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Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is a type of disorder that negatively affects the child's behavior. This behavior can be expressed through actions such as the child often argues with adults, loses their temper, deliberately annoys people, being spiteful or vindictive, and blames others for their mistakes or misbehavior (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022). This disorder can be evidently seen in young children before the age of 8. Children with ODD have also been commonly found in families with marital problems or one parent with a history of a disorder such as ADHD, ODD, substance-related disorder, or even an antisocial personality disorder (Franklin et al., 2012).

ODD Criteria

Due to the criteria of ODD being similar to other diagnosis, it is important to refer to the DSM-5 to seek clarification to avoid a misdiagnosis. There are three main criteria that an individual must resonate with to be diagnosed with ODD. The student must have a consistent angry or irritable mood, defiant/headstrong behavior, and vindictiveness (APA, 2022). Once it is clarified that the student has ODD, a mental health professional can then determine the frequency of each symptom to determine how severe the diagnosis is. Determining the severity of the diagnosis can then help the mental health professional proceed with appropriate interventions.

Impact in Educational Setting

Oppositional Defiant Disorder can interfere with the academic success in a student. ODD can impact a student's academic success by disrupting the learning environment with the projected negative behaviors associated with the diagnosis. This can be shown through angry outbursts in the classroom and truancy. Students with ODD are also most likely to drop out of school and

participate in substance abuse (Franklin et al., 2012). Due to these potential outcomes, it is important for school personnel to seek appropriate interventions to avoid the long-term effects of the student's ODD.

Interventions

There are many interventions that may be effective in addressing a student with ODD. Problem-solving and social skills training in group settings is a great way to allow children to practice positive behaviors towards various situations. In this group setting, the children are taught core competencies to adhere to and then use the learned skills to practice in hypothetical scenarios (Franklin et al., 2012). This allows children to process their emotions or behaviors in a safe and supervised environment. The problem-solving model is used as a foundation for this type of intervention. It involves the child to use critical thinking to address the presenting problem with possible solutions and evaluate how it impacted the initial conflict. This intervention is adjusted to meet level of development of the child. For example, in younger children the facilitator may incorporate toys and puppets to the process versus practicing longer role-play scenarios with the older kids. As a result of this intervention, children can become more thoughtful in their efforts to solve their future problems.

The Response to Intervention framework should be used to conduct an assessment of the severity of ODD in a student. The severity of the diagnosis can impact the type of intervention given. From a tier 1 standpoint, a teacher may intervene in the classroom by playing Good Behavior games. This game helps manage behavior by rewarding students who are expressing appropriate behavior in class. Thus, encouraging the other students to participate in good behavior. At tier 2, a mezzo approach is used where the student may be directed to an educational skills group. In this group, several coping skills are taught so students can learn how

to manage behaviors and emotions such as anger, stress, assertiveness, and problem-solving. Lastly, at tier 3 a more individualized approach may be implemented to address the student's needs by meeting with a mental health professional one-on-one or involving the parent for a more supportive and intensive approach. This type of intervention is typically led by the school social worker who may provide case management to the student and extend resources to the family (Franklin et al., 2012).

Key Points

It is important to keep in mind several factors that may help address students with ODD. For one, we must note that there are no pharmacological and individual interventions that are clinically effective. So, it is important to emphasize group interventions and parent trainings (Franklin et al., 2012). Another key point is that Oppositional Defiant Disorder can be addressed in schools by creating a safe and approachable environment for the students. This involves school personnel to recognize their own reactivity and respond in a calm manner. This can reflect onto the students and soon they will also respond with the same consistent manner they have been receiving. Lastly, although there is a lack of evidence-based interventions for ODD, schools should still implement a variety of interventions that are appropriate in addressing negative behaviors associated with ODD. This includes groups that teach social skills, problem-solving, and anger management (Franklin et al., 2012).

As you can see, Opposition Defiant Disorder is a prevalent issue among young children and this disorder can impact their academic success. As a mental health professional in a school environment, it is crucial to educate ourselves on the possible challenges a student may encounter and what interventions are appropriate to address the concerns.

Reference

- American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed., text rev.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787>
- Franklin, C., Harris, M. B., & Allen-Meares, P. (Eds.). (2012). *The school services sourcebook, second edition: A guide for school-based professionals*. Oxford University Press, Incorporated.