

EMDRIA

Children's Toolkit

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD NEEDS A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL?

Children are learning to cope and manage their emotions, so it is normal that they have some ups and downs, or periods of moodiness. However, it is important to look for the help of a mental health professional if your child:

- Has sudden shifts in usual interest and habits.
- Has excessive problems with sleeping, eating, or any of the daily functions.
- Has excessive worrying or sadness.
- Has regressed in behaviors (bedwetting, clinginess, language regression - aka "baby talk," suddenly decides not to talk for a period of time, separation anxiety, excessive tantrums).
- Does not want to talk or play with any other child.
- Engages in destructive behaviors such as hitting, cutting, banging head against objects, digging nails into the skin to cause pain.
- Expresses desires of self-harm.
- Says things like: "Nobody cares if I run away" or "I wish I weren't here" or "I wish I were dead."
- Talks explicitly about suicide.
- Complains about physical pain or illness such as a stomachache or headache and the doctor has already ruled out any medical issues.
- Has experienced any traumatic event caused by nature or another person.

If you are not sure if a child needs the help of a therapist, consult with one and ask for more specific information.

You can go to: www.emdria.org and use the option "Find an EMDR Therapist" to locate someone in your area.

