

# 7 Warning Signs your Child/Teen Needs Mental Health Care

Mental illness in children and teenagers can be hard for parents to identify. As a result, many children who could benefit from treatment don't get the help they need. Understand how to recognize warning signs of mental illness in children and how you can help your child.

Here are 7 warning signs your child may be suffering from a mental illness, and it's not just a phase that will eventually go away:



## 1 Behavior Changes

Be aware of drastic changes in behavior or personality, as well as out-of-control behavior, such as frequent fighting or arguing.

## 2 Extreme Feelings

Look for feelings of overwhelming fear or worry for no apparent reason, which may affect daily activities and interactions.

## 3 Mood Swings

Watch out for feelings of sadness or withdrawal that last for several weeks, or severe mood swings that affect relationships at home or school.

## 4 Physical Harm

Sometimes a mental health condition leads to self-injury or self-harm, such as cutting or burning yourself. Children with mental health condition also might develop suicidal thoughts or attempt suicide.

## 5 Difficulty Concentrating

Look for signs of trouble focusing or sitting still, which can lead to poor performance in school.

## 6 Substance Abuse

Look for signs of drug or alcohol use to try to cope with their feelings.

## 7 Physical Symptoms

Compared with adults, children with mental health conditions might develop headaches and stomach aches rather than sadness or anxiety.



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