About Dual Diagnosis

Students with dual diagnosis have an intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) and a mental health condition.

30%-50% of children with IDD experience co-occurring mental health disorders.

10% receive appropriate treatment for co-existing mental illness.

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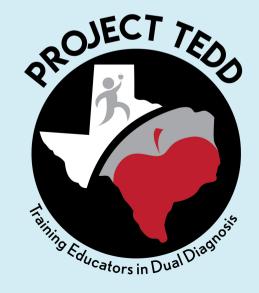(806) 742-2320
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Dual Diagnosis

Information for School-Based Mental Health Professionals

PROJECT TEDD
Training Educators in Dual Diagnosis

Diagnostic Overshadowing

is attributing emotional and behavioral challenges to the individual's intellectual disability and overlooking the possibility of a mental health condition.

The mental health needs of students with IDD often go untreated due to

- the lack of specialized training and awareness of mental health conditions in this population.

- systemic barriers and the division of mental health and IDD services.

- the student's inability to describe and communicate their feelings, thoughts, and symptoms.

Improving the Daily Functioning of Students with Dual Diagnosis

Implement universal supports for safe school environments.

Advocate for social inclusion and connection.

Model and practice mindfulness.

Promote social and emotional learning competencies.

Modify and utilize cognitive behavioral therapy in counseling.

Assessment & Treatment Considerations

- Stress collaboration between caregivers, school personnel, and mental health professionals.

- Attempt to obtain a self-report; however, most information will likely be collected from caregivers and school personnel.

- Utilize a trauma-informed approach.

- Use simplified language and the student's most effective means of communication.

- Avoid abstract concepts; and instead use more concrete examples.

- Allow the student time to process and respond.