

## Seek Treatment for Oppositional Defiant Disorder Before it is Too Late

Contributed by Mark Gregston  
Saturday, 16 June 2007

Parents often are unsure of why their teenager suddenly becomes mean, defiant and abusive of those in authority. If this behavior isn't treated, it can lead to real difficulties for parents and teen, and even dangerous outcomes.

{mosbotwordcount}

My simplistic description of Oppositional Defiant Disorder is when a teenager: "Constantly disobeys his parents and is basically stuck in an outwardly nasty mood when around anyone in authority."

Such behavior is normal to a degree in most teenagers, but when it gets out of hand and starts to affect your home and his or her education (with conflicts with other students and teachers) it may be a more serious disorder that needs to be taken care of.

{bot\_wrgoogle}Here are some symptoms of Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

Vindictive: Looks for ways to get vengeance

Defiant: Seemingly enjoys acts of defiance

Projecting Blame: Blames others for their behavior

Disruptive: Intentionally upsets others

Visible Anger: Bad temper, fits

Conflict: Continual arguing with anyone in authority

If you notice your child is behaving excessively in these areas, it is a good chance they have ODD. Do not ignore these systems. If they are not addressed they can get worse and create major problems for you and your child's future, including problems with authorities, acts of violence, or self-destructive behavior.

What to do if you suspect your child has ODD

If you notice your child is presenting these symptoms, you should first have your child see a trained counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist. Have your child evaluated to determine if it is ODD, or possibly a hormone or chemical imbalance. Physical tests may be required. Your child may also have a learning disorder, a drug or alcohol addiction, he or she could be encountering a bully in school, or it could be due to hidden abuse (current or past). It is important

to know the root cause of the problem and treat that, not medicate the behavior.

### How to handle your teen with ODD

Ways to handle ODD include training for the parents to help them learn how to manage their child. A psychiatrist can determine if medications are required. And if there are medical or drug abuse issues, they can be treated. Concerning abuse, that is often a major factor in ODD and may require years of counseling to work through.

If things get so out of hand between the parents and teen that a break is needed for everyone involved, the parents may want to consider a therapeutic boarding school. Such schools have professional counselors on staff and know how to best deal with ODD teens.

Therapeutic boarding school programs are set up to specifically deal with ODD in teens on a daily basis. They can also help teach and encourage the parents, provide regular counseling for the teen and give time for proper medications to take hold.

For more information you may want to check out this website:

<http://www.heartlightministries.org>