

Issue: Children Who Cannot Work Without Adult Attention

Strategies to Consider:

There are several reasons that a child may want and need an adult's attention to complete his/her school task. Often we find it a little challenging because as educators, we can't be there for them all the time.

Besides finding out the real reason for this phenomenon, it is also important that both a supportive home and school environment are established. The following are the possible reasons why the described behavior would happen:

Anxiety. Different kinds of anxiety may be the reason, such as separation anxiety disorder, which means being alone to work or study can cause anxiety for some children. If this is the case, there are three clinical ways to deal with it: first, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, which is aimed at helping children understand that their anxiety and fear isn't necessary and realistic; second, in vivo exposure, which means to gradually expose a child to different levels of exposure and separation; and third, play therapy, that is to lessen the anxiety that a child has by engaging him/her in regular social and collective activities. Practical methods can teach the child build more social skills, use "anxiety reduction" techniques, and so on. Any effective method must first identify children's different emotions and then make them more manageable.

Attention-seeking. It is also possible that the child just wants to distract the teacher. This means that this child may have difficulty with his/her academics or have some feelings of loneliness and being left out. When this happens, teachers always need to pay more attention and efforts to him/her. Effective methods include checking to make sure the child is ready whenever there is an in-class assignment, reminding him/her what to do, letting the kid keep track of his/her work, or giving the kid a chance to speak and express his ideas.

Family issues. Pay attention to family issues when a child always needs an adult's supervision and attention because family issues can bother young kids for a long time. Situations like the loss of an important family member will make school life harder for kids. When you find out and are sure that this is the reason, reach out to the child first as a caring adult. If no noticeable results take place, you may need to seek professional guidance.

If you believe your student cannot work without adult supervision, the reminders checklist below will help remind you, as a teacher, what you can do to help the student through their school day:

[Reminders Checklist for Working Without Adult Supervision](#)

Also consider:

[CopeCareDeal: A mental health site for teens](#)

[Pervasive Development Disorder](#)

[Separation Anxiety Disorder](#)

[Social Phobia](#)

[Reminders Checklist for Working Without Adult Attention](#)

Reminders Checklist for Working Without Adult Supervision

- _____ Have the student close to the front of the classroom to keep their attention.
- _____ Check to make sure the students is prepared. Do they have the materials required?
- _____ Encourage the student to try to have positive interactions with their peers.
- _____ Remind the student what the class did last time.
- _____ Let the student sit next to a friend who will help them get started.
- _____ Put a note on the student's desk telling them what they will need to do this morning.
- _____ Tell the student what you'll be doing next.
- _____ Provide the student with their own set of directions.
- _____ Offer a goal (such as remembering one or two things) and encourage the student to meet it with an incentive.
- _____ Let the student have a chance to speak.
- _____ Ask the student about their ideas if they are quiet and do not participate.
- _____ Give the student praise when they contribute with their ideas.
- _____ Provide the student with opportunities to work in small groups where they will feel more comfortable to speak aloud.
- _____ There may be times when it is hard for the student to focus; often times a student will get distracted by the thoughts in their mind. If possible, please make the student an outline of the discussion.