

Watch for Early signs of Anxiety in Children

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The new school year, with all its excitement and promise, is now well underway. While school should be perceived as a positive experience, providing opportunities to learn and grow, to bond with old friends and make new ones, many kids find school overwhelmingly stressful. What can parents and professionals do to prevent, or at least minimize, these debilitating feelings?

Discomfort, fear and anxiety are normal feelings. Learning to cope is an important developmental task that children can tackle effectively, usually with adult guidance and support. Fears are common. They emerge and diminish throughout childhood. As most children mature, they overcome fears of the dark, thunder and monsters, and block out daily media reminders of personal tragedies, disasters and terrorism.

Some children encounter special challenges: divorce, a death in the family, an unexpected move to a new neighborhood or community, or a transition to a new school. While many kids develop strategies to compensate for the worries these issues produce, up to 5 percent of children develop anxiety disorders serious enough to interfere with normal function. Treatment is much more effective if begun early, but is dependent upon the early recognition of an anxiety disorder.

How well do you know your child? Does he refuse to go to school, complaining of a bellyache or headache, or display changes in sleep patterns or behavior? Has he lost interest in school, friends or after-school activities? Is your child terrified of failing academically or athletically? Has a bully targeted your child and threatened or physically hurt him? Since children often have difficulty discussing their concerns, fears and worries, parents may only learn of their child's stresses and anxieties by carefully monitoring their actions and activities.

Read the res of the story here: http://www.salemnews.com/pulife/local_story_326000226.html?keyword=topstory

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