

Assessing Disruptive Behaviors in Young Children

As simple as OPQRST!

O	Onset	When did it start? Is it sudden or gradual?
P	Precipitating events	What is going on when the behavior happens? Is it related to: sleep patterns? hunger? frustration?
	Palliative factors	What makes it better? What has been done to address the problem (including punishment strategies)? What has worked?
Q	Qualities and characteristics	What does it look like? Does it include: hyperactivity? not following directions? talking back or defiance? disobedience? aggressive behaviors? Inattention? crying or emotions?
R	Region/Relationships	Where does it happen? At home? At school? Does it happen with: a parent? a teacher? other children?
S	Severity	How does it compare to developmentally typical behavior in this age group? What level of impairment is associated? Are there suspensions, expulsions, lacerations, or fractures?
T	Timing	When does it usually happen? At the end of day, beginning of day, only weekends or weekdays? How long does it last? How does it end?

Reviews of system	Medical History	Family history	Social history	PE, labs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of ADHD? • Signs of anxiety? • Signs of mood disorder (irritability, sadness)? • Signs of autism spectrum? • Developmental status? • Sleep, growth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prematurity? • Lead exposure? • Sleep apnea? • Evidence of thyroid dysfunction? • CNS issue (LOC, Sz)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone with ADHD, depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, psychosis, substance use disorder in biological family or in home? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who lives in home, in family, school and/or child care? • History of adversity or history of traumatic events? • Family support? USE SEEK SCREEN! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical exam for dysmorphology, size for age, vital signs, and signs of non-accidental injury. • Observe parent-child interactions. • Labs: Consider Pb, genetics. <p>Screens: SEEK for all ECSA if under 5 years; VADRS if over 5.</p>



**Mental
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Early Childhood Consultation