

SHY

Counselors may assist shy students in overcoming obstacles that interfere with the learning process.

Symptoms

1. Limited eye contact, a refusal to respond to others, and isolation in social situations
2. Few close friendships outside the immediate family members
3. Hypersensitivity to criticism or perceived signs of rejection.
4. Excessive need for reassurance
5. Reluctance to engage in new activities
6. Negative self-image
7. Physiological distress in social settings: sweating, trembling, increased heart rate

Possible Causes

1. Often criticized or teased
2. Overprotected
3. Parents are neglectful or disinterested

Goals

1. Eliminate anxiety and shyness in most social settings
2. Establish peer friendships outside of the family
3. Initiate social contacts in new social settings
4. Develop social skills that will enhance interpersonal relationships
5. Resolve core conflicts contributing to shyness and anxiety
6. Elevate self-esteem and feelings of security in relationships

How to Help

1. Refer for a speech/language evaluation to rule out impairment that may lead to shyness
2. Actively build a level of trust with student through eye contact, empathy and listening
3. Encourage expression of feelings
4. Assist parents to create environment that enhances self-esteem and social interactions
5. Teach social skills
6. Use art, play or role-plays to express feelings and practice social interactions

7. Find activities where individual will experience constructive endeavors and enjoyable activities
8. Identify instances where self-esteem has been damaged.
9. Ask the student to write one positive thing about him or herself daily. Have them realize that they have over 100 things about which to be proud.
10. Set goals and monitor progress.