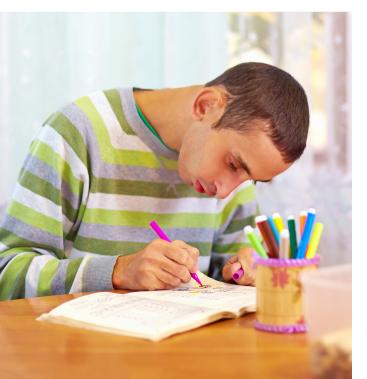
Students with dual diagnosis

- have an intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) and a co-occurring mental health condition.
- often have compounded cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral challenges.
- can excel with integrated and intensive academic and behavior supports.





College of Education

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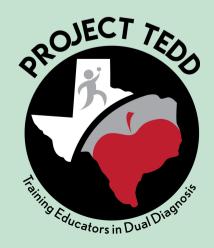


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Educating Students with
DUAL
DIAGNOSIS

Information for Teachers



Mental Health Needs



Mental health conditions may interfere with the student's thinking, mood, and behavior.

What does it look like?

You may observe some students to be withdrawn, irritable, unmotivated, restless, uncomfortable, unable to concentrate, etc.

What may help?

- Work with your school counselor/psychologist to learn coping strategies.
- Help the student replace their negative thinking with positive thoughts/statements.
- Use social stories to practice coping skills.
- Utilize muscle tension and relaxation techniques.
- Practice breathing exercises and mindfulness activities.

Impaired cognitive functioning will likely require modified instruction.

What does it look like?

The student's academic ability may be substantially below grade level. They can quickly become frustrated and overwhelmed with information.

What may help?

- Use visual supports for tasks and routines.
- Break tasks into smaller steps.
- Reinforce task compliance.
- Use assistive technology to support instruction.
- Decrease the amount of information presented at one time.
- Reduce task demands.

Communication Needs

Students with IDD may have limited ability to communicate their needs and feelings.

What does it look like?

You may see an increase in behavior challenges as a response to unmet needs or distress. Observing the behavior may assist in identifying the need.

What may help?

- Teach functional communication skills to express wants, needs, and feelings.
- Create opportunities for the student to use new communication skills.
- Use pictures, iPad, or sign language to communicate.
- Reinforce the use of appropriate communication by immediately responding to the student's requests.