

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

I recall as an adolescent being uncooperative and displaying disturbing outbursts toward my mother and other people of authority. This disorder impacts a child's ability to function and live as a happy and normal adolescence. Children who show these traits should seek professional help with a qualified therapist. The cause of oppositional disorder is unknown but likely is a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

Behavior associated with this disorder causes anger, irritability, defensive behavior and vindictiveness. ODD is not an uncommon phenomenon. It's estimated that between 2 to 16 percent of children and teens have this disorder with over 200,000 children suffering from this disorder in the United States today. As I have previously mentioned, if a child's issues are severe and seem uncommon for their age, you may be searching for answers for these behavioral problems. Although I am not a behavioral professional, an evaluation from a child development expert can help. As disturbing as it may seem, ODD can last for years or even a lifetime.

According to child development experts, Oppositional Defiant Disorder symptoms may be difficult to recognize the difference between a strong willed or an emotional child. Also, it is common for a child to show oppositional behavior at certain stages of development.

Many child development experts say that symptoms of oppositional disorder can begin during preschool years. Sometimes it may develop later but most always before the early teen years and is frequently ongoing. They cause severe problems with relationships, social activities, school, and work for both the child and the family.

For some children, symptoms may first be seen only at home. But with time, problem behavior also may happen in other settings, such as school, social activities and with friends. Experts say your child won't see their own behavior as a problem. Instead, your child will probably complain about unreasonable demands or blame others for problems. As I have previously mentioned, if you think your child may have Oppositional Defiant Disorder or other mental health, or you're concerned about your ability to parent your child, seek help from a mental health expert who specializes in child development.

There is no clear cause of Oppositional Defiant Disorder. Causes may include a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Some mental health experts claim that a child's natural personality or the child's temperament may be a contributing factor to this disorder. Problems with parenting that may involve a lack of supervision, inconsistent or harsh discipline or abuse or neglect may contribute to developing ODD. This disorder may lead to other problems.

1. poor school and work performance.
2. antisocial behavior
3. legal problems
4. impulse control issues
5. substance use disorder
6. suicide.

Many children and teens with this illness also have other mental health conditions such as, Attention deficit / hyperactivity disorder, Conduct disorder (which I will be discussing in another upcoming article), Depression, Anxiety, Learning and communication disorder.

There's no sure way to prevent Oppositional Defiant Disorder, but positive parenting and early treatment can help improve behavior and prevent the situation from getting worse. The earlier ODD can be managed the better. Treatment can help restore your child's self-esteem and rebuild a positive relationship between you and your child. Your child's relationship with other important adults in their life, such as teachers and care providers, will also benefit from early treatment.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Ronald G. Rossetti MBA, Article # 31, Volume # 2, Series # 2
International Alliance for Mental Health (2024)