



## 30 things parents should watch out for

By Dr Andrew Wicking

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Disengagement from learning and school amplifies risky behaviours. This means that not only do disengaged young people have too much time on their hands often with minimal adult supervision, it also means they are more likely to associate with other troubled and disengaged young people.

Parents should be on the lookout for these potential early signs of disengagement and withdrawal:

### Physical Indicators:

- Procrastination;
- Tiredness;
- Untidy appearance, uniform not cared for;
- Indication of substance taking;
- Off task often;
- Frequent illnesses - unhealthy looking/pale;
- Absences from school.

### Psychological:

- Poor academic results;
- Not 'present';
- Stalling tactics;
- Outbursts;
- Anxious/stressed;
- Gives up easily.

### Behavioural:

- Procrastinates;
- Plays computer games at any opportunity;
- Aggression;
- Lying;

- Substance use;
- Constant texting;
- Lack of interest/motivation;
- Easily distracted;
- Avoids school.

### Work/Study habits:

- Says "Got nothing to do";
- Wastes time;
- Constant phone use;
- Homework not done/incomplete;
- No books or wrong books;
- Low level of organization;
- Asking for extensions/behind in tasks;
- Confused.

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