

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) in Equine-Assisted Activities

A Study Guide



Quiz

1. What is Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)? How does it present in youth and teens?
2. Differentiate between typical childhood behaviors and behaviors indicative of ODD.
3. Why is consistency in implementing boundaries crucial when working with students with ODD?
4. Explain the importance of an instructor's tone and phrasing when communicating with students with ODD. Provide an example.
5. What is meant by "controlled choices"? How can they be used effectively with students exhibiting ODD?
6. Why is specific, honest praise important when working with students with ODD?
7. How should an instructor react to a student with ODD who is being verbally abusive or vindictive?
8. Why is it important for the instructor to be aware of the dynamics between the student and their support team?
9. Describe a potential challenge that might arise from inconsistent communication between the instructor and the student's support team.
10. What resource is recommended for instructors seeking further information and support on working with students with ODD and other special needs in equine-assisted activities?

Quiz Answer Key

1. ODD is a behavioral disorder characterized by a pattern of uncooperative, defiant, and hostile behaviors toward authority figures. Youth and teens with ODD may exhibit frequent temper tantrums, argue with adults, deliberately disobey rules, blame others for their mistakes, and display vindictive or spiteful behavior.

2. Typical childhood behaviors involve occasional disobedience or defiance, while ODD presents as a persistent pattern of these behaviors for six months or more, significantly impacting the child's social, academic, or occupational functioning.
3. Consistency in implementing boundaries is crucial because it provides predictability and structure for students with ODD, helping them understand expectations and consequences. This reduces power struggles and creates a safe and supportive learning environment.
4. An instructor's tone and phrasing should be confident and authoritative, avoiding ambiguity that might invite challenges or negotiations. For example, stating "Riders, we are going to trot now" is more effective than "Okay, riders, when you're ready, let's trot."
5. Controlled choices empower students while maintaining structure by offering limited options pre-selected by the instructor. For example, asking, "Would you like to do the barrel pattern first or practice trotting on the rail?" provides a choice within a defined framework.
6. Specific, honest praise reinforces positive behaviors, encouraging their repetition. Students with ODD often receive negative feedback, so genuine acknowledgement of their efforts helps build self-esteem and motivation.
7. An instructor should remain calm, avoid taking the behavior personally, and address the situation directly by explaining why the behavior is unacceptable. Modeling emotional regulation and appropriate responses is crucial.
8. Awareness of the dynamics between the student and their support team (parents, caregivers, volunteers) is essential to prevent manipulation or inconsistencies in implementing boundaries and expectations.
9. Inconsistent communication can lead to the student exploiting discrepancies between the instructor and the support team. For example, if volunteers are unaware of established rules, the student might try to persuade them to deviate from the instructor's instructions.
10. The Intuitive Instructor Club is recommended for instructors seeking information and support on working with students with ODD and other special needs in equine-assisted activities.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the importance of setting clear boundaries and expectations for students with ODD in equine-assisted activities. How can these boundaries be communicated effectively to ensure understanding and compliance?
2. Explain the role of emotional regulation in managing challenging behaviors exhibited by students with ODD. Provide specific strategies instructors can employ to model and promote emotional regulation in the arena.

3. Analyze the benefits and potential challenges of incorporating controlled choices into lessons for students with ODD. How can instructors strike a balance between empowering students and maintaining structure?
4. Describe the importance of collaborative communication between the instructor and the student's support team. How can this communication be facilitated to ensure consistency and prevent the student from manipulating or exploiting inconsistencies?
5. Discuss the ethical considerations involved in working with students with ODD in equine-assisted activities. How can instructors ensure they are providing a safe and supportive environment while upholding the student's dignity and respecting their individual needs?

Glossary of Key Terms

1. **Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD):** A behavioral disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of defiant, disobedient, hostile, and negative behaviors toward authority figures.
2. **Comorbidity:** The presence of two or more co-occurring disorders or diagnoses in an individual.
3. **ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder):** A neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.
4. **Boundaries:** Clear limits and expectations established to create a safe and structured environment.
5. **Controlled Choices:** Offering limited options pre-selected by the instructor to empower students while maintaining structure and control.
6. **Specific Praise:** Providing positive feedback that focuses on a particular behavior or action, increasing the likelihood of its repetition.
7. **Emotional Regulation:** The ability to manage and control one's emotions, expressing them appropriately in different situations.
8. **Support Team:** The network of individuals involved in supporting the student, including parents, caregivers, teachers, therapists, and volunteers.
9. **Manipulative Behavior:** Actions aimed at controlling or influencing others for personal gain, often through deceit or exploitation.
10. **Vindictive Behavior:** Actions intended to inflict harm or punishment in retaliation for a perceived wrong.