

# Signs of Anxiety in Young Children

## Physical Signs

- ☐ Frequently complains of headaches or stomachaches, even though there's no medical reason for them.
- ☐ Refuses to eat snacks or lunch at daycare or school.
- ☐ Won't use restrooms except at home.
- ☐ Constantly tenses his muscles.
- ☐ Can become restless, fidgety, hyperactive or distracted (even though he doesn't necessarily have ADHD).
- ☐ Starts to shake or sweat in intimidating situations.
- ☐ Has trouble falling or staying asleep.

## Emotional Signs

- ☐ Cries often.
- ☐ Acts extremely sensitive.
- ☐ Becomes grouchy or angry without any clear reason.
- ☐ Is afraid of making even minor mistakes.
- ☐ Has extreme test anxiety.
- ☐ Has panic attacks (or is afraid of having panic attacks).
- ☐ Has phobias (about bees, dogs, etc.) and exaggerated fears (about things like natural disasters, etc.).
- ☐ Has obsessive thoughts or compulsive behaviors (finger tapping, hand washing, etc.).
- ☐ Is afraid people will find out about his learning and attention issues (more so than other kids with the same issues).
- ☐ Worries about things that are far in the future (for example, a third grader might worry about starting middle school).
- ☐ Is worried or afraid during drop-offs (at daycare, school, relatives' homes, etc.).
- ☐ Has frequent nightmares about losing a parent or loved one.
- ☐ Gets distracted from playing by his worries and fears.
- ☐ Is starting to have meltdowns or tantrums.

## Behavioral Signs

- ☐ Asks "what if?" constantly. ("What if an earthquake happened?")
- ☐ Avoids participating during circle time or other class activities.
- ☐ Remains silent or preoccupied when he's expected to work with others.
- ☐ Refuses to go to school.
- ☐ Stays inside, alone, at lunch or recess.
- ☐ Refuses to speak to peers or strangers in stores, restaurants, etc.
- ☐ Avoids social situations with peers after school or on weekends (extracurricular activities, birthday parties, etc.).
- ☐ Becomes emotional or angry when separating from parents or loved ones.
- ☐ Constantly seeks approval from parents, teachers and friends.
- ☐ Says "I can't do it!" without a real reason.