

Childhood Disorders

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Oppositional defiant disorder is characterized by negativistic, defiant, disobedient, and hostile behavior toward authority figures. Since all children exhibit some degree of defiance, it might be tempting for parents to see this as a normal part of childhood. However, the difficult behaviors that comprise this disorder exceed what would be typical in the average child.

Conduct Disorder

A more severe behavior disorder is conduct disorder, which is a chronic pattern of the violation of the rights of others. Conduct disorder is sometimes referred to as the adolescent version of antisocial personality disorder since antisocial personality disorder can be diagnosed only in adults. Similarly, conduct disorder can be diagnosed only in adolescents. However, conduct disorder and antisocial personality disorder are linked in that conduct disorder is a necessary prodromal phase for the diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder. Although all adults who have antisocial personality disorder must have had conduct disorder in their youth (otherwise, they would not have qualified for antisocial personality disorder), not all adolescents with conduct disorder will develop antisocial personality disorder. In fact, since adults with antisocial personality disorder are extremely dangerous, when an adolescent has conduct disorder, every attempt should be made to implement the appropriate interventions in order to give the adolescent every opportunity not to develop antisocial personality disorder.