



Prevalent Signs & Symptoms of Substance Abuse

Biological/Physical Symptoms

Changes in the body's ability to self-regulate: may include changes in heart rate, blood pressure, appetite and weight, muscle twitching, weakness or tremors, seizures, lack of coordination, dizziness, blurred vision, dilated or constricted pupils, red, glassy eyes, sweating, nausea, vomiting, respiratory distress, chills

Psycho-Motor agitation: may include pacing, hand wringing, picking at skin, fidgeting, and restlessness

Psycho-motor retardation: may include listlessness, slowed speech, thinking or body movements and deterioration of handwriting

If you notice a student with any of the symptoms below or a significant change in mood or behavior that lasts for more than a week, share your observations with the student's parent and/or guardian and with your school's nurse and/or mental health support team.

Emotional/Cognitive Symptoms

Changes in emotional functioning: may include depressed, irritable mood, nervousness, over-excitability, euphoria, and apathy

Changes in cognitive functioning: may include poor concentration, sensation of slowed time, confusion, rambling flow of thoughts and speech, poor memory and attention

Social/Behavioral Symptoms

Changes in behavioral functioning: may include increased combativeness and competitiveness, lethargy, discontinuation of previously enjoyed activities, becoming more secretive and engaging in lying behavior

Changes in social functioning: may include involvement in a sudden new peer group or marked isolation from peers