

# [Children must exhibit "disorganized or agitated behaviors” but](https://assignbuster.com/children-must-exhibit-disorganized-or-agitated-behaviors-but/)

Childrenmust exhibit “ disorganized or agitated behaviors” but thediagnostic criteria tend to be objective and is very open tointerpretation. PTSD is very commonly overlooked or misdiagnosed by somethingdifferent. For children ages, 6 years and younger symptoms of PTSD must bepresent for a minimum of one month before a diagnosis can be made. Symptoms caninclude distressing memories of the event, dissociative reactions in which thechild feels or acts as of the traumatic event were recurring, in other words, flashbacks.

Avoidance of activities, places or people that arouse recollectionsof the events and frequency of negative emotional states such as fear or shame. G1 Furthermore, the experienced trauma does not necessarily mean someone will develop symptomssignificant enough to meet the diagnostic criteriG2 afor post-traumatic stress disorder, however, it is very common that children doexhibit some of these symptoms associated with trauma exposure even when theirsymptoms are not quite intense enough to meet the diagnostic threshold. Symptoms of trauma can manifest in many ways, in early childhood traumaexposure often can trigger a regression and development. For example, a childwho is a good sleeper may have difficulty falling asleep.

A child who ispreviously potty trained may begin to have frequent accidents. Many childrenwill develop a sense of separation anxiety and find it difficult to separatefrom the primary caregiver. Somatic complaints such as headaches or stomachaches are also very common in children who have experienced trauma. Othercommon symptomsin children who have experienced traumatic events can include frequentnightmares, restricted range of affect and symptoms of increased arousal suchas difficulty falling asleep, difficulty concentrating and increaseirritability. G3 Inaddition, many of these symptoms during childhood can occur completelyunrelated to trauma exposure.

A challenge of infant and early childhood mentalhealth is to gather enough information to get a complete picture of what isreally going on for the child and to accurately diagnose and provideappropriate treatment. The Diagnostic and statistical manual for mentaldisorders 5th edition (DSM 5), categorizes PTSD as a “ traumaand stressor-related disorder” that happens when the symptoms of an acutestress response persist for over a month. The main symptoms are psychologicalones, for example, someone might re-experience their trauma through nightmares, these can also lead to behavioral changes, someone might start to avoid theenvironments and situations that remind them oG4 ftheir trauma and feel a sense of hypervigilance where they are constantly onguard or exaggerated responses to these triggers. These behaviors can lead totrouble sleeping and general irritability which can lead to angry outbursts. However, these patterns are different among children who are less likely toshow distress but instead they might use play to express their memories, orsometimes acting out scenes that trouble them. Children who are exposed toextreme trauma during childhood are more likely to respond to other traumas faced in theiradult life.

G5 G6 Accordingto the DSM-5 (2013), a diagnosis of PTSD for children over age 6 as well asadults involves four core features that persisted longer than 1 month. G7 Theprevalence of PTSD symptoms is appreciably greaterG8 in children who are exposed to life-threatening events or prolongedinterpersonal trauma than children who are exposed to less severe trauma (Mash& Wolfe, 2016). G9 G10 G11