

MENTAL MINUTES

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WORLD AIDS DAY CAMPAIGN

Informed by those most affected by HIV, the World AIDS Campaign's™ goal is to ensure that governments and policy makers meet the HIV targets they set, the commitments they made, and mobilise the necessary resources for a world where people do not die of AIDS and opportunistic infections like TB. At the heart of the global commitment is the publicly stated ambition of Universal Access by 2010 enabling everyone to have non-discriminatory and non-judgmental access to adequate HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

World AIDS Day is celebrated on December 1 each year around the world. It has become one of the most recognised international health days and a key opportunity to raise awareness, commemorate those who have passed on, and celebrate victories such as increased access to treatment and prevention services.

UNAIDS took the lead on World AIDS Day campaigning from its creation until 2004. From 2004 onwards the World AIDS Campaign's Global Steering Committee began selecting a theme for World AIDS Day in consultation with civil society, organisations and government agencies involved in the AIDS response.

Themes run for one or two years and are not just specific to World AIDS Day. Campaigning slogans such as 'Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise' have been used year round to hold governments accountable for their HIV and AIDS related commitments.

Source: <http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/World-AIDS-Day>

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Individualized Education Plans



We have had increasing inquiries regarding what an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is and how it works. Below is a detailed description of this tool so you can determine whether it may be an option for your child or a child you know.

What's an IEP?

Kids with delayed skills or other disabilities might be eligible for special services that provide individualized education programs in public schools, free of charge to families. Understanding how to access these services can help parents be effective advocates for their kids.

The passage of the updated version of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) made parents of kids with special needs even more crucial members of their child's education team. Parents can now work with educators to develop a plan — the individualized education plan (IEP) — to help kids succeed in school. The IEP describes the goals the team sets for a child during the school year, as well as any special support needed to help achieve them.

Who Needs an IEP?

A child who has difficulty learning and functioning and has been identified as a special needs student is the perfect candidate for an IEP. Kids struggling in school may qualify for support services, allowing them to be taught in a special way, for reasons such as:

- learning disabilities
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- emotional disorders
- mental retardation
- autism
- hearing impairment
- visual impairment
- speech or language impairment
- developmental delay

How Are Services Delivered?

In most cases, the services and goals outlined in an IEP can be provided in a standard school environment. This can be done in the regular classroom (for example, a reading teacher helping a small group of children who need extra assistance while the other kids in the class work on reading with the regular teacher) or in a special resource room in the regular school. The resource room can serve a group of kids with similar needs who are brought together for

help.

However, kids who need intense intervention may be taught in a special school environment. These classes have fewer students per teacher, allowing for more individualized attention. In addition, the teacher usually has specific training in helping kids with special educational needs. The children spend most of their day in a special classroom and join the regular classes for nonacademic activities (like music and gym) or in academic activities in which they don't need extra help.

Because the goal of IDEA is to ensure that each child is educated in the least restrictive environment possible, effort is made to help kids stay in a regular classroom. However, when needs are best met in a special class, then kids might be placed in one.

The Referral and Evaluation Process

The referral process generally begins when a teacher, parent, or doctor is concerned that a child may be having trouble in the classroom, and the teacher notifies the school counselor or psychologist. The first step is to gather specific data regarding the student's progress or academic problems.

This may be done through:

- a conference with parents
- a conference with the student
- observation of the student
- analysis of the student's performance (attention, behavior, work completion, tests, classwork, homework, etc.)

This information helps school personnel determine the next step. At this point, strategies specific to the student could be used to help the child become more successful in school. If this doesn't work, the child would be tested for a specific learning disability or other impairment to help determine qualification for special services. It's important to note, though, that the presence of a disability doesn't automatically guarantee a child will receive services. To be eligible, the disability must affect functioning at school.

To determine eligibility, a multidisciplinary team of professionals will evaluate the child based on their observations; the child's performance on standardized tests; and daily work such as tests, quizzes, classwork, and homework.

See full article: http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/learning/iep.html#a_Your_Legal_Rights

Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of childhood schizophrenia may include:

- Seeing or hearing things that don't exist (hallucinations), especially voices
- Having beliefs not based on reality (delusions)
- Lack of emotion
- Emotions inappropriate for the situation
- Social withdrawal
- Poor school performance
- Decreased ability to practice self-care
- Strange eating rituals
- Incoherent speech
- Illogical thinking
- Agitation

Risk factors

Although the precise cause of childhood schizophrenia isn't known, researchers have identified certain factors that may be related to the risk of developing or triggering schizophrenia, including:

- Having a family history of schizophrenia
- Exposure to viruses while in the womb
- Malnutrition while in the womb
- Stressful early life circumstances
- Trauma or abuse during childhood
- Older paternal age
- Taking psychoactive drugs during adolescence



MENTAL MINUTE

CHRISTMAS BRAIN TEASER

1. Which of these companies was the first to use Santa Clause in an advertisement?

- a) Pepsi b) Coca-Cola c) 7-Up d) Fanta

2. What kind of Christmas does Elvis Presley sing about?

- a) White b) Red c) Blue d) Snowy

3. In what year was "A Christmas Carol", by Charles Dickens, published?

- a) 1765 b) 1843 c) 1860 d) 1906

4. What is the name of the Grinch's dog in the movie "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"?

- a) Pete b) Sam c) Ruth d) Max

5. Which reindeer helps Rudolph fly at the reindeer games?

- a) Donner b) Clarice c) Dancer d) Blitzen

Answer on p. 4

Source: <http://www.christmasrivia.net/quizes/moderate-christmas-rivia>

Childhood Schizophrenia



Definition

Childhood schizophrenia is a type of schizophrenia, a chronic mental illness in which reality is interpreted abnormally (psychosis). Childhood schizophrenia is essentially the same as schizophrenia in adults, but it occurs early in life — sometimes even before the teen years — and has a profound impact on a child's ability to function.

Childhood schizophrenia includes hallucinations, delusions, irrational behavior and thinking, and problems carrying out routine daily tasks, such as bathing. With childhood schizophrenia, the early age of onset presents special challenges for diagnosis, treatment, educational needs, and emotional and social development. Childhood schizophrenia is sometimes called childhood-onset schizophrenia or early-onset schizophrenia. It's also sometimes grouped together with similar conditions known collectively as schizophrenia spectrum disorders.

Causes

It's not known what causes childhood schizophrenia, but it's thought that it develops in the same way as adult schizophrenia does. It's not clear why schizophrenia starts so early in life for some, though, and not others.

A growing body of evidence suggests that childhood schizophrenia and other forms of schizophrenia are caused by brain dysfunction. Why and how that brain dysfunction occurs is still under investigation. It's thought that an interaction of genetics and environment may lead to this brain dysfunction. Problems with certain naturally occurring brain chemicals called neurotransmitters may also contribute to schizophrenia. Imaging studies show differences in the brain structure of people with schizophrenia, but researchers aren't yet sure about the significance of these changes.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, schizophrenia affects about 1 percent of the general population, and childhood schizophrenia affects a much smaller percentage. Early-onset schizophrenia occurs in children ages 13 to 18. Very early-onset schizophrenia occurs in children age 12 or younger.

What you can do

Being an active participant in your child's care can help your efforts to manage his or her condition. One way to do this is by preparing for a planned medical or psychiatric appointment. Think about your child's needs and goals for evaluation and treatment, and review your child's symptoms and medical history.

Diagnostic criteria for childhood schizophrenia

To be diagnosed with childhood schizophrenia, your child must meet certain symptom criteria spelled out in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). This manual is published by the American Psychiatric Association and is used by mental health providers to diagnose mental conditions and by insurance companies to reimburse for treatment.

The psychiatrist may first diagnose your child with a nonspecific psychotic disorder, rather than schizophrenia. As thinking and behavior patterns and

symptoms become more clear over time, a diagnosis of schizophrenia may be made if the criteria are met.

Diagnostic criteria for childhood schizophrenia are generally the same as for adult schizophrenia and include:

- Presence of at least two of these: delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, disorganized or catatonic behavior, lack of emotion, social withdrawal, inability to carry out routine daily tasks such as dressing and bathing
- Failure to achieve the expected level of academic, social or work performance
- Signs last for at least six months
- Other mental health disorders have been ruled out
- Treatments and drugs

Childhood schizophrenia is a chronic condition, lasting through adulthood. Because of this, schizophrenia in children requires lifelong treatment, even during periods when symptoms seem to have subsided. Treatment is similar for all types of schizophrenia but is a particular challenge for children with schizophrenia.

Coping and support

Coping with an illness as serious as childhood schizophrenia can be challenging. Medications can have unwanted side effects, and you, your child and your whole family may feel angry or resentful about having to manage a condition that requires lifelong treatment. Here are some ways to cope with childhood schizophrenia:

- Learn about childhood schizophrenia. Education about the condition can empower you and your child and motivate him or her to stick to the treatment plan.
- Join a support group. Support groups for people with schizophrenia can help you reach out to other families facing similar challenges. You may want to seek out separate groups for you and for your child so that you each have a safe outlet.
- Get professional help. If you as a parent or guardian feel overwhelmed and distressed by your child's condition, consider seeking professional help from a mental health provider.
- Stay focused on goals. Recovery from childhood schizophrenia is an ongoing process. Stay motivated as a family by keeping recovery goals in mind. As a family, you're responsible for managing the illness and working toward goals.
- Find healthy outlets. Explore healthy ways your whole family can channel energy or frustration, such as hobbies, exercise and recreational activities.
- Learn relaxation and stress management. Try such stress-reduction techniques as meditation, yoga or tai-chi. Even children need stress management skills.
- Structure your time. Plan your day and activities. Try to stay organized. You may find it helpful to make a list of daily tasks.
- Take time as individuals. Although managing childhood schizophrenia is a family affair, both children and parents need their own time to cope and unwind. Create opportunities for healthy alone time.

See full article: <http://www.bing.com/health/article/mayo-126544/Childhood-schizophrenia?q=childhood+schizophrenia>

Effects of Mental Illness on the Family



To be suffering from a psychiatric condition is, by many, described as a painful and sometimes traumatic experience. When someone close to you goes through this you will not only be affected because s/he is in pain, your life will be

affected in a number of other ways. It can affect your financial situation and how and where you live and work.

The emotional effects can be a constant worry, which in turn can cause psychological problems for you as well. According to a Swedish study, half of the family members [of mental illness patients] have had to give up their own recreational pursuits. A fifth had to, on one or more occasions, leave their job. An even larger number stated they felt isolated and restrained from seeing other people. Half of the people in this study claimed they developed psychological or social problems of their own to the extent that they needed help and support.

Symptoms described by family members were sleeping problems, stomach pain or depression. It

is not unusual that family members are carrying around feelings of guilt and shame because they think they are to blame for the development of the psychiatric illness or for not knowing how to handle this kind of family crisis. A consequence of feeling guilty and ashamed is that it might feel difficult talking to others about what you are going through. A lot of the times it helps to talk to other people that have similar experiences as you have. Many relatives of the mentally ill join a support group.

Make inquiries about what options are available to you in your local community. You can ask at the mental health clinic or check with charities in your area if there is a support group that suits your needs. If you don't feel comfortable talking in groups and sharing with others you might want individual support. The important thing is that you get an opportunity to focus on how you feel and what you need.

For a long time parents and other family members got the blame for the occurrence of psychiatric problems. This has its origins in the early psycho-analytical tradition where problems in adulthood were thought best to be explained by experiences in early childhood. Psychological theories have developed since then and today we know that the family plays a great role in the process to recovery. People who have gone through the recovery process express how important safety and continuity is.

A lot of people with psychiatric problems often feel isolated and lonely. Therefore it is very important to have people around to talk to and share everyday life with. It makes a major difference to have somewhere to go even if it is in the middle of the night and someone to listen, someone who still believes recovery is possible. Therefore it is important, not only for you, but also for the sick member of your family that you take your own feelings seriously. Only if you get the support you need, can you contribute to the wellbeing of your loved one.

When it comes to children, they are often the invisible victims. Having a parent with a psychiatric illness brings about a lot of difficulties. As a child it is hard to understand why a parent is not feeling well and many blame themselves. This can result in low self esteem and a poor self-image. The children might also be embarrassed to bring friends home or might not be allowed to. Many children therefore grow up to feel different than everybody else around them and end up lonely and isolated from peers of their own age. Therefore it is very important to look for signs that a child is not feeling well. The sooner a child gets the appropriate support the less likely it is that s/he develops psychological problems of his/her own.

Source: <http://web4health.info/en/answers/life-family-mental-illness.htm>

Recipe Round-Up: Snickerdoodles & Christmas Package Cheese Snack

Ingredients

- 2-1/4 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup vegetable shortening
- 2 tablespoons soft butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- Colored sugar or edible glitter



Instructions

Sift the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and nutmeg into a large mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, using an electric mixer, cream the shortening and butter. Gradually mix in the sugar. Beat in the egg until blended, then the sour cream, vanilla extract, and lemon zest. With a wooden spoon, stir the dry ingredients into the creamed mixture half at a time, until evenly mixed. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and refrigerate it for 30 to 60 minutes. Shortly before baking heat the oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease one or two large cookie sheets, or line them with parchment paper. Put the decorative sugar into small bowls.

With lightly floured hands, shape the dough into 1-1/2-inch-thick balls. Roll the balls in the colored sugar and place them on the prepared baking sheets spaced about 3 inches apart. Bake the cookies on the center oven rack for 15 to 18 minutes, until they're a light golden brown. Cool the cookies on the sheet for 2 to 3 minutes. Then use a spatula to transfer them to a wire rack to finish cooling. Makes about 24 cookies.

Source: <http://familyfun.go.com/recipes/the-elves-snickerdoodles-811453/>

Ingredients

- 8 ounces of cream cheese (softened)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- Red Bell Pepper
- Scallion



Instructions

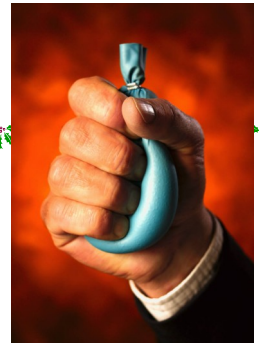
Mix the dried dill, garlic powder, and salt into the softened cream cheese. Pack the mixture into a rectangular container lined with plastic wrap (you can reuse the cream cheese box).

Refrigerate it for at least 3 hours. Before serving time, set the unwrapped block of cheese on a platter and decorate it with a scallion bow and red pepper polka dots and gift tag.

Source: <http://familyfun.go.com/recipes/christmas-package-cheese-snack-688436/>

Our sister agencies provide an extensive array of mental health services for both children and adults. "Our mission is to provide high-quality, easily accessible services for Georgians, focused on promoting mental and emotional well-being through personal and professional development, family preservation, resource coordination, and individualized treatment.

Self Care Corner: Coping with Holiday Stress



Coping with Holiday Stress

Making priority lists, taking time out for yourself, and staying healthy are some techniques for coping with holiday stress. Even though it might not seem important, incorporating these strategies will make your holidays so much better and keep you happier from start to finish.

Why Do Holidays Cause Stress?

There are movies that humorously display typical holiday stresses and poke fun at these events, but in reality stressful situations can really take a toll. During the holidays, people are dealing with many expectations, pressures, monetary expenses, and long to-do lists. These things tend to pile on top of usual responsibilities, like work and social events, and can make it hard to relax.

Holiday demands can disrupt regular schedules, and dealing with travel or hosting extended family members at home can add to the anxiety. While all these changes sound good in theory, the truth is that they create additional stress.

Tips for Coping with Holiday Stress

Here are some ideas for coping with holiday stress. Choose the techniques that work best for you and don't stress out if you slip or fall behind in the plan you've created. You're likely going to benefit simply by starting a plan and taking the steps to put it into action.

Make Lists

The holidays are more relaxing when you have a plan for what works. You can start this process by designating a notebook to help yourself get through it all. Make a place for different lists, including parties to attend, things to buy, your budget, gift ideas, and most importantly, ways to best take care of yourself. Putting yourself on this list automatically gets you into a mindset of not overextending yourself. Here are some tips for making lists

- Spend an hour making a list of holiday gift ideas and where to shop
- List out estimates on prices for items

- Create a budget and write your spending goal
- Buy early from stores online or plan shopping expeditions during sales

Try to focus on one list at a time because it is easy to feel overwhelmed when you look at everything at once. Take on tasks in increments, creating short lists with realistic goals.

Let Go of Your Expectations

While it's great to have high hopes for the perfect holiday, this can be a breeding ground for disappointment. Instead of trying to make everything perfect, choose to let go of your expectations. The likelihood is that no one will even notice if your holiday party is missing some decorations and there is nothing wrong with buying an emergency pumpkin pie from the store because you burned your own. Realize that even the best plans go can array and that you cannot control the actions of other people. Here are some ways to let go:

- If you have a lot of parties to attend, choose to just make an appearance and leave early, rather than overextending your energy. Most party hosts are just happy to see you and won't mind.
- Make time every day to do nice things for yourself, even if they're just small gestures. This might include things like taking a couple extra breaths before getting out of the car or buying a warm drink to carry around during a shopping trip.
- Remember that the only thing you can truly control is yourself.

Remember to Celebrate

By celebrating the true meaning of the holidays, this will make it a more special and less stressful holiday for you and your family. While this is personal to every one, focusing on the deeper meaning can make a big difference.

Source: http://stress.lovetoknow.com/Coping_with_Holiday_Stress

Mental Minute Solution

Solution

- 1) Coca-Cola - B
- 2) Blue - C
- 3) 1843 - B
- 4) Max - D
- 5) Clarice - B

Source: http://stress.lovetoknow.com/Coping_with_Holiday_Stress



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