



DEFINITION:

ANXIETY IS THE RESPONSE TO PERCEIVED THREAT THAT WE ARE ANTICIPATING IN THE FUTURE (AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, 2022)

**MOST OCCUR MORE FREQUENTLY IN GIRLS THAN IN BOYS
WITH A 2:1 RATIO**

SYMPTOMS

1. Out-of-proportion anxiety compared to the actual threat
2. Excessive worry or fear about everyday situations
3. Restlessness or feeling on edge
4. Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank
5. Irritability or frequent mood swings
6. Trouble sleeping, such as difficulty falling asleep or nightmares
7. Physical complaints like stomachaches or headaches without clear cause
8. Avoidance of certain situations, places, or activities
9. Clinginess or reluctance to separate from caregivers
10. Rapid heartbeat or sweating in stressful situations
11. Excessive need for reassurance or approval
12. Catastrophic thinking (expecting worst-case scenarios)
13. Increased rigidity or insistence on sameness
14. Increased repetitive behaviors (e.g., hand flapping, rocking)

<https://youtu.be/dpyaki31D4w>

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Sensory Integration Activities: Use sensory tools like weighted blankets, fidget toys, or calming sensory bins to regulate emotions.

Deep Breathing Exercises: Teach techniques like belly breathing or "balloon breaths" to calm the nervous system.

Mindfulness Meditation: Introduce guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, or simple yoga poses to reduce stress.

Structured Routines: Create predictable daily schedules to provide stability and reduce uncertainty.

Social Skills Training: Practice role-playing or group activities to build confidence in social situations.

Physical Activity: Incorporate movement-based tasks, such as obstacle courses or dance, to release tension.

Environmental Modifications: Create calm, low-stimulation spaces or adjust sensory input (ex, dim lighting, quiet areas).

Self-Regulation Tools: Teach children to use visual schedules (PECS, AAC, boards), timers, or emotion charts to manage feelings.

Play-Based Interventions: Use therapeutic play, like storytelling or art, to express emotions and build coping skills.