

RECOGNIZING CHILDREN IN NEED OF REFERRAL  
Head Start Mental Health Services

Staff members have the best sense of a child's state of happiness. Listed below are some of the behaviors which should alert you to a child who may need Mental Health Services. In case of doubt or uncertainty refer the child and talk with the WHA consultant.

Social Indicators:

Overly aggressive  
Overly sensitive to criticism  
Overly demanding of attention  
Poor eye contact  
Resists being touched  
Disruptive  
Stubborn  
Uncooperative  
Excessively demanding  
Will not participate in games  
Whining and continually complaining  
Poor adjustment to class routine  
Defiant  
Hostile  
Uncontrollable  
Poor listening skills  
Daydreaming  
Poor peer relationships

Cognitive Indicators:

Poor memory  
Poor recognition  
Inability to grasp concepts  
Inability to generalize  
Inability to count  
Short attention span  
Difficulty following directions  
Easily distracted  
Learns at a slow rate

Language Indicators:

No language used  
Words or sentences unintelligible  
Bizarre thoughts  
Stuttering  
Articulation problems  
Monotone voice

Other Indicators:

Low percentiles on Early Assessment  
Information obtained from Family Assessment - Confidential Folder

Emotional Indicators:

Restlessness  
Lethargic  
Withdrawn  
Thumb sucking  
Head banging  
Emotionally labile  
Temper tantrums  
Nail biting  
Screaming  
Poor personal habits  
Answers inappropriately  
Destructive  
Easily frightened, timid  
Inappropriate noises  
Scratching or biting self  
Excessive apprehension  
Excessive crying  
Nervous  
Rigid movements  
Low frustration level  
Overly active  
Unusual need for order or sameness  
Pica (inappropriate eating)  
Immature for age  
Separation problems  
Depressed, non-spontaneous

Physical Indicators:

Accident prone  
Bowel and bladder problems  
Awkward (gross and fine motor)  
Poor coordination  
Easily fatigued  
Spills and drops things  
Trembling  
Tics, tremors  
Unusual patterns of overactivity and  
lethargy