

EMOTIONAL AND/OR BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS



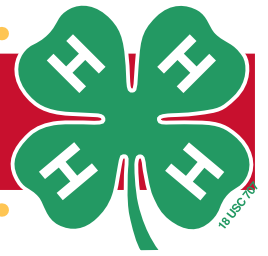
Disclaimer: No two individuals with emotional or behavioral disorders are the same. Symptoms or even the severity of symptoms will not be the same. What works for one individual may not work for another.

Definition and Statistics (Council for Exceptional Children, 2020)

- Emotional disturbance characterized by one or more symptoms over a long period of time
- Encompasses a large number of disorders:
 - Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Conduct Disorder, Eating Disorders, Bipolar Disorder (Bipolar I and Bipolar II), or Schizophrenia
- Most disorders are not physically observable, leading some to view youth as a troublemaker
- Individual's physical, cognitive, or social skills may be affected

Symptoms/Characteristics (Council for Exceptional Children, 2020)

- While each disorder has specific symptoms, below are common characteristics
 - Hyperactivity
 - Aggression
 - Withdrawal
 - Learning difficulties
 - Poor concentration
 - Often speaks out with irrelevant information with no turn taking
 - Does not follow or appear to care about rules
 - Resistance to change and transitions in routine
 - Inattentive and distractible
 - Impulsive behavior; disrupts activities
 - Intimidates and bullies others
 - Low self-esteem
 - Consistently blames others for their dishonesty
 - Experiences difficulty working with groups
 - Frequently demonstrates self-injurious behaviors
 - Often is manipulative in situations



Adaptation Considerations

*If youth needs reasonable accommodations, please work with county Extension staff. Details are outlined on the Reasonable Accommodation Practices website: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/reasonable-accommodation-practices>

- Create an environment that encourages youth engagement, safety, and a positive climate
- Foster engaging, useful, and positive learning opportunities
- Provide immediate encouragement and feedback
 - Promote self-esteem and confidence every chance. Praise the youth for doing something great. Praise the act not the youth. Likewise, point out inappropriate behavior rather than tell the youth they are bad.
- Use interests to motivate
- Set rules and expectations and the consequences associated with not complying. Collaborate with youth to develop these
- Provide youth with opportunities to become responsible
- Promote cooperation; encourage positive interactions; use a variety of groupings to promote strong social foundations for ALL youth
- Provide a schedule of activities. If the schedule needs to change, introduce it gradually
- Limit distractions
- Create a reward system
- Be consistent and develop a routine
- Balance active and passive activities

Additional Resources

The following websites are general emotional/behavioral disorder resources. If you want more specific information, do a web search related to that disorder.

- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities: <http://nichcy.org/disability/specific/emotionaldisturbance>
- PACER Center: <http://www.pacer.org/ebd/>
- Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders: <http://www.ccbd.net/hom>
- Kids Mental Health: <http://www.kidsmentalhealth.org/childrens-behavioral-and-emotional-disorders>

References

1. Council for Exceptional Children. (2020). *Behavioral disorders: Definitions, characteristics & related information*. <https://community.cec.sped.org/ccbd/about/ebddefinition>
2. Chapleau, A., & Harrison, J. (2017). Mood disorders. In B. J. Atchison & D. Powers Dirette (Eds.), *Conditions in occupational therapy* (pp. 119-127). Wolters Kluwer.
3. Morkut, B. G., & Atchinson, B. J. (2017). Complex trama. In B. J. Atchison & D. Powers Dirette (Eds.), *Conditions in occupational therapy* (pp. 193-204). Wolters Kluwer.

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