



The Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center

## Recognizing Symptoms Of Anxiety In Children

Anxiety is one of the most common mental health problems seen in children, and its frequency and incidence have skyrocketed during the coronavirus pandemic.

### Common physical symptoms

It's not unusual for anxiety to show up as a physical symptom, especially in younger children. This includes:

- Headaches or stomachs
- Problems with sleeping, wakefulness or sleepiness
- Problems with appetite or eating

### Common cognitive symptoms

- Repetitive thoughts or questions
- Using logic will not always diminish their fears
- Problems with concentration and attention
- School refusal or problems with academic performance
- Withdrawal from social situations, avoiding friends
- Avoiding conversations about the pandemic or certain situations (such as group conversations)

IMPORTANT: Because these symptoms regularly occur even in children who are not anxious, it's important to note if they are ***persistent*** or ***unusual***. Symptoms that recur should trigger a discussion with the school counseling staff.

For classroom activities that can address anxiety in children, please see MARC's *Teacher's Guide to Anti-Anxiety Classroom Activities* by Dr. Katharine Covino. It can be downloaded from the MARC website.

<https://www.marccenter.org>

Twitter: @ekenglander