

General Effects: ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder) is a condition in which a child demonstrates uncooperative, defiant, hostile, and/or annoying behavior to authority. These behaviors last over 6 months and often disrupt a child's everyday activities. It is common for children to demonstrate opposition and they may exhibit some of these symptoms without a formal diagnosis. Physical violence is rare and often ODD behaviors are directed at those individuals the child feels closest to (family, guardians, etc.). ODD symptoms may be present in one or several environments (home, school, etc.).

Symptoms include:

- Throwing repeated temper tantrums
- Excessively arguing with adults
- Actively refusing to comply with requests and rules
- Deliberately trying to annoy or upset others, or being easily annoyed by others
- Blaming others for your mistake

- Having frequent outbursts of anger and resentment
- Being spiteful and seeking revenge
- Swearing or using obscene language
- Saying mean and hateful things when upset
- Getting frustrated easily
- Maintaining a low self-esteem

Advice for Mentors:

Provide structure and regulations in a creative and simplified way

- Provide a Little with advanced notice on cancellations or date changes if needed. Understand that change may be difficult for a Little to cope with, and that they may get upset about it. Be sure to give your Little fair notice of any changes.
- Allow a Little to make some of the major hangout decisions. By allowing a Little to decide on these activities, they will view this as fun rather than required.
- Create simple and concise rules that are easily understood. Create these rules with a Little at the beginning of the match so they have some ownership. You may need rules and regulations throughout, but try your best to present these in a way that makes sense to a Little or in a way that makes rules sound less like rules.
- Avoid excessive praise. A child with ODD tends to go against the grain. If you consistently compliment them on what they are doing right, they may intentionally try to do it wrong.

Allow your Little to trust you

- Be sure to point out your vulnerabilities and mistakes, showing your Little that you trust them and that everyone makes mistakes.
- Encourage your Little to do things they love and act as an inspiration through expressing what you have done and how you got there.
- Show a Little you are here for the long-run. A good way to do this would be to make a calendar that plans out all of your scheduled activities. This will allow your Little to understand that you are looking forward to time together and that you have thought about it. Help build a sense of connection with your Little.

React to behavior issues calmly and collectively

- If a Little tries to break the rules, it is important to deal with these as they come in a consistent and immediate manner. Do your best to set limitations while making them seem like they are just part of the activity. By defining them as rules, a Little is more likely to try to break them.
- When speaking with a Little, use words that describe sadness or empathy rather than anger, and let the Little diffuse the situation. By asking a Little's advice, you are working with them, not against them. Example: "Unfortunately you are not listening to the instructions so you are unable to participate in the activity. I am sad about that and you must feel bad about that too. You are going to miss out on something fun. What do you think we should do instead?" Respond accordingly and help your Little to reflect on how they feel about the situation.
- Ask questions such as: How may I help you? Is what you are doing working for you? What could you have done differently to avoid that from happening? What do you think would work better next time?
- Meet with a Little privately; never try to approach a serious situation in front of others. Respect your Little's feelings and privacy. Listen to them and show that all your focus is on your Little. Allow a Little to explain what they did wrong and how to do it differently in the future.