

Presenting Issues:

A participating PCP emailed a consultation request into WICPCP@mcw.edu, stating that they were working with a 5-year-old female patient who was having significant anxiety with attending school. She had just started kindergarten, but had already missed more than half the days, due to high anxiety and vomiting in the mornings. Per the child's mother, she had struggled with attendance as well as academic concepts throughout K-4. There was no reported anxiety during the summer break, until the week before school started up again.

WI CPCP Clinician Recommendations:

- In effort to further clarify anxiety symptoms, request that the parent fill out an **Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional-Second Edition (ASQ: SE)** and the **SCARED Anxiety Rating Scale**.
- **Psychotherapy** should be strongly considered to address anxiety and school avoidance, as well as for parent support to help get the patient to school each day.
- School anxiety can sometimes be the result of academic struggles, where the pattern of anxiety 'disappears' during weekends and school breaks.
 - Since school functioning is impacted, the patient's parent could request that the school develop an **Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan**, which could address anxiety symptoms in that setting as well as assess for learning disabilities or other factors which could be impairing functioning.

Teaching Points:

- The **ASQ: SE** can be used for two purposes:
 - As a first-level screening tool when identifying infants and children up to age 63 months that may require further social-emotional behavioral assessment.
 - As a monitoring tool to gauge the development of children who are at risk for social-emotional developmental problems.
 - [Social-Emotional Screening Toolkit](#)
- Requirements for school accommodations:
 - There are two requirements for an IEP
 - A child has one or more of the 13 disabilities listed in [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#).
 - The disability must affect the child's educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum. The child must need specialized instruction to make progress in school.
 - There are two requirements for a 504 Plan:
 - A child has any disability. Section 504 covers a wide range of different struggles in school.

- The disability must interfere with the child's ability to learn in a general education classroom.
- Section 504 has a broader definition of a disability than IDEA.
 - A disability must substantially limit one or more basic life activities.
 - This can include learning, reading, communicating, and thinking. A child who doesn't qualify for an IEP might still be able to get a 504 Plan.
 - [The difference between IEPs and 504 Plans](#)