



# FAST FACTS ABOUT THOUGHT DISORDERS

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## WHAT ARE THOUGHT DISORDERS?

Thought Disorders are psychiatric illnesses that involve serious problems with thinking, feelings, and behavior. Thought disorders are very rare in late childhood or early adolescence, and are not given because of a one time episode or incident. The most typical diagnoses given for those with Thought Disorders are Schizophrenia and Psychosis.

The symptoms of Thought Disorders can include false belief about self or others, paranoia; hearing or seeing things that others don't see; extremely disconnected speech or thinking; feelings that don't match the situation; social isolation; being unable to function at home, or school; odd behavior; excessive concerns about one's body or very disorganized behavior.

Children or adolescents may also have co-occurring problems of depression, anxiety, and anger. The symptoms that represent being out of touch with reality are called psychotic symptoms. If a child or adolescent displays these symptoms it is important to have them referred to a mental health professional.

## TREATMENT

Thought Disorders are usually life long if they start in childhood or adolescence. During stressful times of life, the symptoms may become more of a problem. At this time it is impossible to predict any individual's outcome. Treatment consists of medication, therapy, and life skills training. A child and adolescent psychiatrist should always be the primary treatment provider for the treatment of a Thought Disorder.

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THOUGHT DISORDERS

**American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry**  
3615 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20016  
(202) 966-7300

**National Alliance for the Mentally Ill**  
2101 Wilson Blvd. #302  
Arlington, VA 22009-1604  
(703) 524-7600

**National Alliance for Research on Thought Disorder and Depression**  
60 Cutter Mill Rd. Suite 200  
Great Neck, NY 11021  
(516) 829-0091

**National Mental Health Association**  
1021 Prince Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2971  
(703) 684-7722