

5 minute check-in: Spotting Early Signs of Anxiety in Students/Pupils

HOW TO SPOT THE WARNING SIGNS IN YOUR CLASSROOM

NOT CONCENTRATING

Difficulty concentrating or being preoccupied with worries

Students might find it hard to focus on tasks or think about anything other than their current worries. Even low levels of anxiety can affect educational outcomes.

AVOIDANCE

Avoidance of situations or activities that trigger anxiety

This can manifest as avoiding specific social interactions, places, or school activities. In extreme cases this could manifest as selective mutism, where a child consistently fails to speak in certain social situations like school, despite being able to speak comfortably in other settings

PERSISTENT WORRYING

Persistent and excessive worry about everyday situations

This goes beyond typical concerns and can be a sign of generalized anxiety disorder. Students with anxiety disorders may also experience intense fear or worry that is difficult to control and disproportionate to the actual danger

CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR

Observable changes in physical or behavioral patterns

Manifesting as restless, tense or irritable behaviour, you may even observe physical symptoms such as nausea or headaches. Or even negative self-talk (e.g., "I can't do this") or difficulty articulating feelings and worries due to a lack of emotional literacy or confidence

IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN NORMAL AND EXCESSIVE ANXIETY. RECOGNISING THE SIGNS EARLY IS CRUCIAL TO POSITIVE OUTCOMES.

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