

# Foothills Behavioral Health Partners

## Tips for Parents

### Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

- 1. Participate in your child's treatment.** The best treatment for ODD is family therapy so, be actively involved in creating a treatment plan and setting goals for your child and family. Help your child practice skills that he/she is learning. Talk to your child's therapist if certain techniques don't seem to be working so you can work together to modify and improve them.
- 2. Practice skills** you learn for working with your child and talk with your spouse or others in the household to develop a consistent discipline plan:
  - a. Recognize and praise your child's positive characteristics and things your child does well.
  - b. Set reasonable, age-appropriate limits and enforce consistent, reasonable Consequences
  - c. Model positive behaviors that you want your child to have
  - d. Pick your battles and try to avoid power struggles by prioritizing the things you want your child to do—safety should always come first.
  - e. Offer acceptable choices to your child, giving them some control.
- 3. Create a routine/structure** for your child. Encourage your child to use a planner and/or calendar to stay on track with daily activities, goals, etc. Be sure to build time into the weekly schedule for you and your child to spend together doing something enjoyable.
- 4. Encourage your child's participation in extracurricular activities** that promote peer involvement such as school programs, athletics, faith-based groups, or community centers. Being around peers who model appropriate behaviors can be helpful for your child.
- 5. Take care of your child's physical health.** Be sure to take your child to regular appointments with a Primary Care Physician (PCP). Inform the PCP of the treatment your child is receiving for ODD or any other mental health issues, including medications prescribed.
- 6. Be alert to your child's symptoms.** Sometimes children with ODD have other emotional or learning difficulties that can be effectively treated if recognized. These can include depression or anxiety, anger problems, or learning disabilities. It is important to talk with a therapist to assess the type of difficulties your child may be having. Tell the therapist if behaviors become worse, and include aggression towards people or animals, or destruction of property.
- 7. Communicate regularly with your child's teachers, doctor and therapist.** Ask questions whenever something is unclear. Communicate regularly with your child's teachers to stay up date with your child's behaviors and progress at school.
- 8. Take care of yourself.** Parenting a child with ODD can be challenging and frustrating at times. Get support for yourself from friends, family members, or other parents of children with ODD. Develop outside interests, and try to spend some time outside of the home to restore your energy. Learn ways to calm yourself so that you can model "keeping it cool" for your child.
- 9. Be hopeful.** Most kids with ODD do make improvements with parental involvement, support, and guidance. It can sometimes take awhile to change family patterns, and you may notice that your child's behavior gets worse before it gets better, but hang in there! The more patient and consistent you are with the child, the more likely you will see results.
- 10. Learn about ODD** and how parents can help their children manage ODD symptoms. Ask your therapist for resources or go to [www.fbhpartners.com](http://www.fbhpartners.com).

