

Classroom accommodations for anxiety

Explore these common classroom accommodations for anxiety. They can help kids at school — and even at home.

Providing emotional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage the student to use anxiety-reducing techniques, including self-calming objects.• Check in frequently for “emotional temperature.”• Build in “call home” breaks, if needed.• Let the student talk with a staff member with mental health expertise when needed.
Classroom setup, schedules, and routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearly state and/or write down expectations and consequences.• Allow the student to sit where they’re most comfortable, like near a teacher or a friend.• Let the student sit near an exit during assemblies.• Give the student a “take a break” pass.• Assign the student a buddy for lunchtime, recess, and/or hallways.• Allow preferential grouping for field trips.• Create a plan for catching up after an absence.• Give advance notice of planned substitute teachers, changes in routine, or transitions.• Rehearse transitions in a low-stress environment.• Provide a signal before calling on the student and a signal for the student to opt out of answering.
Completing assignments and tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Break down assignments into smaller chunks.• Use both oral and written instructions.• Exempt the student from reading aloud or demonstrating work in front of the class. Let the student present projects to the teacher.• Give extended time on tests and/or a separate test-taking space.• Allow word banks, notes, or fact cards for tests.• Set homework time limits or reduce the amount.• Assure that work not completed in that time won’t count against the student.• Provide class notes for the student to preview.• Give notice of upcoming tests (no “pop quizzes”).