



CARE GIVER – A CHALLENGE IN CARE OF CHILDREN WITH MENTAL ISSUES

Nursing Science

Varun Toshniwal Ph.D. Scholar, Malwanchal University, Indore

Dr. Smriti G. Solomon Guide, Malwanchal University

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION:

Children are a valuable asset of any country in its development. A healthy child contributes to a healthy and prosperous society. From birth, a child goes through stages of physical, mental and social development until reaching adulthood. All of these aspects of growth and development are equally important to the healthy health of a child. Any intervention in mental or emotional development can cause behavioral disorders in a child. "India Today" published "India is the most depressed country in the world". Many researchers have shown that 90% of the human brain develops by the age of 5. Children are excellent observers who learn new and advanced skills. Their brain perceives behavior from the environment and thus their insight develops, gradually by observation and also by how they are treated. Children look up to their parents and teachers and try to pick up bits of their behavior and imitate them. The origin of most childhood disorders is therefore before the age of 5.

Statistical facts:

The intensity of behavior problems in children has not yet been well recognized by many governments and decision makers. These problems include behavioral problems of children raised in the family structure, children involved in child labor and sex, and children orphaned by AIDS or migrated due to unavoidable circumstances. A report published by "The National Health Survey of India" in 2015-16 stated that nearly 15 million people in India need medical help to recover from their mental disorder

Children under the age of 15 represent approximately one-third of the world's population, and approximately 5-15% of them suffer from this socially handicapping behavior disorder. According to Malhotra (1992), 80% of the world's children live in developing countries where mental health services are negligible. A review of recent studies has shown that the prevalence of mental health problems in school-going children ranges from 6.33% to 43.1% in the Indian context. Children often feel unhappy, anxious, fearful and angry. They may show a lack of concentration, forgetfulness, impulsivity and difficulty controlling emotions. They may complain of various somatic problems such as unexplained headache, stomachache, anorexia and insomnia; may have difficulty building friendships or interacting with people; and can show aggression. These signs are some common signs that indicate that all is not well with the baby and the baby needs attention. Most parents, teachers, and other adults are not sensitive enough to notice these subtle forms of behavior problems. It is only taken seriously when the problem becomes severe and disabling.

Early identification promotes early recovery and shifts developmental trajectories onto a healthier and more adaptive path. Emphasis should also be placed on children outside of parental care, as they are often stressed and traumatized and lack parental affection. Children and youth who are orphans, runaways or abandoned by their families and brought up in institutional settings form one such vulnerable group under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme in India. A literature review shows the prevalence of behavioral and emotional problems among orphans and other vulnerable children ranging from 18.3% to 64.53%, while in normal community samples it was reported to range from 8.7% to 18.7%¹². A study conducted by Raslaviciene G. and Zoborskis A found that children who are neglected and abandoned develop psycho-emotional problems, namely nervousness, aggression, frustration and depression. Very few studies have been conducted on the psychological health of these children and adolescents, which urgently calls for more research in this area in

India. Therefore, this study was undertaken to identify and compare behavior problems in children in parental care and out of parental care, so that remedial measures can be taken as early as possible to reduce the incidence.

Awareness

A care giver should have enough knowledge and awareness regarding normal and abnormal characteristics of behavior, and if there is any abnormality in behavior the care giver who can either be parents, family members or teachers should observe and follow the measure to solve them. The general measures are as follows:

1. General Remedies –

- The caregivers should use natural remedies instead of or in addition to medications and clinical therapies. In the early stage of such problems, making life style changes may help to overcome these symptoms. According to the 'Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) following remedies can be recommended:
- a. Take a regular nutritious and balanced diet – child should be given proper protein, iron, calcium and other minerals required for normal physical and mental growth.
- b. Physical exercise per day – there should be at least 60 min exercise either in the form of outdoor play, running, Yoga or aerobic exercise etc.
- c. Rest & sleep – there should be 6 to 8 hours of sleep per day.
- d. Control over screen time – Over use of electronic gadgets like phones, computers, Tablets and TV are the major source of behavioral problems so screen time should have a limit on daily basis.
- e. Completion of daily assignments – It can be helpful to focus on writing down homework assignments and keeping items of daily use at their assigned positions.

2. Regular reinforcement and observation –

The children should be monitored for their new activities and proper reinforcement need to be given like of acceptable behavior child should be praised and appreciated and effective guidance and support will be provided for any unacceptable behavior and tell them the method to modify that.

3. Active observation –

Early detection of their mental and behavioral problem is essential to helping children to recover from such issues. The goal is not to let those issues carryover adulthood and lead to more severe consequences.

Caregiver v/s child

Parents: Parents are their child's teacher's best friends, so they know their child better. Parents should be open and honest with their child so that they can communicate freely and share their thoughts and problems.

Young children:

Taking care of their mental health, emotions and dealing with behavioral conflicts is as important as protecting their physical health. If there is an emotional conflict, anger, fear or sadness, they should not be afraid or feel despair, they should talk about their feelings and reach out to a trusted friend or adult.

Health practitioner:

Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment based on updated guidelines is very important. There are resources to help diagnose and treat childhood mental disorders.

Teachers/School Administrators: Early identification of such problems is important to get children the help they need. Teachers will gain knowledge with families and health professionals if you are concerned about a child's mental health at school.

Parents, teachers and family members are fundamental in the lives of young children. They help children in their growth and development in every way. A child spends most of his time either in the family or at school and learns so many things to build his behavior. They observe most of the child's activities and shape them in the right direction. As a child grows, so many confusions develop towards adaptive behavior. So the first step is to talk to a person who observes the child most of the time, maintains contact with him, is aware of his mental abilities, who can make them open up about what he is going through.

School and children behavior

Now days, in most of the families, parents have to deal with 1 or 2 or 3 kids. But, at schools, teachers have to face more than 40 children. Or more precisely, one can say many differently involved children. Understandably, in this state, it is difficult for teachers to accurately predict each child's behavior if they have little or no knowledge of normal developmental behavior. To make life easier for teachers, there is a key check that helps teachers detect any change in behavior or the onset of mental illness in children. By 'Zedua' If the following symptoms are observed in a child, then it is necessary to help this child:

1. Face difficulties in socializing with other children
2. Gets into a lot of fights and shows sudden mood swings.
3. He is constantly distracted in class or is noisy.
4. He always shows up with unfinished homework or a workbook.
5. Does not finish tiffin, secretly eat other's tiffin or any type of eating disorder.
6. Pay less attention when studying; they often look tired and sleepy throughout the day.
7. He suddenly started talking or behaving badly.

Role of teacher in developing mental health In most cases, the action taken when a child misbehaves or comes in with unfinished homework is a 'punishment.' Extra homework or standing outside the classroom. However, this does not and never has helped any child at school. The famous "murga" or "hands up" punishment has now become a joke. We laugh at memes. Subjecting students to corporal punishment is a BIG NO. For example, if a child is lonely and avoids socializing with other children, forcing them to play during PT is not the right way to handle it.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, all schools were closed and students received online education, which completely changed the approach to children's education. In this regard, UNICEF suggested 8 different ways for teachers to support the mental health of students for the return to school:

1. Listen carefully to children's concerns.
2. Check children's performance
3. Provide children with accurate information about COVID-19 and related issues.
4. Seek suggestions from children on how to create a welcoming, safe and comfortable classroom so that they can actively participate.
5. Be on the lookout for any behavioral warning signs of your child's ability to explore, play and learn.
6. Encourage games and sports to promote interaction among students
7. Explore and demonstrate good coping behaviors for students – be calm, honest and caring.
8. Take care of yourself and know your limits

The role of the teacher in the development of mental health important and can save the child from his fears and obsessions.

CONCLUSION

Parents and caregivers keep children healthy and safe, equip them with the skills and resources to succeed as adults, and impart basic cultural values. Parents and caregivers offer their children love, acceptance, recognition, encouragement and guidance. Support from parents, family and caregivers is very valuable in helping children and youth cope with adversity, especially if they experience stigma or prejudice associated with factors such as their race/ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, weight or socioeconomic status. Correcting behavior problems in children requires identifying their determinants.

Intervening and correcting various problems in their developing environment during the early school years would possibly minimize the impact of behavioral problems in their later life.

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