

**COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES
FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER**

Our office will be closed on Monday February 13th in observance of Lincoln's Birthday. In addition, we will be closed on Monday February 20th in observance of President's Day.



Please remember to refer a friend!! Anyone who might want to be a CASA Volunteer, please encourage them to call our office for additional information. The training is set to begin March 20th.

"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong."

~George Washington



**If you have a case file from a closed case, please return that file to the office as soon as possible. Thank you!!*

**If you aren't already, please follow us on Facebook for weekly updates!*



Happy February 9th Birthday to Danna Larson! Enjoy Your Day!



Our **February** Noon-Networking will be held at the CASA office on Thursday the **9th**. Please join us for an exciting topic of Thera-Play. This topic will be presented by Brook Linenfelser, LCSW, who is the Associate Director of Clinical Services at Chaddock. We look forward to seeing you here!

Please join us on **Monday March 27th** for our quarterly evening In-Service. We will be hosting Judge Wooleyhan who will be discussing how a case travels through the court system. This presentation will be in conjunction with the New CASA training. Please RSVP.

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What Is Oppositional Defiant Disorder? Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) is one of a group of behavioral disorders called disruptive behavior disorders (DBD). These disorders are called this because children who have these disorders tend to disrupt those around them. ODD is one of the more common mental health disorders found in children and adolescents.

Physicians define ODD as a pattern of disobedient, hostile, and defiant behavior directed toward authority figures. Children and adolescents with ODD often rebel, are stubborn, argue with adults, and refuse to obey. They have angry outbursts and have a hard time controlling their temper. Even the best-behaved children can be uncooperative and hostile at times, particularly adolescents, but those with ODD show a constant pattern of angry and verbally aggressive behaviors, usually aimed at parents and other authority figures.

The most common behaviors that children and adolescents with ODD show are: • Defiance • Spitefulness • Negativity • Hostility and verbal aggression A mental health professional is often called upon if these behaviors create a major disturbance at home, at school, or with peers.

Seeking treatment for children and adolescents suspected of having ODD is critical. This disorder is often accompanied by other serious mental health disorders, and, if left untreated, can develop into conduct disorder (CD), a more serious disruptive behavior disorder. Children with ODD who are not treated also are at an increased risk for substance abuse and delinquency Some parents have trouble seeing defiant behaviors as a symptom of a mental disorder. They may want to wait to start treatment until the child matures to see if he or she will “grow out of it.” Also, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between ODD and normal, independence-seeking behavior that shows up during the “terrible twos” and early teen years. However, there is evidence to suggest that early intervention and treatment will help a child overcome ODD. Treatment also may prevent its progression into a more a serious mental health concern. Treatment usually consists of a combination of therapies, including behavioral therapy, parent training, and family therapy. Some children may benefit from medication as well. With treatment, children and adolescents can overcome the behavioral symptoms of ODD. They can learn techniques to manage their anger and develop new ways of coping with stressful situations. Treatment also can help parents learn better ways to discipline and techniques to reward good behavior. With treatment, children and adolescents with ODD can overcome their difficult behaviors and lead happier, more fulfilling lives.

What Causes ODD? There is no clear-cut cause of ODD. However, most experts believe that a combination of biological, psychological, and social risk factors play a role in the development of the disorder. Biological Factors Children and adolescents are more susceptible to developing ODD if they have: • A parent with a history of attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), ODD, or CD • A parent with a mood disorder (such as depression or bipolar disorder) • A parent who has a problem with drinking or substance abuse • Impairment in the part of the brain responsible for reasoning, judgment, and impulse control • A brain-chemical imbalance • A mother who smoked during pregnancy • Exposure to toxins • Poor nutrition Psychological Factors • A poor relationship with one or more parent • A neglectful or absent parent • A difficulty or inability to form social relationships or process social cues Social Factors • Poverty • Chaotic environment • *Abuse • Neglect • Lack of supervision • Uninvolved parents • Inconsistent discipline • Family instability (such as divorce or frequent moves)*

As you can see, the last sentence is very telling of the kinds of children we advocate for and why many of them suffer from ODD. For addition information please go to:

https://www.aacap.org/App_Themes/AACAP/docs/resource_centers/odd/

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