

# POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) affects people of all ages, even children. Domestic violence, abuse, neglect, abandonment, orphaning, physical and sexual abuse, accidents, natural disasters, bullying are some of the factors that could induce Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD among children and adolescents.

## SIGNS OF PTSD IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Unlike adults, who usually have some kind of awareness of what is happening to them at the time of trauma, children often cannot comprehend what is being done to them or what they are going through. Confusion, anger, and sadness with no safe space to reach out to, start showing variations in behavior, sometimes extreme changes. A quiet, studious child might suddenly lose interest in studies and indulge in reckless behavior, an extroverted child might suddenly stop talking.

Symptoms in children and adolescents can be grouped under 4 categories:

- **Intrusive thoughts/memories:**

Children start to re-live their trauma multiple times, will try to re-enact it during playtimes, and has frequent nightmares. They might start speaking about things beyond their age in a negative, harmful way.

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- **Avoidance:**

Children will avoid everything related to the trauma/incident or anything that reminds them of it. They will try to pretend as if it happened to someone else or will completely block it out.

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- **Cognitive alterations:**

Children stop doing activities they like, will not want to go out and play, or, will want to constantly be outside with strangers if the trauma happened at home. They might have trouble concentrating at school, finishing assignments on time, falling grades, inability to take part in sports.

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- **Physical & Mental variations:**

Sudden outbursts of crying, easily startled or frightened, intense feelings of guilt and/or shame. Young children might lose developmental skills like bladder control and resort to bedwetting. Adolescents might indulge in self-harm, substance abuse and develop eating disorders.

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[Click here](#) to know how you can help your child cope with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

For signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in adults, [Click here.](#)



Read more about **PTSD** and other mental health related articles on

[www.pamllc.us/resources](http://www.pamllc.us/resources)

Interested in a consultation? Request an appointment from our [website](#) or mail at

[telehealth@pamllc.us](mailto:telehealth@pamllc.us)

**NOTE**

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline toll-free at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or the toll-free TTY number at 1-800-799-4TTY(4889). You also can text the Crisis Text Line (HELLO to 741741) or go to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>



**PAM LLC**

Psych Associates of Maryland provides comprehensive behavioral health services by a group of competent, independent practitioners. We diagnose and treat children, adolescents, adults, and the geriatric population. Psychological testing and neuropsychological testing are available for a variety of disorders, including ADHD, brain injuries and head trauma, and memory problems.

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