

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Besides seeking professional help, other helpful strategies to consider:

- Have a discussion with your child on how his/her behaviours affect him/her and the family. Explain that you are concerned about his/her change in behaviour.
- Persuade your child to consult a psychiatrist and/or a psychologist. Explain why such a visit is necessary, how it can help and that importantly, it does not mean that he/she is going crazy.
- Read stories or internet articles on how children/teenagers with OCD overcome the condition.
- Do not be angry or judgmental about your child's obsessive thoughts or compulsive actions. Remember that for OCD, these thoughts are uncontrollable, intrusive and distressing to your child and that he/she feels the compulsion to perform some actions against their will.
- Giving in to the compulsions will make OCD stronger. Get your child to start overcoming some of these compulsive actions by making a list of compulsions he/she has. Starting with the one which causes least distress when not performed, encourage your child to resist performing the compulsion. Engage in something relaxing with your child to help him/her cope with the anxiety of not performing the compulsion. Be patient and do not expect your child to be able to do it consistently.
- For younger children, you may wish to institute a reward system for the child's attempts at resisting performing compulsions. Reward your child's effort, not successes.