







## SYMPTOMS/BEHAVIOURS

- Sudden unprovoked anger
- Arguing with adults
- Defiance or refusal to comply with rules or requests
- Deliberately aggravating others
- Blaming others for their misbehaviour
- Resentful and angry

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Students with ODD may consistently challenge the class rules, refuse to do assignments and argue or fight with other students. The constant testing of limits and arguing can create a stressful classroom environment. This behaviour can cause significant impairment in both social and academic functioning.

## SERIES ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

-  Anxiety
-  Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
-  Asperger's Syndrome
-  Autism Spectrum Disorder
-  Conduct Disorder
-  Depression
-  Eating Disorders
-  Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
-  Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
-  **Oppositional Defiant Disorder**
-  Reactive Attachment Disorder
-  Tourette Syndrome

### TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Gord Ewin Centre for Education  
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Sudbury, ON P3E 2P8  
Phone: 705.523.3308  
rainbowschools.ca

This series on mental health and well-being is a Rainbow District School Board Parent Involvement Committee project funded by the Ministry of Education Parent Engagement Office.



## OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER

# ABOUT OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER

**Students with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) appear angry most of the time. They are quick to blame others for mistakes and act in negative, hostile and vindictive ways. All students exhibit these behaviours at times. Typically, these behaviours occur more frequently for those with ODD than individuals of comparable age and level of development.**

Students with ODD often display behaviours that alienate them from their peers, resulting in poor peer relationships. In addition, these students may have an unusual response to positive reinforcement or feedback. When given praise, they could react by destroying or sabotaging the project from which the praise was given.

Some students develop ODD as a result of stress and frustration from divorce, death, loss of family or family disharmony. ODD may also be a way of dealing with depression or the result of inconsistent rules and behaviour standards.

If not recognized and corrected early, oppositional and defiant behaviour can become ingrained. Other mental health disorders may, when untreated, lead to ODD. A student with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) may exhibit signs of ODD, due to the experience of constant failure at home or at school.

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## INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS AND CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

- Avoid power struggles.  
State your position clearly and concisely.
- Choose your battles wisely.
- Give two choices when decisions are needed.  
State them briefly and clearly.
- Establish clear classroom rules.  
Be clear about what is non-negotiable.
- Post a daily schedule so students know what to expect.
- Praise students when they respond positively.
- Avoid making comments or bringing up situations that may be a source of argument for them.
- Make sure academic work is at an appropriate level.  
When work is too difficult, students become frustrated. When it is too simple, they become bored. Both reactions lead to classroom disruptions.
- Avoid infantile materials to teach basic skills.  
Materials should be positive and relevant.
- Pace instruction. When students with ODD have completed a designated amount of a non-deferred activity, reinforce their co-operation by allowing them to do something they prefer, or find more enjoyable or less difficult.
- Allow sharp separation to occur between academic periods but hold transition times between periods to a minimum.
- Systemically teach social skills including anger management, conflict resolution strategies and appropriate assertiveness.
- Discuss strategies that students may use to calm themselves when they feel anger is escalating.  
Do this when students are calm.
- Provide consistency, structure and clear consequences for the student's behaviour.

- Select material that encourages student interaction. Students with ODD need to learn to talk to peers and adults in an appropriate manner; however, all co-operative learning activities must be carefully structured.
- Minimize downtime and plan transitions carefully. Students with ODD do best when kept busy.
- Maximize student performance through the use of individualized instruction, cues, prompting, broken down tasks, debriefing, coaching, and positive incentives.
- Allow students to repeat assignments to improve their score or final grade.
- Structure activities so students are not left out.
- Ask parents/guardians what works at home.



### Resources:

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: [www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org)  
Anxiety Disorders Association of America: [www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org)  
SAMHSA'S National Mental Health Information Center -  
Center for Mental Health Services: [www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov)