

Are mental health problems in children common? What should we do about them?

childhood
disability
LINK



Summary

Child and adolescent mental health problems are common and affect at least 12% of the paediatric population. The most common conditions are conduct and other disruptive disorders and emotional problems including anxiety and depressive symptoms. There is evidence that these problems affect the long-term development of these children. Despite the availability of evidence-based approaches to their treatment, the access to psychiatric care of children with severe mental health disorders is still suboptimal. Child psychiatric services should implement these evidencebased methods vigorously. Due to the scarcity of resources, child psychiatrists should work closely with primary care providers to deal with the burden of care due to child mental health problems.

Implications for families and practitioners

Mental health problems are common in children and adolescents and an attempt should be made by primary health care practitioners to identify these problems.

Psychiatric services and primary care physicians need to be more aggressive in treating these disorders of childhood.

Reference

[Michaud, P.A, Fombonne, E. \(2005\) Common mental health problems. BMJ, 330: 835 – 838.](#)
[Fombonne, E. \(2005\). Developing modern child psychiatry. World Psychiatry , 4, 156-7.](#)