

▶ Warning Signs

Displays frequently or excessively the following behaviors:

- ▶ Does poorly in school and does not want to attend or has an unexplained decline in school work
- ▶ Numerous minor illnesses or accidents, excessive complaints about physical ailments
- ▶ Anxiety, fearfulness or hopelessness
- ▶ Cannot pay attention or sit still
- ▶ Often aggressive and/or irritable and yells and screams at people, frequent outbursts of anger
- ▶ Frequent nightmares or irregular sleep habits including wetting the bed, marked changes in sleep habits
- ▶ Refuses to eat or has marked changes in eating habits
- ▶ Hurts other children or animals
- ▶ Refuses to be alone with another family member or acts disturbed when that person is present
- ▶ Is inappropriately affectionate or makes unusual sexual gestures
- ▶ Talks about suicide and death
- ▶ Neglects appearance
- ▶ Runs away
- ▶ Defies authority, steals or vandalizes
- ▶ Uses or abuses drugs or alcohol
- ▶ Has no friends or difficulty getting along with other children

▶ Stay Healthy

- ▶ Make sure your family gets outdoor exercise - walking is a great family activity and a great time to talk. Drink lots of water.
- ▶ Make time for some activity for your child that is both enjoyable and promotes self-reliance, accomplishment and/or relaxation.
- ▶ Eat healthy! Eat more fruits and vegetables!!
- ▶ Eating together and sharing the day is good for everyone.

▶ Helpful contacts and resources

24 Hour ACCESS and Crisis/Suicide Line:

O'ahu: **832-3100**

All other islands: **800-753-6879**

This service includes Crisis Mobile Outreach as well as Crisis Stabilization. It serves children, youth, and adults.

Mental Health America of Hawai'i:

www.mentalhealth-hi.org

Click on "Finding Help." This is a very complete resource of statewide help for people of all ages with contact information.

State of Hawai'i Network of Care for Mental / Behavioral Health

www.Hawaii.networkofcare.org

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD)

www.hawaii.gov/health/mental-health/camhd/index

O'ahu: **733-9333**

All other islands: **800-294-5282**

Hawai'i Families as Allies(HFAA):

www.hfaa.net

Warm Line O'ahu: Mon-Fri **487-8785**

All other islands: **866-361-8825**

Parent Line: www.theparentline.org

O'ahu: **526-1222**

All other islands: **1-800-816-1222**

Mentally Healthy, Physically Fit

Does My Child Need Help?



HAWAII MHT SIG

► It is often difficult to know if a child needs help, and parents are often unable to tell if a child is having problems. Divorce, death of a family member, moving, change or loss of parent's job, illness in the family, or going to a new school may all cause stress for children – but also for parents.

When deciding whether your child needs help, keep in mind that an appropriate reason to consider treatment for a child is if he or she is generally unhappy.

You may want to find help for your child if any of the following warning signs have been present for a period of time.

Some of these problems may be helped by working with a teacher, counselor or school psychologist. Help can also come from concerned family members.

It is normal for parents to experience feelings of guilt because their child is having emotional or behavioral problems. But a child's problems are not necessarily caused by problems at home. A tendency to have certain emotional or behavioral problems can be inherited. Also, it is possible that problems may be caused by changes within a child's brain or body, so the child should always have a complete medical examination.

► How do I choose a mental health professional for a child?

A mental health professional for your child should be warm and caring and also professional and objective. Parents and children should begin to feel comfortable after several sessions, though both of you may be anxious, frightened, angry or resistant to treatment at the beginning. Effective mental health professionals are trained to anticipate and work with those emotions so that open communication can take place. To select a mental health professional, you may want to talk to more than one person to see who you feel most comfortable with.

► When in doubt, consult an expert.

*It is better to
“over-react” than
to ignore problems
until they are
extremely
serious.*

► How do I talk to my child's teacher/school about mental health needs?

You don't have to talk to the school at all, but if you choose to, you can talk to the child's teacher, school counselor, or administrator about how the school might support the child in the school setting.

Public schools are required to make changes to help every child be successful in school. Parents may ask for an educational assessment to determine how the child's mental health needs might be impacting the child's ability to successfully learn.

The child may be eligible for services based upon that assessment.

The assessment is not meant to “label,” but to be sure that a child is being taught and supported in a way that will help the child be most successful.

Private schools may provide similar services. Don't be afraid to ask.

