

Mental health therapy can start in infancy

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Eating or sleeping troubles in infants may warrant a discussion with a therapist if parents aren't sure what's normal, health professionals suggested.

A growing number of hospital and universities offer infant mental health therapy for parents who wonder whether troublesome behavior are what's expected or signal something potentially serious, said KNES-TV in San Antonio.

"We see the children's behavior problems, especially starting around 18 months and increasing around 2 and all the way through the 3s," Jean Thomas, a San Antonio-area child psychiatrist, told the television station. "Sometimes its neuro-developmental problems, sometimes it's more associated with anxiety and mood disorders."

Warning signs for infants are trouble eating or sleeping or they may be listless and unresponsive, professionals said. Excessive tantrums, whining or clinginess could be symptoms in toddlers, experts said.

The National Institute of Mental Health is funding research involving infant mental health therapy, with research into depression in infants. The American Academy of Pediatrics has not taken a position on infant mental health therapy.

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