Warning Signs for Recognizing Students Who May Be Experiencing Social or Emotional Difficulties

Note: This activity covers the content of lessons 4, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, and 4f.

Read the following scenarios and answer the accompanying questions:

Scenario 1

Sarah has been having problems sleeping for several months. She always feels tired, even if she sleeps for hours each night. Sarah hasn’t felt very hungry lately, and she has started to eat lunch alone in the cafeteria. Her friends don’t understand why Sarah doesn’t want to sit with them, and they are frustrated by her frequent mood swings. Sarah’s teachers have noticed that her academic performance is dropping, and that she has missed several deadlines. When asked about her school work, Sarah replies that she can’t concentrate on studying. She told one teacher, “I just can’t take it anymore.” Sarah spends most evenings alone in her room listening to music.

1. Identify any warning signs that indicate that Sarah may be experiencing social or emotional difficulties.

2. Do you think that these warning signs are of concern? Explain your response.
Scenario 2

James is usually a confident and easygoing third grade student. Lately he has been clinging to his mom whenever she leaves, and he has had trouble sleeping. James’ teacher has noticed that he seems more anxious than usual, and his academic performance is dropping. When the teacher asks James about his school work, he becomes even more worried and anxious. James appears almost fearful to be alone, and does not like to be far from his mom or the teacher.

1. Identify any warning signs that indicate that James may be experiencing social or emotional difficulties.

2. Do you think that these warning signs are of concern? Explain your response.

Scenario 3

Mindy has had trouble sleeping for the past few nights. She is taking a college entrance exam on Saturday, and she can’t stop thinking about it. She feels worried about the test, and she has been spending a lot of time alone studying. Mindy hasn’t felt very hungry this week, and she has been irritable around her friends and family.

1. Identify any warning signs that indicate that Mindy may be experiencing social or emotional difficulties.

2. Do you think that these warning signs are of concern? Explain your response.