

Aggressive Behaviors and Outbursts

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Dr. Nadia Mendiola joined Northern Light Acadia Hospital in August 2019 from San Antonio, Texas where she completed her general psychiatry residency, as well as a child and adolescent psychiatry fellowship at the University of Texas Health San Antonio.

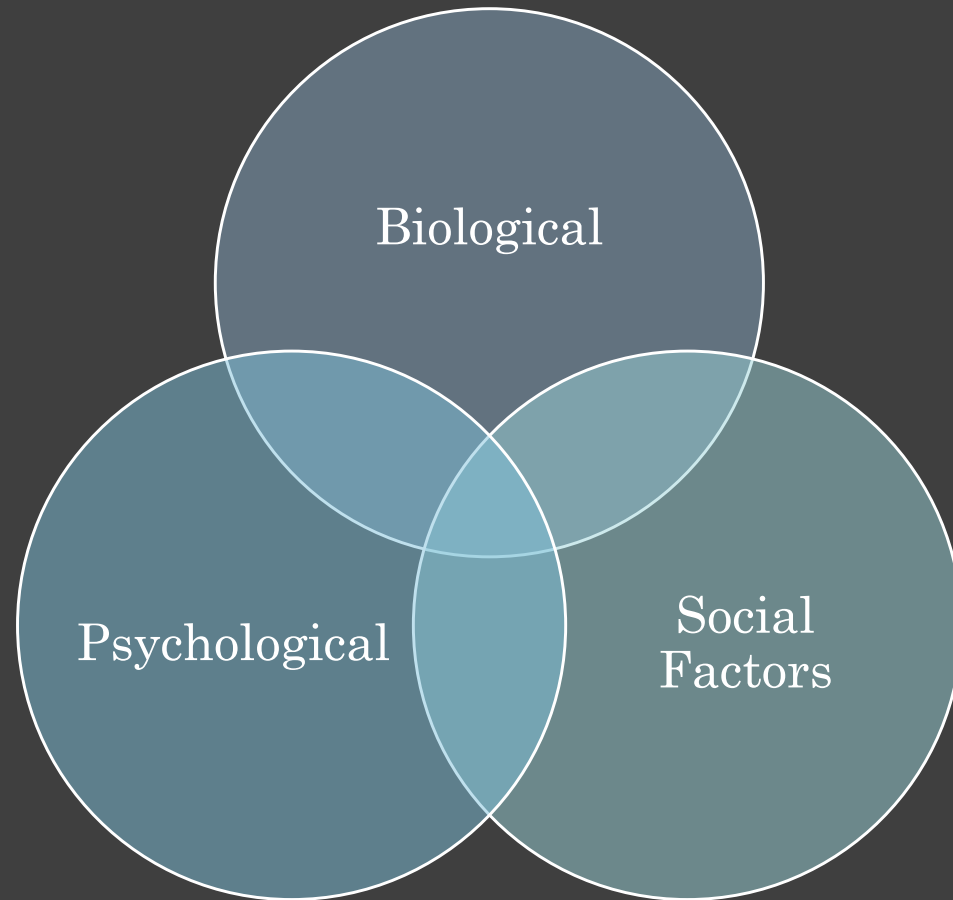
She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in biochemistry from St. Mary's University in 2010, and her Doctor of Medicine in 2014 from the University of Texas Health San Antonio. She practices Child Psychiatry on the inpatient child and adolescent psychiatric unit at Acadia Hospital.

Alongside a multitude of skilled staff, she is working to continue to strengthen the inpatient individualized care, particularly with the autistic pediatric population.

Objectives

- To gain insight into the biopsychosocial contributions to aggression and outbursts
- To understand strategies to address aggressive behaviors and outbursts in complex psychiatric pediatric cases based on biopsychosocial contributions

Biopsychosocial Model





Why is my child so aggressive? Is there something just wrong with their brain?



There are many biological reasons that can account for your child's current aggression. Patience and having more information from you can help us understand what may be contributing.

Biological Contributions

Predisposing Factors

- Neurodevelopmental Disorder
- Genetic Predispositions

Precipitating Factors


- Acute medical illness
- Medication Side Effects

Perpetuating Factors


- Chronic medical or psychiatric symptoms
- Substance use

Protective factors

- Intelligence
- Adherence to treatment



We don't know what else to do. Is there any medication to help?



Depending on what is really contributing to the presentation we can consider a medication.

Treatments Based on Categories of Aggression Based Symptoms

Anxiety/Depression

- SSRI
- Adjunctive atypical antipsychotic

Mood Dysregulation Disorders

- Atypical Antipsychotics
- Mood Stabilizers
- Lithium

Impulse Control Disorders

- Atypical Antipsychotics
- Alpha Agonist
- Stimulant

Psychotic Disorders

- Atypical Antipsychotics
- Typical Antipsychotics

Neurodevelopmental Disorder

- Atypical Antipsychotics
- Mood Stabilizers
- Lithium
- SSRI
- Alpha Agonist

Substance Use

- Treat possible underlying mood/anxiety disorders



Is my child just psychologically damaged?

Your child is not psychologically damaged. There are many contributing factors including your child's past, personality traits, and coping strategies.



Psychological Contributions

Predisposing Factors

- Personality Traits
- Defense Mechanisms

Precipitating Factors

- Trauma
- Abandonment
- Cognitive distortions
- Identity questions

Perpetuating Factors

- Trauma
- Abandonment
- Automatic negative thoughts

Protective factors

- Ego Strength



My child refuses to talk to anyone, what can we do to try to help them?

There are some different options available to help decrease unsafe behaviors. Patience with yourself and your child and celebrating small wins will be important.



Treatments Based on Categories of Aggression Based Symptoms

Anxiety/Depression

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
- Trauma Focused CBT

Mood Dysregulation Disorders

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Trauma Focused CBT

Impulse Control Disorders

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Trauma Focused CBT
- Parent Management Training

Psychotic Disorders

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Life Skills Training

Neurodevelopmental Disorder

- Applied Behavioral Analysis
- Life Skills Training

Substance Use

- Outpatient or Inpatient Rehabilitation programs



People say that what is happening at home or school may affect my child, is that true?



Things occurring in the environment can affect your child in both positive and negative ways. Exploring environmental factors will be important.

Social Contributions

Predisposing Factors

- No biological parent involved

Precipitating Factors

- Poor interpersonal relationships
- Lack of resources

Perpetuating Factors

- Poor interpersonal relationships
- Lack of resources

Protective factors

- Cultural Beliefs
- Spiritual Beliefs



I have searched everywhere and there is no one to help me. Everyone has a waitlist. What do I do?



It is true that right now the waitlist for resources is quite long. We may have to think of out of the box solutions for right now to help your child and family.

Things to consider for Recommendations:

- Work with school for possible 504 program, IEP, or extracurricular activities
- Look for community programs
- Apply for MaineCare if they do not already have it
- Check on housing and financial stressors
- Make sure they are in process of getting case management

Questions?