

Case study 12

Anxiety spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a range of conditions that involve excessive and persistent worry or fear. Anxiety disorders are a type of mental health disorder, and they can range from mild to severe. People with anxiety spectrum disorder may experience a variety of symptoms, including excessive worry, fear, and apprehension, physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, or a racing heart, and avoidance of situations that trigger anxiety.

Description: Lina, a 7-year-old girl. She often tries to take responsibility for a lot of things she can't really influence. She especially wants to feel safe and always asks again after a lesson, to double-check, to be reassured that she has understood or done the task correctly. The girl is observed to lose stability when the order or timetable of tasks changes, and to be overwhelmed by time limits and changes. In such cases, she experiences physical signs of discomfort, such as sweating, shivering and heart palpitations.

- **Key words:**

Anxiety, mental disorder, daily functioning.

Case study 12. Anxiety spectrum disorder

Tool 1

Title: What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Using this tool you can suspect anxiety spectrum disorder.

Instructions / Methodology / Recommendations how to use the tool

Concern should be expressed if the child has been worried for a long time, without a clear reason. The anxiety becomes uncontrollable and interferes with everyday life. The resulting symptomatology ranges from persistent to non-specific anxiety, to intense, overwhelming fears. In an educational context, this significantly affects the child's functioning in learning activities. The most common manifestation is disengagement, generalised, social anxiety disorder and selective mutism.

All anxiety disorders share some common symptoms:

1. Panic, fear.
2. Sleep problems - insomnia, restless sleep.
3. Inability to concentrate and focus.
4. Frequent heart palpitations or chest pain.
5. Difficulty breathing, lack of air.
6. Fatigue and irritability.
7. Tense muscles.
8. Numbness, tingling in the arms or legs.
9. Dizziness.
10. Difficulty speaking, dry mouth.
11. Excessive worry or fear about a range of situations or events, such as being away from parents, attending school, or sleeping alone.
12. Restlessness or fidgeting, feeling keyed up or on edge.
13. Avoidance of activities or situations that cause anxiety or fear.
14. Physical symptoms such as stomach aches, headaches, or muscle tension.
15. Difficulty sleeping or staying asleep.
16. Easily startled or frightened.
17. Irritability, mood swings, or temper tantrums.
18. Difficulty concentrating or paying attention.
19. Perfectionism or a fear of making mistakes.
20. Seeking reassurance excessively.

Interpretation of the results

If anxiety lasts for a long time, it can become an anxiety disorder and can have many negative effects on our lives. Therefore, it is advisable to seek for a professional help.

Key words

Anxiety, worried, disengagement, social anxiety disorder.

Links

1. Anxiety and Depression Association of America: Anxiety in Children - <https://adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/children/anxiety>
2. Child Mind Institute: Anxiety in Children - <https://childmind.org/guide/anxiety-in-children/>
3. National Institute of Mental Health: Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents - https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/anxiety-disorders/index.shtml#part_145345
4. American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Anxiety Disorders - https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Anxiety-Disorders-007.aspx
5. Anxiety Canada: Anxiety in Children and Youth - <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/anxiety-in-children-and-youth/>