disrupt daily life at home, at school or in the community. Without help, mental health problems can lead to school failure, alcohol or other drug abuse, family discord, violence or even suicide. However, help is available. Talk to your health care provider if you have concerns about your child's behavior.

Start Here

  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/espanol/tratamiento-de-ni-os-con-enfermedades-mentales/]

Overviews


Latest News


Diagnosis/Symptoms

Treatment

- 11 Questions to Ask Before Psychiatric Hospitalization of Your Child or Adolescent
  Also available in Spanish
  [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Spanish/11_Preguntas_a_Hacerse_Antes_de_Comenzar_el-Tratamiento_Siquiatrico_de_su_Nino_o_Adolescente_32.aspx]

- Antipsychotic Medicines for Children and Teens: A Review of the Research for Parents and Caregivers
  Also available in Spanish

- Continuum of Care for Children and Adolescents
  [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/The_Continuum_Of_Care_For_Children_And_Adolescents_42.aspx] (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)
  Also available in Spanish

- Mental Health Medications

- Mental Health Providers: Tips on Finding One
  [http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/mental-health-providers/MY01650/METHOD=print] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

- Psychotherapies

- Psychotherapies for Children and Adolescents
  Also available in Spanish

- Residential Treatment Programs

- Taking Your Child to a Therapist
  [http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/finding_therapist.html] (Nemours Foundation)
  Also available in Spanish

- What Parents Should Know about Treatment of Behavioral and Emotional Disorders in Preschool Children
Coping


Disease Management

- Family Guide to Systems of Care for Children with Mental Health Needs [http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//SMA05-4054/SMA05-4054.pdf] (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) - PDF - In English and Spanish

Specific Conditions

- Helping Kids Handle Worry [http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/worrying.html] (Nemours Foundation)
- Panic Disorder in Children and Adolescents [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Panic_Disorder_In_Children_And_Adolescents_50.aspx] (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Spanish/Desorden_de_Apegamiento_Reactivo_85.aspx]
- Separation Anxiety (For Parents) [http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/feelings/sep_anxiety.html] (Nemours Foundation)
  Also available in Spanish [http://kidshealth.org/parent/en_espanol/emociones/separation_anxiety_esp.html]
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/edu_materials/Entendamoselestrumatico.pdf]
Related Issues

- Building Resilience in Children and Youth Dealing with Trauma
  [http://www.samhsa.gov/children/trauma_resilience.asp] (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

- Children and Grief
  Also available in Spanish
  [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Spanish/Lo_s_Ninos_y_la_Pena_por_la_Muerte_de_un_ser_Queido_08.aspx]

- Children of Parents with Mental Illness
  - PDF
  Also available in Spanish

- Hearing Voices and Seeing Things

- Know Your Rights: Consent and Confidentiality


- Partnering with Your Child's School: A Guide for Parents
  - PDF
  Also available in Spanish

- Preventing and Managing Medication-Related Weight Gain
  [http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/preventing_and_managing_medicationrelated_weight]
  (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)

- Religion, Spirituality and Your Mental Health Care
  [http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/religion_spirituality_and_your_mental_health_care]
  (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)

- Sleep-Away Camps for Children on Medication
  [http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/sleepaway_camps_children_medication] (NYU Child Study Center)


- Talking to Kids about Mental Illnesses
  [http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/talking_to_kids_about_mental_illnesses]
  (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)
  Also available in Spanish
  [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Spanish/Cuando_se_Habla_a_los_Ninos_Acerca_de_las_Enfermedades_Mentales_84.aspx]

- Telepsychiatry and Your Child [http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/telepsychiatry_and_your_child]
  (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)

Financial Issues

  (Nemours Foundation)

- Understanding Your Mental Health Insurance
  (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry)
  Also available in Spanish
  [http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/Facts_for_Families_Pages/Spanish/E...
Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Mental Disorders [http://clinicaltrials.gov/search/open/condition=%22Mental+Disorders%22] NIH (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Child Mental Disorders [http://clinicaltrials.gov/search/open/term=%22mental+disorders%22+%5BCONDITION%5D+AND+child+%5BAGE-GROUP%5D] NIH (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Child Mental Health [http://clinicaltrials.gov/search/open/term=child+%5BAGE-GROUP%5D+AND+%22mental+health%22+%5BALL-FIELDS%5D] NIH (National Institutes of Health)

Research

- Daily or Severe Tantrums May Point to Mental Health Issues [http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2012/daily-or-severe-tantrums-may-point-to-mental-health-issues.shtml] NIH (National Institute of Mental Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Programs aim to help schools identify and address mental illness... [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23632696?tool=MedlinePlus]

Dictionaries/Glossaries

- Mental Health Dictionary [http://www.aboutourkids.org/families/disorders_treatments/mental_health_dictionary] (NYU Child Study Center)

Directories

Mental Health
- Psychologist Locator [http://locator.apa.org/] (American Psychological Association)

Organizations
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [http://www.aacap.org/]

Law and Policy

Statistics

Children
- Going to a Psychologist, Psychiatrist, or Therapist [http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/going_to_therapist.html] (Nemours Foundation)
- Also available in Spanish [http://kidshealth.org/kid/en_espanol/sentimientos/going_to_therapist_esp.html]
- Storm in My Brain: Kids and Mood Disorders (Bipolar Disorder and Depression) [http://www.dbsalliance.org/pdfs/storm.pdf] (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) - PDF

Patient Handouts
- Reactive attachment disorder of infancy or early childhood [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001547.htm]
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/ency/article/001547.htm]
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/ency/article/002059.htm]
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000588.htm]

You may also be interested in these related encyclopedia pages:
- Reactive attachment disorder of infancy or early childhood [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001547.htm]

You may also be interested in these related MedlinePlus topics:

The primary NIH organization for research on Child Mental Health is the National Institute of Mental Health [http://www.nimh.nih.gov]

Date last updated: 15 July 2013
Topic last reviewed: 6 June 2013