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- withdrawn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),  embeddings (educators), © (professionals), ☺ (all), sp (other languages),  (interactive)

- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry – [www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org) (website that assists parents & families in understanding developmental, behavioral, emotional, and mental disorders affecting children and adolescents)  
- Anxiety Association of America – [www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org) (site dedicated to the public awareness of anxiety and panic disorders)  
- Child and Adolescent Bipolar Foundation – [www.bpkids.org](http://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)  
- Children with Attention Deficit Disorders – [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org) (303.646.5299 = provides science and evidence based information about AD/HD)  
- Colorado Department of Education – [www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us) (303.866.6600 = educational resource site for Colorado residents)  
- Colorado Mental Health Services – [www.cdhs.state.co.us/ohr/mhs](http://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](http://www.ndmda.org) (DBSA Friends & Family Support Group 303.721.1462 = dedicated to improving the lives of people living with mood disorders)  
- Empower Colorado - [www.empowercolorado.com](http://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](http://www.ffcmh.org) (Denver/Aurora Chapter)  
- Harvard Medical School-Partners Bipolar Research Program – [www.manicdepressive.org](http://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](http://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)  
- National Information Clearinghouse for Children & Youth – [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org) (site which shares information about disabilities in children & youth that includes a link to state resources)  
- National Mental Health Association – [www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org) (Colorado Chapter: [www.mhacolorado.org](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://www.patientadvocacy.net) (303.744.7667 = your recourse resource for children’s mental health insurance disputes)  
- Peak Parent Center, Inc. – [www.peakparent.org](http://www.peakparent.org) (Denver, 303.864.1900/1.800.284.0251 = information and support from Colorado’s Parent Training and Information Center)  
- The Advocacy Project – [www.advocacyproject.net](http://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](http://www.bipolarchild.com) (Internet resource guide to information, articles, workshops, & consultations involving children and adolescents with bipolar disorder)  
- The Explosive Child – [www.explosivechild.com](http://www.explosivechild.com) (guide to misunderstood behaviors complete with nationwide workshops and resources)  
- Tourette Syndrome “Plus” – [www.tourettessyndrome.net](http://www.tourettessyndrome.net) (information site for Tourette Syndrome, Asperger Syndrome, Anxiety Disorders and many other mental illnesses)  
- Wrightslaw – [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com) (advocacy site for parents and families of children with disabilities)