313.81 Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Oppositional defiant disorder is described by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV as an ongoing pattern of disobedient, hostile and defiant behavior toward authority figures which goes beyond the bounds of normal childhood behavior. People who have it may appear very stubborn.

The 2000 Diagnostic & Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) provides criteria for diagnosing ODD.

The criteria are presented here in modified form in order to make them more accessible and available to a wider audience. They are listed here for information purposes ONLY and should ONLY be used to diagnose or treat Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

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Oppositional Defiant Disorder

A brief synopsis of the diagnostic criteria for Oppositional Defiant Disorder

A) A pattern of negativistic, hostile, and defiant behavior lasting at least 6 months, during which four (or more) of the following are present:

(1) often loses temper

(2) often argues with adults

(3) often actively defies or refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules

(4) often deliberately annoys people

(5) often blames others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior

(6) is often touchy or easily annoyed by others

(7) is often angry and resentful

(8) is often spiteful or vindictive

Note: Consider a criterion met only if the behavior occurs more frequently than is typically observed in individuals of comparable age and developmental level.

B) The disturbance in behavior causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic or occupational functioning.

C. The behaviors do not occur exclusively during the course of a psychotic or mood disorder

D. Criteria are not met for Conduct Disorder, and, if the individual is age 18 years or older, criteria are not met for Antisocial Personality Disorder.

ODD - Diagnostic Criteria

To meet DSM-IV criteria, certain factors must be taken into account:

First, the defiance must interfere with the child's ability to function in school, home, or the community.

Second, the defiance cannot be the result of another disorder, such as the more serious conduct disorder, depression, anxiety or a sleep disorder.

Third, the child's problem behaviors have been happening for at least six months

There are several sources of controversy around the diagnosis of ODD (The American Journal Of Psychiatry) …

One concerns the fact that the DSM-IV criteria differ slightly from those of the World Health Organization's criteria, as outlined in the ICD-10

Diagnosis of ODD is further complicated by the high occurrence of co-morbidity with other disorders such as AD/HD

A 2002 study provided additional support for the validity of ODD as an entity distinct from conduct disorder.

The utility of the DSM-IV criteria to diagnose preschoolers has been questioned because the criteria were developed using school-age children and adolescents. The authors concluded that the criteria could be used effectively when developmental level was factored into assessment.

Other critics maintain that the diagnostic criteria for ODD simply reflect normal behaviors for children and young adults.