

WOODALL GNETS NEWSLETTER

The Woodall GNETS Program * 1822 Shepherd Drive, Columbus, Georgia 31906 * 706-748-3166 Office

Message from Mrs. L. Thornton – Director

As we enter the Holiday Seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas, it gives me a chance to take a moment and reflect on how much I am grateful for here at Woodall. I am thankful for our wonderful supportive staff, to our Custodian, our Learning Assistants, our Office Staff, to all of our Teachers and our Therapeutic Team. I am appreciative every day for the opportunity to work with all of them and I know your children are in good hands with them. In addition, we have unbelievable students, who challenge themselves every day to learn and be engaged as well as challenging us to become better people. They are why we are here every day! I want to take this time to wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.

Woodall GNETS PBIS

Mission Statement

To create a climate of cooperation and socio-emotional competence through explicit modeling of behaviors and expectations for students and staff.



Psychotropic Medication Management: Some Considerations

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Forensic / Licensed Clinical Social Worker

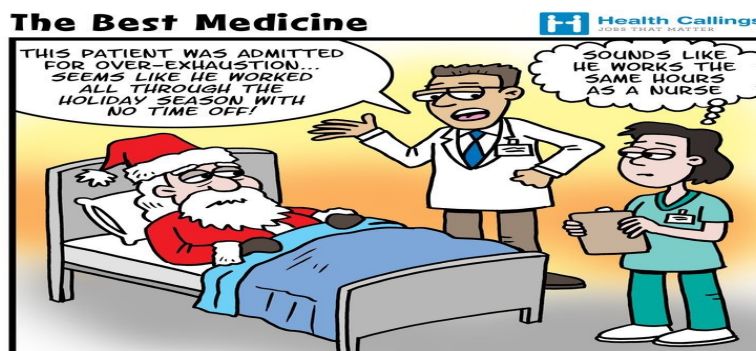


Psychotropic medications are taken for the purpose of improving the emotional and behavioral health of a child or adolescent diagnosed with a specific and/or progressive psychiatric disorder or mental health condition. There is evidence that psychotropic medications are both over and under-prescribed for children and adolescents. Overall, the use of psychotropic medication in children and adolescents has been increasing over the past 20 years, as evidence to support effectiveness when used appropriately has increased.

Prescribing psychotropic medication for children and adolescents requires a competent prescriber, optimally a child and adolescent psychiatrist, with training and qualifications in the use of these medications in this age group. Psychotropic medication is only one component of a comprehensive biopsychosocial treatment plan that must include other components in addition to medication. A comprehensive treatment plan requires a collaborative, team effort, e.g., teacher, paraprofessional, licensed clinical social worker, board-certified behavioral analyst, psychiatrist, etc. The term biopsychosocial recognizes the three domains that impact emotional and behavioral well-being that must be considered in creating a comprehensive treatment plan: (1) "Bio" refers to biological, including physical health and genetic factors. Psychotropic medication can affect biological factors by altering the levels of chemicals in the brain that help to regulate the activity of brain cells that determine emotions and behavior; (2) "Psycho" refers to psychological factors that contribute to emotional and behavioral functioning including feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions; and (3) "Social" refers to environmental factors that influence functioning, such as family dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and social/cultural influences. A mental health evaluation that includes evaluation for medication should identify the needs best addressed by medication as well as the needs best addressed by other psychosocial treatments, such as individual, group, family, behavioral, and/or play therapy.

Prescribing psychotropic medication is greatly influenced by the context in which the prescribing occurs. Individuals create desired change, not medication. Medication removes physiologically based obstacles to change, enabling the individual's own efforts to be more beneficial and goal-directed. Even with medication, psychiatric disorders or conditions can remain challenging and unresponsive. Active pursuit of alternative interventions to medication (e.g., play therapy) is especially important when there are serious side effects, such as weight gain or movement disorders, especially when medication is prescribed over an extended period of time. Therefore, it is always acceptable for a parent or legal guardian to seek a second opinion when medication management is ineffective. There are several circumstances that may indicate the need for a second opinion. These situations include when there is concern about whether to initiate psychotropic medication management; when treatment with psychotropic medication has not resulted in improvement within two months of starting medication; or any time a guardian or parent has concerns about prescribed medication and talking with the prescribing physician about these concerns has not helped. Parents must be proactive when it comes to discussing their concerns with the prescribing physician before requesting a second opinion. The prescribing physician should be willing to help with obtaining any request for a second opinion.

Source: Elbe, D. (2018). Clinical handbook of psychotropic drugs for children and adolescents (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Hogrefe Publishing.



A community of lifelong learners, responsible citizens, and champions of success!



Notes from the Desk of —

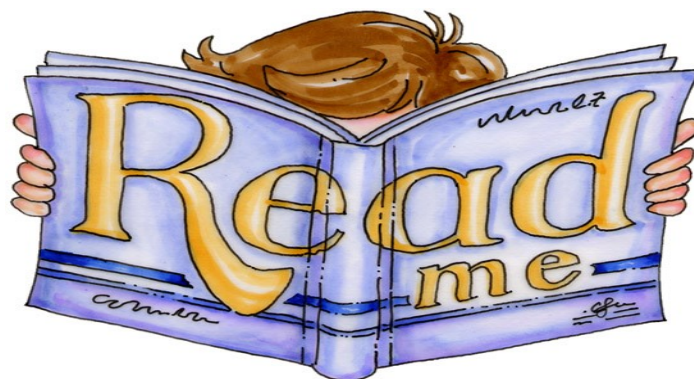
Dr. Vytoris Sanford, Instructional Specialist

The Benefits of Completing Homework!

Research says that there are benefits to having your children complete homework assignments, including:

- Learning to be responsible for bringing papers and books to and from school
- Listening to instructions and taking responsibility for what is required
- Learning to manage one's time
- Reaching out for help when having trouble (either by approaching us, by going to the teacher, or contacting a classmate)
- Reinforcing learning that has taken place in the classroom
- Developing a sense of capability that comes from mastering new tasks and skills
- Experiencing pride in completing a project

***Every student at Woodall receives homework Monday – Thursday, please encourage your child to complete and return!



Notes from the Desk of —
Chauntell Beal, Behavior Specialist

Character Word of the Month

PATRIOTISM

Patriotism- Respectful devotion or love to one's country

Greeting,

We will start the Behavior Assessment System for our children on November 5, 2019. Please complete the forms and return them. The Behavior Assessment System for Children, Third Edition (BASC™-3) is a multimethod, multidimensional system used to evaluate the behavior and self-perceptions of children and young adults ages 2 through 25 years. The BASC-3 system includes the following components: • Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BESS) • Teacher Rating Scales (TRS) • Parent Rating Scales (PRS) • Self-Report of Personality (SRP) • Structured Developmental History (SDH) • Student Observation System (SOS) • Behavior Intervention Guide • Behavioral and Emotional Skill Building Guide - part of the BASC-3 family of products • Flex Monitor • Parenting Relationship Questionnaire (PRQ™) Typically, emotional and behavioral difficulties have various facets. Consequently, these difficulties need to be assessed by a number of different viewpoints. BASC-3 components offer a comprehensive system for identifying, evaluating, monitoring and remediating behavioral and emotional problems in children and adolescents. Each component can be used individually or in whatever combination is best suited to the situation at hand.

