

# CC Spaulding School Based Support

## *Behavioral Help Facts and Classroom Tips*

### *Symptoms or behaviors*

### About Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar disorder, also known as manic-depressive illness, is a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in a person's mood, energy, and ability to function. The normal ups and downs that everyone goes through are more severe for students experiencing symptoms of bipolar disorder. Children may experience mood swings between depression and mania many times within a day. Working together to track patterns and reactions may help to decrease swings at home and school.

If you suspect that a student has Bipolar Disorder, refer the student to the Intervention Team, who with family consent will coordinate the work of all community partners involved with the family.

### Classroom Strategies and Accommodations

- Provide the student with recorded books as an alternative to self-reading when the student's concentration is low.
  - Break assigned reading into manageable segments, monitor the student's progress, and check comprehension periodically.
  - Devise a flexible curriculum that accommodates the sometimes rapid changes in the student's ability to perform consistently in school.
  - Reduce academic demands when energy is low.
- Increase opportunities for achievement when energy is high.
- Identify a place where the student can go for privacy until he or she regains self-control.
  - Set up a procedure of a late start at school if needed.
  - Communicate successful strategies or triggers between home and school.

*A student with bipolar disorder may have difficulty concentrating and understanding assignments with long directions, or reading and comprehending written passages of text.*

- Rapidly changing moods lasting a few hours to a few days
- Depression
- Explosive, lengthy, and often
- Destructive rages
- Separation anxiety
- Defiance of authority
- Hyperactivity & distractibility
- Strong and frequent cravings, often for carbohydrates and sweets
- Impaired judgment, impulsivity, racing thoughts, and pressure to keep talking
- Delusions & hallucinations
- Grandiose belief in own abilities
- Dare-devil behaviors
- Inappropriate or precocious sexual behavior
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### Watch for:

- Episodes of overwhelming emotion
- Poor social skills and difficulty with peers
- Frequent tardiness
- Over involvement in activities or tasks
- Poor judgment and defiance