

Could your child be ODD??

No, it does not mean Odd, like unusual or strange. ODD stands for Oppositional Defiant Disorder. The symptoms of ODD are usually seen in multiple settings, but are really, really noticeable at home and at school. Common to adolescence are teenagers that talk back, do not listen, openly defy their parents, and are hostile at times. However, they occur every now and then and are not seen as a regular and constant pattern of behaving. Children/teenagers with Oppositional Defiant Disorder can only be diagnosed if the behaviors occur more frequently than in normally observed in children/teenagers of the same age group. Of course parents are going to have an occasional conflict with their children, that is completely normal, however the conflict becomes more frequent and intense, than ODD should be considered.

By definition, ODD is a pattern of negativistic, hostile, and defiant behavior lasting at least six months, during which four (or more) of the following symptoms 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/her mistakes
- 6.) Is often touchy or easily annoyed by others
- 7.) Is angry or resentful
- 8.) Is often spiteful or vindictive

If these symptoms describe your child or teenager, then a diagnosis of Oppositional Defiant Disorder should be considered. A comprehensive evaluation should be completed to ascertain if this is the correct diagnosis or if another problem is present such as Conduct Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, or ADHD. There is an overlap in the symptoms of ODD and Conduct Disorder as well as in ADHD and Bipolar Disorder and a good evaluation is necessary in order to determine a correct diagnosis and to obtain treatment. Treatment usually includes family training on how to deal and work with the behavioral problems, cognitive-behavioral therapy with a counselor, anger management, and training with the child/teenager on how to interact more appropriately with others.

Kara T. Tamanini, M.S., LMHC
Author and Therapist
Founder of Kids Awareness Series
www.KidsAwarenessSeries.com

Kara T. Tamanini is a licensed therapist that works with children/adolescents with a variety of childhood mental disorders.