

Asperger's gone, dyslexia stays in first change to psychiatric manual in almost 20 years

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The Washington Post:

The now familiar term “Asperger’s disorder” is being dropped. And abnormally bad and frequent temper tantrums will be given a scientific-sounding diagnosis called DMDD. But “dyslexia” and other learning disorders remain.

The revisions come in the first major rewrite in nearly 20 years of the diagnostic guide used by the nation’s psychiatrists. Changes were approved Saturday.

Full details of all the revisions will come next May when the American Psychiatric Association’s new diagnostic manual is published, but the impact will be huge, affecting millions of children and adults worldwide. The manual also is important for the insurance industry in deciding what treatment to pay for, and it helps schools decide how to allot special education.

This diagnostic guide “defines what constellations of symptoms” doctors recognize as mental disorders, said Dr. Mark Olfson, a Columbia University psychiatry professor. More important, he said, it “shapes who will receive what treatment. Even seemingly subtle changes to the criteria can have substantial effects on patterns of care.”

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