

If your child has problems or acts differently after arriving in the Netherlands

Psychological complaints in children after migration and dramatic events

Having to move to another country can take a toll on your children. They are away from their usual and trusted environment and had to leave behind school, friends and family. Your child may be feeling out of sorts and problems may develop. That is quite normal. Still, you can help them. Although these kinds of problems can go away after a while, sometimes your child will need extra help to feel better.

Problems in children

- A child may be more active than usual.
- A child may become quiet and less talkative.
- You may notice that a child is acting as if they were (back to being) a younger kid or that they wet their pants, even though they haven't done that in a long time.
- Children can also feel afraid or very sad.
- Children can act defiant.



As a parent, it is difficult when you see that your child isn't doing well. For children it is also hard to see when their parents do not feel good. And of course, both worry about the other. Sometimes you wish that your child wasn't acting up. It makes you discipline your child more strictly than you used to. You may have gone through a lot yourself, and are therefore having a hard time. If that is the case, it is tough when your children occupy all your attention. That's why it is a good idea to ask your GP, nurse or pediatrician for help. They work for youth health services. This can be in the context of a clinic for babies and toddlers, or of primary or secondary school.

What can I do?

- Do things together. Try to be active with your child. It will help your child feel better.
- Talk with your child. Ask open questions. Give honest answers without scaring your child.
- Make a day schedule with the family. Have your child wake up and go to bed at the same time every day. Plan fun activities too. Hang up the day schedule at home.
- Do fun things together. Play games, go to the playground, go dancing.
- Go outside with your child: you could play outdoors, ride a bike or take a walk.
- Do not let your child spend too much time watching TV or playing with their phone. It is better to listen to music or to read.

When to ask for help?

Problems do not always last long. They often lessen after a few weeks or go away. If the problems are still there after a month and are getting worse, then you have to do something. You can ask the CJG [CJG](#) for advice.

This information is based on a [Pharos leaflet](#).

