

A. Two Guides on Environmental Stressors and Common Responses

The American Academy of Pediatrics has prepared a guide on mental health for primary care providers. The guide suggests that commonly occurring stressful events in a youngsters life can lead to common behavioral responses. Below are portions of exhibits that give an overview of such events and responses.

Guide 1

Environmental Situations and Potentially Stressful Events Checklist

Challenges to Primary Support Group

- Challenges to Attachment Relationship
- Death of a Parent or Other Family Member
- Marital Discord
- Divorce
- Domestic Violence
- Other Family Relationship Problems
- Parent-Child Separation

Changes in Caregiving

- Foster Care/Adoption/Institutional Care
- Substance-Abusing Parents
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Quality of Nurture Problem
- Neglect
- Mental Disorder of Parent
- Physical Illness of Parent
- Physical Illness of Sibling
- Mental or Behavioral disorder of Sibling

Other Functional Change in Family

- Addition of Sibling
- Change in Parental Caregiver

Community of Social Challenges

- Acculturation
- Social Discrimination and/or Family Isolation

Educational Challenges

- Illiteracy of Parent
- Inadequate School Facilities
- Discord with Peers/Teachers

Parent or Adolescent Occupational Challenges

- Unemployment
- Loss of Job
- Adverse Effect of Work Environment

Housing Challenges

- Homelessness
- Inadequate Housing
- Unsafe Neighborhood
- Dislocation

Economic Challenges

- Poverty
- Inadequate Financial Status

Legal System or Crime Problems

Other Environmental Situations

- Natural Disaster
- Witness of Violence

Health-Related Situations

- Chronic Health Conditions
- Acute Health Conditions

*Adapted from The Classification of Child and Adolescent Mental Diagnoses in Primary Care (1996). American Academy of Pediatrics.

Guide 2

Common Behavioral Responses to Environmental Situations and Potentially Stressful Events

EARLY CHILDHOOD (3-5Y) **BEHAVIORAL MANIFESTATIONS**

Illness-Related Behaviors

N/A

Emotions and Moods

Generally sad
Self-destructive behaviors

Impulsive/Hyperactive or Inattentive Behaviors

Inattention
High activity level

Negative/Antisocial Behaviors

Tantrums
Negativism
Aggression
Uncontrolled, noncompliant

Feeding, Eating, Elimination Behaviors

Change in eating

Fecal soiling
Bedwetting

Somatic and Sleep Behaviors

Change in sleep

Developmental Competency

Regression or delay in developmental attainments

Sexual Behaviors

Preoccupation with sexual issues

Relationship Behaviors

Ambivalence toward independence
Socially withdrawn, isolated
Excessive clinging
Separation fears
Fear of being alone

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD (6-12Y) **BEHAVIORAL MANIFESTATIONS**

Illness-Related Behaviors

Transient physical complaints

Emotions and Moods

Sadness
Anxiety
Changes in mood
Preoccupation with stressful situations
Self-destructive
Fear of specific situations
Decreased self-esteem

Impulsive/Hyperactive or Inattentive Behaviors

Inattention
High activity level
Impulsivity

Negative/Antisocial Behaviors

Aggression
Noncompliant
Negativistic

Feeding, Eating, Elimination Behaviors

Change in eating
Transient enuresis, encopresis

Somatic and Sleep Behaviors

Change in sleep

Developmental Competency

Decrease in academic performance

Sexual Behaviors

Preoccupation with sexual issues

Relationship Behaviors

Change in school activities
Change in social interaction such as withdrawal
Separation fear
Fear of being alone

Substance Use/Abuse...

ADOLESCENCE (13-21Y) **BEHAVIORAL MANIFESTATIONS**

Illness-Related Behaviors

Transient physical complaints

Emotions and Moods

Sadness
Self-destructive
Anxiety
Preoccupation with stress
Decreased self-esteem
Change in mood

Impulsive/Hyperactive or Inattentive Behaviors

Inattention
Impulsivity
High activity level

Negative/Antisocial Behaviors

Aggression
Antisocial behavior

Feeding, Eating, Elimination Behaviors

Change in appetite
Inadequate eating habits

Somatic and Sleep Behaviors

Inadequate sleeping habits
Oversleeping

Developmental Competency

Decrease in academic achievement

Sexual Behaviors

Preoccupation with sexual issues

Relationship Behaviors

Change in school activities
School absences
Change in social interaction such as withdrawal

Substance Use/Abuse...

* Adapted from The Classification of Child and Adolescent Mental Diagnoses in Primary Care (1996). American Academy of Pediatrics