

**Behavioral Psychology Associates  
Pediatric Mood & Bipolar Groups**

***Psychosocial Education and Support Groups for  
Children and their Families***

In January 2008, Behavioral Psychology Associates started to fill a desperate need in the Northwest Suburbs. Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the diagnosis of Pediatric Mood and Bipolar Disorders. Early-Onset Bipolar Disorder is often mistaken for ADHD or depression. It is currently estimated that over 1 million children in the US have Bipolar Disorder.

Symptoms of Pediatric Bipolar Disorder are not like the traditional manic and depressive states seen in Adult Bipolar Disorder. In childhood, it is much more typical to have ultrarapid cycling (5-365 manic episodes per year) or ultradian/continuous cycling (365+ manic episodes a year). Mood states can rapidly shift from irritable, easily annoyed, and angry to silly, goofy, and elated to low energy with boredom, depression, social withdrawal, and suicidal ideation. Rage states can occur for prolonged periods of time with physical and verbal aggression, grandiosity, and racing thoughts. Additionally, children can be very oppositional and defiant, experience severe separation anxiety, have night terrors, and demonstrate ADHD-like symptoms (i.e., inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity).

Pediatric Bipolar Disorder is treatable with mood stabilizers, individual and family therapy, and accommodations at school. Families dealing with such an illness can quickly become isolated, exhausted, and traumatized by the rapid cycling and "walking on eggshells" on a daily basis. Currently, there is a movement towards psychosocial education and support groups for children/teens and their parents.

The Pediatric Mood Disorders Clinic at UIC's Institute of Juvenile Research in Chicago is one of the few locations conducting research on Therapy Groups for children ages 8 to 12 and their parents. They have shared their 12-week RAINBOWs program with our staff in order to fill a need in the Northwest Suburbs.

The Child Group is run by Dr. Diana Rothermel. Topics addressed include the following:

- How to monitor moods
- How to manage mood instability and irritability
- How to manage impulses
- How to cope with school stresses
- How to maintain self-esteem
- How to use creativity

Dr. Lori Bolnick runs the Psychosocial Education and Support Group for parents. The Parent Group occurs concurrently with the Child Group. Topics addressed include:

- Increasing your social support network
- Identifying triggers to changes in behavior
- Using schedules to improve your child's behavior
- How to discipline your child
- Medication management
- Family issues
- And other issues parents would like to address

Groups are run on Thursday evenings in the Schaumburg office. Please contact either Dr. Rothermel or Bolnick for more information on the groups.

## Website Links for More Information on Pediatric Bipolar Disorder

[National Institute of Mental Health \(Fact Sheet on Child and Adolescent Bipolar Disorder\)](#)

[Child and Adolescent Bipolar Foundation](#)

[Juvenile Bipolar Research Foundation](#)

## Books on Pediatric Bipolar Disorder

Demitri Papolos, MD, and Janice Papolos, MD (2006). [The Bipolar Child: The Definitive and Reassuring Guide to Childhood's Most Misunderstood Disorder, Third Edition.](#) New York: Broadway Books.

David J Miklowitz, PhD, and Elizabeth L George, PhD (2008). [The Bipolar Teen: What You Can Do to Help Your Child and Your Family.](#) New York: Guilford Press.

Mary A Fristad, PhD, and Jill S Goldberg Arnold, PhD (2004). [Raising a Moody Child: How to Cope with Depression and Bipolar Disorder.](#) New York: Guilford Press.