Red Flags of Adolescent Behavior

What are Signs that a Student May Need Mental Health Services?

A Change from the Norm

Identifiers: these behaviors *may* help teachers identify mental health needs in students

- disassociated behavior
- exaggerated reactions
- physical and verbal aggression
- detaching from peers
- tearful/despondent
- disruptive
- withdrawn
- obsessive/perfectionism/ compulsive
- sensory issues/easily over-stimulated
- change in grades
- change in personality
- "dark" writings or drawings
- deterioration in hygiene
- giddy
- impulsive
- refusal to work/non-compliance
- chronic lateness
- missing classes/poor attendance
- excessive daydreaming
- falling asleep in class
- change in physical appearance

What YOU should do:

- show sensitivity and make accommodations in the LEAST public manner
- "check-in" with the student regularly
- be aware of cultural issues
- develop a relationship with the student (and parents) and exhibit caring behaviors
- learn from, partner with, and communicate with parents
- know the school mental health processes and professionals (psychologist, social worker, counselor) in your school building
- notify parents before student is in a crisis
- know when to ask others for help
- know the difference between emotional disturbance and physical disability
- document behaviors and concerns

What YOU should NOT do:

- embarrass the student
- jump to conclusions or overreact
- advise parents about medications
- leap to a label
- assign blame
- ignore red flags
- neglect available resources
- transfer any personal issues or prejudices onto student or parents

Resources

♥ (families), ☛ (educators), Ⓟ (professionals), ☺ (all), SP (other languages), ✐ (interactive)

- **American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – www.aacap.org** *(website that assists parents & families in understanding developmental, behavioral, emotional, and mental disorders affecting children and adolescents)* ☺, SP
- **Anxiety Association of America – www.adaa.org** *(site dedicated to the public awareness of anxiety and panic disorders)* ☺, ✐
- **Autism Society of America – www.autism-society.org** *(Denver, 720.214.0794=leading source of information and referral on autism)* ☺
- **Child and Adolescent Bipolar Foundation – www.bpkids.org** *(educates, supports, and advocates for increased services to families and professionals on the nature, causes and treatment of bipolar with links to local support groups)* ☺, SP, ✐
- **Children with Attention Deficit Disorders – www.chadd.org** *(303.646.5299=provides science and evidence based information about AD/HD)* ☺, SP, ✐
- **Colorado Department of Education – www.cde.state.co.us** *(303.866.6600= educational resource site for Colorado residents)* ☺, SP
- **Colorado Mental Health Services –www.cdhs.state.co.us/ohr/mhs** *(300.866.7400= link to rules & regulations, local agencies, advisory council (s), cultural competency information and the Child Mental Health Treatment Act)* ♥
- **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance - www.ndmda.org** *(DBSA Friends & Family Support Group 303.721.1462= dedicated to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders)* ♥, ✐
- **Empower Colorado -www.empowercolorado.com** *(1.866.213.4631= provides support, education, and advocacy for parents and families)* ♥
- **Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health – www.ffcmh.org** *(Denver/Aurora Chapter* **www.coloradofederation.org**, *303.343.1019= bilingual website focused on the needs of children with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders and their families)* ☺, SP
- **Harvard Medical School-Partners Bipolar Research Program – www.manicdepressive.org** *(research, information, and a referral database dedicated to serving persons living with Bipolar)* Ⓟ
- **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill – www.nami.org** *(NAMI-CO: 303.321.3104/1.888.566.6264= an organization dedicated to improving the lives of persons affected by mental illness)* ☺, SP
- **National Information Clearinghouse for Children & Youth – www.nichcy.org** *(site which shares information about disabilities in children & youth that includes a link to state resources)* ☺, SP
- **National Institute of Mental Health Publications – www.nimh.nih.gov** *(publications, news, and events concerning mental illness)* ☺
- **National Mental Health Association – www.nmha.org** *(Colorado Chapter:* **www.mhacolorado.org**, *303.377.3040/1.800.456.3249=works to improve mental health through advocacy, education, research and service)* ☺
- **O.A.S.I.S. (Online Asperger Syndrome Information & Support) – www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger/** *(site dedicated to education about Aspergers and other Autistic Spectrum Disorders with links to local support groups)* ☺, ✐
- **Parents & Teachers of Explosive Kids -www.explosivekids.org** *(parent driven website offering education & support for parents and professionals involved with children with mental health needs)* ♥, ☛, ✐
- **Patient Advocacy Coalition, Inc. -www.patientadvocacy.net** *(303.744.7667=your recourse resource for children's mental health insurance disputes)* ☺
- **Peak Parent Center, Inc. – www.peakparent.org** *(Denver,303.864.1900/1.800.284.0251=information and support from Colorado's Parent Training and Information Center)* ☺, SP
- **The Advocacy Project – www.advocacyproject.net** *(303.680.6741=information about advocacy, resources, and events concerning special education and other issues such as children's mental health needs)*☺
- **The Bipolar Child – www.bipolarchild.com** (*Internet resource guide to information, articles, workshops, & consultations involving children and adolescents with bipolar disorder)* ☺
- **The Explosive Child – www.explosivechild.com** *(guide to misunderstood behaviors complete with nationwide workshops and resources)* ☺
- **Tourette Syndrome "Plus" – www.tourettesyndrome.net** *(information site for Tourette Syndrome, Asperger Syndrome, Anxiety Disorders and many other mental illnesses)* ☺
- **Wrightslaw – www.wrightslaw.com** *(advocacy site for parents and families of children with disabilities)* ☺