

## WARNING SIGNS OF TROUBLE

The following recommendations are derived from the pamphlet "Help and Hope: Caring for Your Children's Mental Health," (pp. 5-7) published by NAMI and the Center for the Advancement of Children's Mental Health at Columbia University.

### Children of Elementary School Age

- Difficulty in going to sleep or taking part in activities that are normal for the child's age or refusal to go to school on a regular basis.
- Frequent, unexplainable temper tantrums.
- Hyperactive, behavior-fidgeting or constant movement beyond regular playtime activities.
- A steady and noticeable decline in school performance.
- A pattern of deliberate disobedience or aggression.
- Opposition to authority figures, and little or no remorse for breaking rules or norms.
- Persistent nightmares.
- Poor grades in school despite trying very hard.
- Pronounced difficulties with attention, concentration or organization.

### Pre-Teens and Adolescents

- Sustained, prolonged negative mood and attitude. Often accompanied by poor appetite, difficulty in sleeping, or thoughts of death.
- Opposition to authority, truancy, theft, vandalism, and consistent violation of the rights of others.
- Abuse of alcohol, drugs, and/or heavy tobacco use.
- Intense fear of becoming obese with no relationship to actual body weight, constant dieting, restrictive eating habits, purging food or vomiting.
- Frequent outbursts of anger or inability to cope with problems and daily activities.
- Marked change in school performance.
- Marked changes in sleeping and/or eating habits.
- Persistent nightmares or many physical complaints.
- Threats of self-harm or self-injury; harm or violence toward others.
- Sexual acting out.
- Threats to run away.
- Strange thoughts and feelings and unusual behaviors.