

Chapter 13

Overview of Conduct Disorder: Implications for School Rehabilitation Professionals

Michael F. Shaughnessy

Eastern New Mexico University, USA


Mark Williams II

Eastern New Mexico University, USA

Carl Michael Carlson

Eastern New Mexico University, USA

Chia Jung Yeh

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7776-7179>

East Carolina University, USA

ABSTRACT

Research studies show that conduct disorder is a disruptive behavior disorder that might cause children to experience some challenges within their personal and social life. Very often children with this disorder might be feeling failure at school and exclusion from their peers and others. It might also affect their home, social, and school environments. These students with this disorder might present management and therapeutic challenges for counselors, psychologists, and mental health professionals. This chapter aims to provide an overview of conduct disorder, which might help school rehabilitation professionals and educators understand what risk factors, symptoms, diagnosis criteria, and treatment options can better understand this disorder, preventions, and interventions. This chapter will cursorily explore these realms with an overview of this disorder and offer some implementations and recommendations for school rehabilitation professionals.

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INTRODUCTION

Conduct disorder is a disruptive behavior disorder that can cause some concerns, disruptions, and difficulty at school and in the classroom (Jones, 2008). Some studies indicated the impacts of this disorder are often associated with lower school achievement, higher school dropouts, inferior access to higher education, and deprived employment (Bakker-Huvenaars et al., 2017; Balia et al., 2018; Reyes, 2020). Children with conduct disorder have been discovered some issues with their verbal skills, decision-making functions, some deficits with selective attention, cognitive flexibility, as well as some planning capacities which expressively impact their social learning and increase the tendency of antisocial personality in the near future (Balia et al., 2018).

This disorder is demarcated as a persistent behavior pattern, such as aggressive behaviors toward people and animals, violation of rules, not respecting others' rights, and destroying others' property (AACAP, 2018; APA, 2013; Jones, 2008). The prevalence of conduct disorder is different in children's age and gender (Patel et al., 2018). The higher prevalence rate (5-9%) has been found for adolescents between 13-18 years old and a lower occurrence rate (approximately 2-5%) for younger children between 5-12 years. Comparing to boys, girls demonstrated less tendency to present with conduct disorder.

Educators and other professionals who work with children and families must understand the risk factors, symptoms, diagnosis criteria, and treatment options to get a better understanding of the disorder, as well as preventions, interventions, and rehabilitative strategies to use at school or other settings. Applying this knowledge can go a long way in providing students with conduct disorder an appropriate education and can assist in the rehabilitative process (Jones, 2008). Teachers are tasked with educating the future of America no matter what nationality, background, home life, socioeconomic level, or disability the student may have. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), each student should receive a free and appropriate education. This very noble charge is extremely difficult since every student has different needs, and their education should be geared toward improvement and rehabilitation.

Some of the more challenging students present a complex, often challenging, disruptive behavior disorder. Several studies found that general educators from the inclusive classrooms feel some deficits in their understanding and experiences of working successfully with a student who has been diagnosed with a conduct disorder or other disabling conditions (Anunah et al., 2005; Avramidis et al., 2002; Sokal et al., 2014). The following provides educators and school administration staff with a reference guide for understanding conduct disorder and offers strategies to help educators and students be successful.

BACKGROUND

Students with conduct disorders have been a challenge in the schools for many years. There are students with overt and covert conduct disorders with behaviors ranging from theft to assault to fire starting, and these students have presented management challenges and therapeutic challenges for counselors, psychologists and mental health professionals alike. This chapter will cursorily explore this disorder and provide an overview of this disorder and examine treatment issues, including characteristics, risk factors, causes, symptoms, diagnostic criteria, and some treatments, and implementation in the classroom.

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