



# Symposium on Educational Excellence 2024

## Mental Health Care in the Pediatric Emergency Department: A Comprehensive Training Program for Pediatrics and Emergency Medicine Residents

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### Keywords

Pediatrics; Pediatric Emergency Medicine; Pediatric Mental Health; Pediatric Mental Health emergencies; Emergencies; Depressive Disorder, Major; Mental Health; Curriculum; Emergency Medicine; Child Abuse; Patient Care Team

### Abstract

The "Mental Health Care in the Pediatric Emergency Department" curriculum addresses a crucial need for specialized training in managing pediatric mental health emergencies among Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Pediatrics and Emergency Medicine residents. This program is designed to bridge a significant gap in current training, preparing residents to handle complex scenarios such as child abuse, sexual assault, severe depression, anxiety, and acute psychiatric crises. It combines web-based learning with dynamic, hands-on simulation workshops, focusing on both clinical proficiency and the ethical and legal aspects of pediatric mental health care.

### Objectives

- 1) Standardize the approach of pediatric residents to acutely ill children
- 2) Provide repeated practice in a safe environment for pediatric emergency skills
- 3) Boost confidence in recognizing and managing psychiatric emergencies in pediatric patients.

### Designs and Methods

This curriculum includes a self-paced web-based module and a 3-hour simulation workshop. Residents work in small groups through stations that simulate real-life pediatric mental health scenarios. The training emphasizes practical skill development and team-based decision-making with input from a multidisciplinary team. Competencies and confidence levels are assessed through pre-surveys and post-surveys to measure skill improvements and decision-making capabilities.

## Conclusion

This curriculum provides an innovative training experience, enhancing the ability of residents to manage pediatric mental health emergencies. Emphasizing small group interactions and simulation scenarios, it builds confidence, alleviates apprehensions, and develops critical skills. The focus on scenario-based learning and real-time feedback prepares residents to deliver high-quality mental health care in emergency settings.