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10 Signs Your Child May Need Extra Support

A research-backed checklist for parents by Dr. Aryeh Berlin, PsyD

Every child has hard days. This checklist isn't about occasional struggles. It's about patterns worth paying attention to. Check any that sound familiar, then see what to do next below.

☐ 1. Persistent Anxiety or Fear

Worry that doesn't respond to reassurance, avoidance of previously enjoyed activities, or physical complaints tied to anxious situations.

☐ 2. Explosive or Uncontrollable Anger

Meltdowns beyond typical tantrums: longer, more intense, out of proportion to the trigger, and happening multiple times a week.

☐ 3. Persistent Withdrawal or Sadness

Pulling away from friends and family, losing interest in activities they used to love, appearing sad or flat for weeks.

☐ 4. School Avoidance

Refusing to attend school, recurring stomachaches or headaches on school mornings, noticeably declining grades.

☐ 5. Aggression Toward People or Animals

Any physical aggression toward people or animals, or high-intensity destruction of property. These are clinical markers worth attention at any intensity.

☐ 6. Changes in Sleep or Appetite

Significant, persistent disruptions across several weeks that aren't tied to a single one-off event.

☐ 7. Social Withdrawal or Peer Struggles

A previously social child pulling back, or ongoing intense peer conflict that isn't improving with adult support.

☐ 8. Shrinking Confidence and Self-Belief

Listen for "I can't do it," "Everyone is better than me," or "I'm stupid." A consistently negative self-narrative is worth addressing early.

☐ 9. A Major Life Change Has Hit Hard

Even resilient kids can struggle after divorce, loss, a move, illness, or bullying. Support during transitions helps prevent longer-term problems.

☐ 10. Repetitive or Compulsive Behaviors

Rituals, checking, or repeated reassurance-seeking that interfere with daily routines and are hard for your child to stop on their own.

What to Do With Your Results

Checked one or two? Keep watching. Isolated signs that aren't affecting daily life are often just part of growing up.
Checked three or more, or is any single sign affecting school, friendships, or family life? That's worth a conversation. Not a crisis, just a conversation.

Learn how our team helps **children and teens**

Need a Trusted Referral? We're Here to Help.

If a child's anxiety is interfering with daily life, or if parents feel stuck, call our team. No waitlist, and a free 10-minute call to see if we're a fit.



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