

# HANDOUT 1:

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ODD

### HOW COMMON IS ODD IN CHILDREN?

There are wide estimates of prevalence rates (1 to 11 percent). In childhood, boys more likely than girls to have ODD; gender disparity diminishes by adolescence.

### IS IT JUST A MADE-UP CONDITION TO LABEL “BAD” CHILDREN?

All children are oppositional from time to time, particularly when tired, hungry, stressed, or upset. They may argue, talk back, disobey, and defy parents, teachers, and other adults. Oppositional behavior is a normal part of development for two- to three-year-olds and early adolescents. (AACAP, Facts for Families).

However, openly uncooperative and hostile behavior becomes a serious concern when it is so frequent and consistent that it stands out when compared with other children of the same age and developmental level and when it affects the child's social, family, and academic life. When children act out persistently so that it causes serious problems at home, in school, or with peers, they may be diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD).

### IS IT TEMPORARY? DO KIDS GROW OUT OF ODD?

**It's normal to hope that your child will grow out of ODD**, but ODD won't go away by itself. Your child needs professional diagnosis and treatment early on. This will help your child develop the skills he needs to make and keep friends, get and keep a job, and build a support network later in life.

### HOW COULD IT AFFECT MY CHILD'S FUTURE?

Childhood ODD is associated with future problems. Children with ODD are at greater risk for substance abuse, cigarette smoking, anxiety, depression, antisocial behavior, and performance problems both now and later in life.

### WHAT CAUSES ODD?

ODD has been linked in some research to parenting issues, child temperament, and/or traumatic experiences.

### CAN ODD BE TREATED?

ODD is treatable. Research has shown behavioral treatments (like DOCC) can be helpful.

### WILL MY CHILD HAVE TO TAKE MEDICATION?

Medication is not part of treatment for ODD. However, if your child has a co-occurring diagnosis of ADHD, medication may be recommended.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD DOES NOT RECEIVE TREATMENT FOR ODD?

It is possible that your child will do perfectly fine with no treatment. However, if left untreated, school environments.

Untreated ODD may also increase a child's risk for anxiety, depression, antisocial behavior, and substance use disorders.