

Behavioural Problems

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Abstract

Childhood is a phase of development when children develop motor and social skills, language & behavior, learn to regulate emotions and control their behavior. Any disruption to a child's mental or emotional development might result in behavioral problems. Certain kids exhibit remarkably tough and demanding behaviors that defy expectations for their age group. Childhood mental health problems are quite prevalent. These include developmental issues anxiety, depression, ODD, CD, and emotional-obsessive-compulsive disorder.

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Introduction

The point at which two gametes that have been charged with energy come together to form a zygote is where life begins. Life has always operated under the principle of survival of the fittest; over its lengthy journey from a single-celled zygote to a multi-organ baby, life has adapted to its mother's womb. Every stage, from the initial union to the child's rearing, influences how a child develops into a typical youngster or one who exhibits certain behavioral issues.

Children are precious assets of parents and future nation builders. Childhood is a phase of development when children develop motor and social skills, language & behavior, learn to regulate emotions and control their behavior. Starting from the womb, a child passes through phases of physical, mental, and social development

until he achieves adulthood. Any disruption to a child's mental or emotional development might result in behavioral problems.

It's common for young toddlers to occasionally act impulsively, defiantly, and naughtily. Nonetheless, certain kids exhibit remarkably tough and demanding behaviors that defy expectations for their age group. These days, it's typical for behavioral issues to surface currently as kids attempt to adjust to the changing environment, establish their independence, and go through different changes like starting school or meeting new friends.

Epidemiology

Children below 15 years represent 1/3rd of the world's population & approximately 10

– 15% of them are crippled with behavioral disorders. 80% of world's children live in developing countries where mental health services are negligible. Recent surveys show that the prevalence of mental health problems in school children varies from 6.33% to 43.1%. The prevalence of behavioral and emotional problems among orphans' ranges from 18.3% to 64.53%. Overall, the prevalence of behavioral disorders in children and adolescents in different studies have been reported from 10% to 42%, being more common among males (5-7). Studies from India have revealed the prevalence rates to be 6.3% - 12.5% in 0-16yrs community-based sample from different parts of the country.

As per the Government survey > 400 Indian students lost their life in abroad due to Suicide in last 5 years. Childhood mental health problems, or MHDs, are quite prevalent. These include developmental issues (speech/language delay, intellectual impairment, autism spectrum), anxiety, depression, ODD, CD, and emotional-obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

Causes: The causes of ODD, CD and ADHD are unknown but some of the risk factors include:

- Gender – Boys are more prone than girls.
- Gestation and birth – Difficult pregnancies, premature birth, low birth weight, isolated environment may contribute in some cases later in life.
- Temperament – Children who are moody or aggressive from an early age are more likely to develop behavioral disorders later in life.
- Family life –Dysfunctional families, for example families where domestic violence, poverty, poor parenting skills or substance abuse are a problem show higher risks.

- Learning challenges: Reading and writing issues are frequently linked to behavioral issues.
- Intellectual difficulties: Behavioral issues are twice as common in children with intellectual disabilities.
- Brain development: Research indicates that children with ADHD tend to have reduced activity in the parts of the brain responsible for controlling attention.
- Modern technologies – Children these days have a greater exposure to mobiles & TVs and a lesser exposure to open parks and grounds making their communication skills poorly developed.

Study shows that kids who consume energy drinks are more prone to mental health disorders.

Types of Behavioral Problems

- Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD): About 1/10 of children under the age of 12 years are thought to have an ODD with boys to girl's ratio of 2:1
- Conduct Disorder (CD): Children with conduct disorders show delinquent behavior and refusal to accept rules and are often judged as 'bad kids. Relevance ration in boys to girls is 4:1. Some of the typical behaviors of a child with CD may include: Frequent refusal to obey parents and others, frequent lying, A tendency to run away from home and Suicidal tendencies although rare, Tendency to use drugs, including cigarettes and alcohol, at a very early age, Desire to start physical fights also may use weapons, Criminal behavior such as stealing, deliberately lighting fires, breaking into houses and vandalism, Lack of empathy and being aggressive to animals and other people or showing sadistic behaviors including bullying and physical or sexual abuse.

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): Around 2 to 5% of children are thought to have ADHD, with boys to girls being 3:1. The characteristics of ADHD can include: Inattention is defined as having trouble focusing, forgetting directions, and switching between tasks without finishing any of them. Impulsivity includes talking over other people, having a "short fuse," and being prone to mishaps. Overactivity – constant restlessness and fidgeting. Avoiding Eye contact, Movements like spinning, hand waving, etc. Slow in learning to walk and speak.
- Anxiety: Children with anxiety experience persistent fears and worries that don't go away. They are often afraid to separate from their parents. They don't want to be around people so avoid going to school. Always worrying about something terrible occurring. Often experience panic attacks.
- Depression: Children with depression don't get over their feelings within a few days or even a few weeks. They may find themselves having trouble enjoying themselves. Sleeping too much or lack of sleep, having little energy or being sluggish. Mostly lost in thoughts and absent minded. Changes in eating habits. Self-harming behavior.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Children who go through or witness a traumatic or stressful event often experience emotional after-effects that can lead to long-term symptoms. They often constantly replay the event in their mind with sleeplessness and nightmares. Easily get triggered by anything that reminds them of that experience and avoid people or places that might remind

them of the event. Behave emotionally numb.

Conclusion

Children with behavioral problems shall be treated compassionately and with empathy. The reason for such problems shall be reviewed and suitable measures to be taken so that the child leads a normal childhood.

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