Where can I find additional information?

There are a number of websites that can assist you in learning more about DBDs. Below are just a few of these websites:

**American Academy of Child & Adolescents Psychiatry**
Facts for families: Conduct disorder
Website address: [http://aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/conduct_disorder](http://aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/conduct_disorder)

**Mental Health Association of Westchester**
What are disruptive behavior disorders?
Website address: [http://mhawestchester.org/diagnosechild/cbehavior.asp](http://mhawestchester.org/diagnosechild/cbehavior.asp)

**The Department of Psychiatry University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine**
Disruptive behavior disorders.
Website address: [http://www.wpic.pitt.edu/research/city/FAMILY/Behavior%20Disorders/BP.htm](http://www.wpic.pitt.edu/research/city/FAMILY/Behavior%20Disorders/BP.htm)

Where can I find assistance in Allegheny County?

**Allegheny County Telephone Crisis Intervention Line** — 24 hours a day
1-888-424-2287
This hotline provides counseling, emergency care, and referrals by professional mental health. You will receive immediate crisis counseling and/or be referred to a behavioral health provider.

**Non-emergency Behavior Health Questions - 412-350-4456**
This number connects you to Outpatient Community Treatment Services for individuals who want more information about mental health treatment services.

**Warmline**
1-866-661-WARM (9276)
This hotline is a peer network, you will be connected to a friendly voice if you just need someone to talk to.

My child has been diagnosed with a Disruptive Behavior Disorder . . .

What is a Disruptive Behavior Disorder?

What are the signs and symptoms of Disruptive Behavior Disorders?

How will a Disruptive Behavior Disorder effect my child?

What Can I do to help my child?

Plus more information to help a parent who has a child with a Disruptive Behavior Disorder.
What is a Disruptive Behavior Disorder?

In general, DBDs are considered a consistent pattern of behaviors that “break the rules.” With that in mind, it is also important to remember that all children at one time or another will display some of these behaviors. The difference between an average child and a child diagnosed with a DBD is the frequency and severity of these behaviors.

Children who have been diagnosed with a Disruptive Behavior Disorder (DBD) have shown a persistent pattern of severely disruptive, aggressive, rule-breaking behavior that is well above the range of what is considered normal in children of the same age for six months or more. These children are usually diagnosed with more specifically with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) or Conduct Disorder (CD).

Symptoms of a child diagnosed with ODD are lose temper easily, often argue with adults, actively defies adults request or rules, deliberately annoy others, blames others for their own misbehavior and mistakes, may seem touchy or easily annoyed and angry.

Symptoms of a child diagnosed with CD are aggression toward people and animals, destruction of property, deceitfulness or theft and serious rule violations such as stays out after curfew set by parents, runs away from home and is truant from school all before the age of 13.

What are the causes of Disruptive Behavior Disorders?

Experts agree that there is a broad range of factors that may lead to a DBD in a child. Although more research needs to be done experts believe that DBDs can be caused by both neurological and environmental factors.

Neurological factors are conditions in the child’s brain where the brain has very small impairments that causes the brain to function differently compared to how average child’s brain may functions. Other mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety and ADHD are thought to have neurological impairments as well.

Environmental factors are conditions in the child’s life that effects how the child functions. Environmental factors that have shown to cause DBDs are rejection of the child from the mother, separation from parent without an adequate caregiver, continued neglect from the family, abuse and violence in the home and/or community, large family size and poverty.

Parental behaviors that have shown to increase the likelihood of DBD include inconsistent/harsh discipline, poor monitoring/supervision, low levels of warmth/nurturance, high numbers of negative verbalizations towards the child.

How will a Disruptive Behavior Disorder affect my child?

Symptoms of DBDs can make it very difficult for children function successfully with family members, peers and in school settings. The earlier DBDs are identified and treated the more likely it is that your child will learn how to become more successful in all areas of their life.

DBDs like other mental health disorders are real, painful and can be severe. The mental health of your child is a serious matter that can effect all areas of you and your child’s life. The good news is that DBDs can be treated and the earlier treatment for DBDs the more likely your child will be able to overcome his or her DBD and be able to function normally at school and home.

Will my child have Disruptive Behavior Disorder the rest of their life?

DBDs are disorders that are only identified in children and adolescence. As a child grows into adulthood and the same severe behaviors continue to exist the adult will probably meet the criteria for antisocial personality disorder, which can be looked at as and adult diagnosis of CD. Often adults will antisocial disorder will demonstrate delinquent behavior that end up in jail.

Good news, not all children diagnosed with a DBD will be effected later in life by the disorder. Treatment of your child when you identify that your child has a DBD will help in preventing your child from developing more severe disorders that will effect their lives as adults. Research has shown that only one-third of cases of CD will persist into adulthood.

What else I should know about Disruptive Behavior Disorder?

It is very common for children who have been diagnosed with DBD to also have other disorders such as Attention Deficit Disorder, learning difficulties, communication disorders, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, or substance abuse. When considering different treatment options it is important to consider if your child is displaying any signs or symptoms of these other disorders. If there are other behaviors that are concerning to you it is advisable to speak with a doctor or a mental health professional about the other symptoms.

Treatment of other disorders may be necessary before you can effectively address your child’s DBD. If the other disorders are not addressed and treated as well the treatment of your child’s DBD may be slowed down.