



Exploring Kids and Mental Health

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*THE FAMILY FARM
“More than a business,
the family farm is a
lifestyle, it is an ideal
worth preserving”*



Mental Health vs. Mental Illness/Disorder

- Mental health is the overall wellness of how you think, regulate your feelings and behave. A mental illness, or mental health disorder, is defined as patterns or changes in thinking, feeling or behaving that cause distress or disrupt a person's ability to function.
- Mental health disorders in children are generally defined as delays or disruptions in developing age-appropriate thinking, behaviors, social skills or regulation of emotions. These problems are distressing to children and disrupt their ability to function well at home, in school or in other social situations
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/mental-illness-in-children/art-20046577>

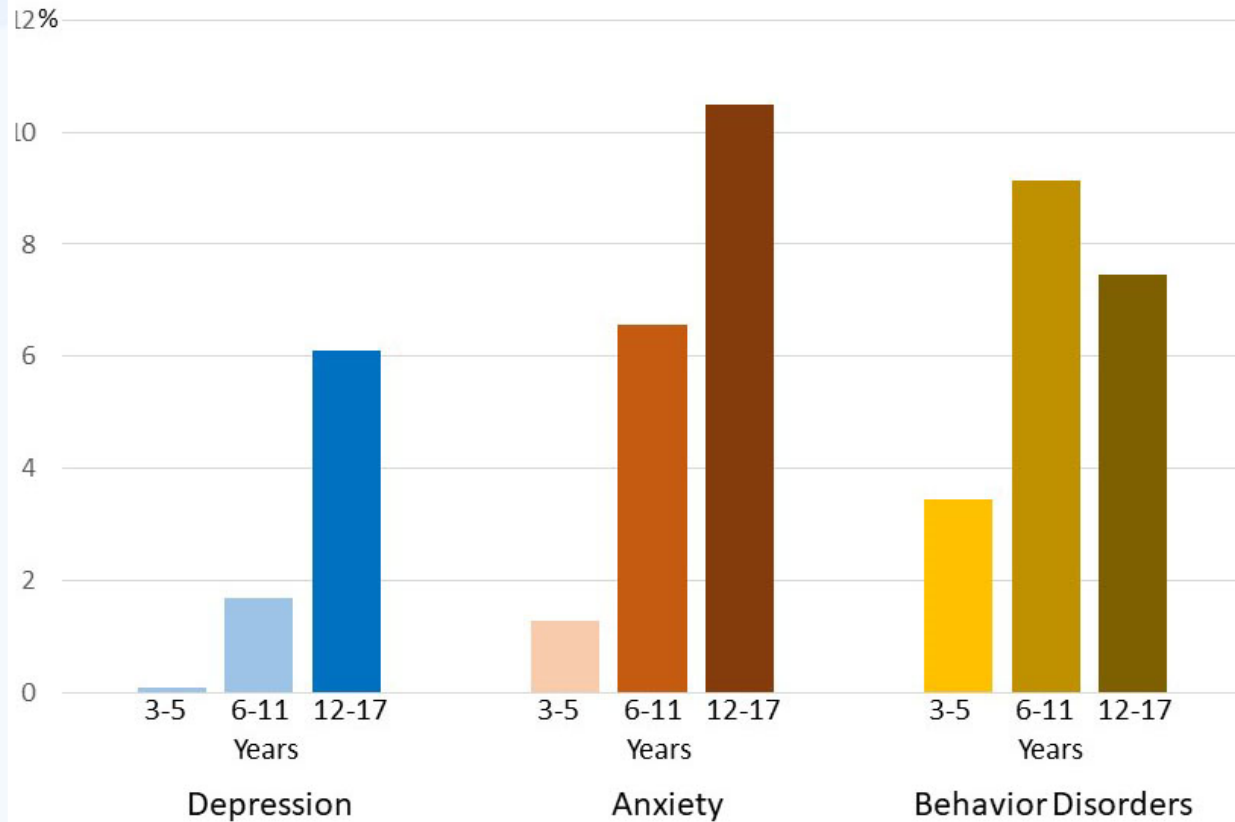


1 in 6 children aged 2-8 years
has a mental, behavioral, or
developmental disorder.

Prevalence of Mental Disorders

[https://www.cdc.gov/childrens
mentalhealth/data.html](https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html)

Depression, Anxiety, Behavior Disorders, by Age



Prevalence of Mental Disorders

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Is this normal development...or is this a problem??

- Signs/symptoms last weeks or months
- Issues interfere with daily functioning at home, school, and with friends



Warning Signs in Children



- Frequent tantrums
- Often talk of fear/worry
- Stomach- and/or head-aches
- Sleep disturbances
- Not interested in playing
- Struggle or decline academically
- Repeat actions/check things out of fear

Warning Signs in Adolescents



- *Loss of interest*
- *Low energy or periods of high energy*
- *Isolating/avoiding family/friends*
- *Sleep disturbances*
- *Fear of gaining weight*
- *Self-harm*
- *Thoughts of suicide*
- *Risky/destructive behaviors*
- *Hallucinations/delusions*

Common Diagnoses

- *Anxiety Disorders*
- *Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)*
- *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*
- *Eating Disorders*
- *Depression & other mood disorders*
- *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*
- *Schizophrenia*



The Who and How of a Diagnosis

- Who can diagnose? MD, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Mental Health Professional, Clinical Social Worker
- How is a diagnosis made?
 - Medical Exam
 - History: Family, Symptoms, Trauma, Academics
 - Developmental Progress
 - Interviews and Screening Tools



Treatment



- *Psychotherapy*
- *Medication*

Helping Your Child Cope

- Learn about illness/disorder
- Family Counseling
- Ask for advice on how to handle behavior
- Parent support groups/training programs
- Stress Management Techniques
- Relax and have fun with child
- Recognize positives
- Work collaboratively with school/caretakers

Setting the Stage for Good Mental Health

- *Unconditional Love*
- *Self-Confidence*
- *High Self-Esteem*
- *Encouraging Teachers*
- *Supportive Caretakers*
- *Safety and Security*
- *Guidance and Discipline*



References

- Mayo Clinic <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/mental-illness-in-children/art-20046577>
- Mental Health America <https://www.mhanational.org/what-every-child-needs-good-mental-health>
- National Institute of Mental Health
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/index.shtml>
- Centers for Disease Control
<https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>

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