

CONDUCT DISORDER

Students with conduct disorder can disrupt the school environment and interfere with the learning process. The counselor needs to recognize symptoms and work with the school to diminish interruptions and in setting behavioral and learning goals for the conduct disordered student.

Symptoms

1. Persistent refusal to comply with rules or expectations in home, school or community.
2. Lack of sensitivity to the thoughts, feelings and needs of other people.
3. School adjustment is characterized by disrespectful attitude toward authority figures and frequent disruptive behaviors.
4. Numerous attempts to deceive others by lying, conning or manipulating.
5. Consistent failure to accept responsibility for misbehavior accompanied by a pattern of blaming others.
6. Excessive fighting, intimidation of others, destruction of property, and cruelty or violence toward people and animals.

Possible Causes

1. Lax, harsh or inconsistent discipline
2. Physiological – seven times more prevalent in boys – increased brain wave activity
3. Exposed to stressful or chaotic environment
4. Scapegoat in family – others direct negative attention toward student
5. Learned behavior – parents show little regard for authority

Goals

1. Comply with rules and expectations in the home, school and community
2. Demonstrate acceptance of responsibility for his/her behavior
3. Resolve core conflicts that contribute to the emergence of conduct problems
4. Demonstrate increased honesty
5. Parents establish and maintain appropriate boundaries, setting firm, consistent limits
6. Demonstrate marked improvement in impulse control

How to Help

1. Arrange for psychological testing/may need to refer to outside agency

2. Examine the core conflicts that are contributing to the conduct problems
3. Set reachable goals. Concentrate on one or two behaviors to improve.
4. Actively build a level of trust with student through eye contact, empathy and listening
5. Firmly confront the student's antisocial behavior and dishonesty
6. Arrange for adult male companionship for fatherless boy
7. Confront statements in which the student blames their misbehavior on others
8. Assist parents in establishing clearly defined rules, boundaries and misbehavior