

ANXIETY IN THE CLASSROOM

How To Work With Your Colleagues

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Building a team to help a child struggling with anxiety and/or OCD in your school is crucial. Team members share information, expertise, and responsibility for the student and support each other through plan development and implementation.

Teams may consist of a teacher, school counselor, school social worker, school nurse, parents, a therapist, and/or the student. It is helpful if a team has an identified point person who collects information from all parties and communicates it to other team members in an organized and meaningful way.

HOW TO WORK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

Working with your colleagues to recognize and address anxiety/ OCD.

- 1 Identifying Anxiety & OCD
- 2 Learning About Anxiety & OCD
- 3 Communicating with Parents
- 4 Ongoing Assessment & Data Collection
- 5 Referrals



HOW TO WORK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

In this video, Eric Storch, PhD, talks about how school personnel can work together to help develop a plan for a student with anxiety and/or OCD.



WORKING WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES



Identifying anxiety/ OCD.

Because school personnel interact with students in different ways, they may have different information about what they observe in the student.

- A teacher may recognize a student repeating behaviors like getting up from their chair or a dramatic decrease in homework compliance or attendance.
- A school nurse may recognize that a student comes to their office regularly complaining of shortness of breath or headache.



WORKING WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

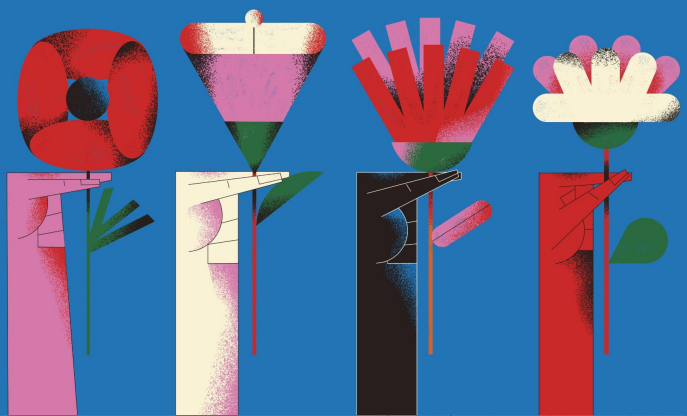


Identifying anxiety/ OCD.

It is very important that school personnel collaborate as a team to share information about a potential problem with each other.

- Without sharing information, it may take longer than necessary for the bigger picture to emerge and can delay a student getting the help they need.

WORKING WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES



Communicating with parents.

- It is crucial that school personnel communicate their concerns to the student's parent(s)/caregiver(s) in a respectful, warm, and calm manner.
- Sometimes this communication comes from the classroom teacher and other times it comes from the school psychologist or counselor.
- While it is not the school's job to diagnose a student with a mental health condition, it is important to be clear about what the problem is, provide specific examples to back up their concerns, and make recommendations for how to handle the situation. If a caregiver is skeptical, school personnel may invite them to come to school to observe the student in the school environment.

WORKING WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES



Ongoing assessment and data collection.

- School personnel will continue to observe and document anxiety and OCD related behaviors.
- This information is used in continued communication with parents and school personnel and when developing 504 Plans and IEP. Sometimes school personnel use general behavior tracking forms and other times they may use specific mental health questionnaires. Again, information should be consolidated and shared by one school-based point person.

HOW TO MANAGE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ANXIETY



Referrals.

School personnel may make a referral

- 1 For further testing to determine if a student is eligible for special education services
- 2 To school-based counseling
- 3 To community mental health professionals and supports (if requested by parents).

THANK YOU.

QUESTIONS ?

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