

## **Childhood Disorder**

### Mental Retardation

Beginning before 18 year old, the individuals have low intelligence that causes them to need special help in coping with life. IQ of 70 or less. Their ability to adapt to the demands of normal life is impaired in some important way. However, their adaptation depends on their education, job training, motivation, personality, and support from significant others.

*Signs & Symptoms:- (difficulties on several of the following)*

- Behaviourial problems, such as aggression, dependency, impulsivity, passivity, self-injury, stubbornness, low self-esteem, and poor frustration tolerance.
- Communicating
- Caring for self
- Living at home
- Relating to others
- Using community resources
- Directing self
- Academic functioning
- Working
- Using free time
- Health
- Safety

=> Begins before age 18.

### Autistic

Children who have autism have impaired social interactions and communication problems, and develop stereotyped behaviours and interests.

*Signs & Symptoms:- (several of the following)*

- Impairment of social interaction – absence of social or emotional reciprocity, absence of seeking to share achievements, interests with others, lack of peer relationship that are appropriate, and deficiency in nonverbal behaviours (eye contact, facial expression)
- Impairment of communication – delayed or absent development of spoken language, deficiency in ability to begin or sustain a conversation, language is repetitive / stereotyped, absence of social imitative play or spontaneous make believe play
- Activities, behaviour, and interests that are repetitive, restricted, and stereotyped – abnormal preoccupation with interests that are restricted and stereotyped, rigid performance of routines, repetitive motor mannerisms

=>Before age 3, shows delayed or abnormal functioning in social interaction, language used in social communication, and/or imaginative or symbolic play.

### Asperger's

Similar to autistic disorder, but children with Asperger do not have delayed or impaired language.

*Signs & Symptoms:- (several of the following)*

- Deficient regulation of social interaction through non verbal behaviour, such as eye contact and facial expression
- Lacking of peer relationships that are appropriate
- Absence of seeking to share achievements and interests
- Absence of social or emotional reciprocity
- Abnormal preoccupation with interests that are restricted and stereotyped
- Rigid performance of routines
- Repetitive, stereotyped motor mannerisms

=> No clinically important general language delay. Except social interaction, there is no clinically important delay in developing cognition, age-appropriate self-help skills, adaptive behaviour, and normal curiosity about the environment.

### Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder

Known as ADHD in short, the persons are hyperactive, impulsive, or inattentive, and often all three. Children who have ADHD have either inattention or hyperactivity-impulsivity (or both) persisting for at least 6 months to a degree that is maladaptive and immature.

*Signs & Symptoms:-*

- Inattention – fail to pay close attention to details, make careless errors in school work or activities, have trouble keeping attention on tasks, do not appear to listen when being told, neither follow instruction nor complete schoolwork, have trouble organizing activities, dislike tasks that involve sustained mental effort, lose materials needed for activities, easily distracted by external stimuli, forgetful
- Hyperactivity – squirm in seat, inappropriately leave seat / run/ climb, have trouble quietly playing, appear driven, talk excessively
- Impulsivity – answer question before they have been completely asked, have trouble awaiting turn, interrupt or intrude on others

*Reference:-*

Morrison, J. (2001). DSM-IV Made Easy: The Clinician's Guide to Diagnosis. New York: The Guilford Press

*For more detailed description and criteria of each mental illness, pls refer to the book mentioned above or <http://www.psychologynet.com>*