



Vermont Legislative Research Sh

Relevant Studies

One difficult issue that often arises is that children who need mental health treatment are often the ones with the least capacity to make appropriate decisions for themselves. For instance, child psychiatrists find that children raised in a healthy environment have a better understanding about treatment options. These children also are more likely to have parents who will make the best decisions for their children. Children raised in an environment of neglect, child abuse, or sexual abuse are more likely to lack the proper skills to make appropriate decisions for themselves. These children are also the most likely to need to make decisions of consent, as their guardians will most likely not protect the child's best interest and may try to influence their child's decisions for their own benefit (Fergert and Tan 2004).

One study found that children have a harder time understanding consent forms when questions are open-ended. Children tend to best understand

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