


**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**



*TSA Educational In-Service*



*Education, Research and Support*

**People With TS Often Have OCD**



- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is often associated with TS**
- **OCD is an anxiety disorder characterized by:**
  - Recurrent, unwanted thoughts and images (obsessions), and/or
  - Repetitive behaviors (compulsions) which the person hopes will prevent the obsessive thoughts or make them go away
    - Performing the "rituals" provides only temporary relief
    - Not performing them significantly increases anxiety

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**Obsessions & Compulsions**



- **Obsessions**
  - Germs, neatness, social embarrassment, order, symmetry, thoughts of violence, thoughts prohibited by religious beliefs, hoarding...
- **Common Compulsions (rituals)**
  - Handwashing, locking/relocking doors, counting, checking, touching (especially in a particular sequence), haircombing...
- **The rituals interfere with daily life and can be isolating and embarrassing**
  - People with OCD must perform them even though they are distressing
  - Some adults and children do not recognize their behaviors as being unusual

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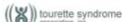
**Students and OCD**

- **Some common problems seen in school as a result of OCD**
  - Difficulty transitioning from one activity or location to the next
  - Touching things that are off limits, such as fire alarms
  - Inability to tolerate mistakes
  - Constant erasing
  - Not being able to start a task due to fear of imperfection
  - Refusal to eat or participate due to obsession with germs
  - Not completing work or appearing inattentive due to performing compulsions

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**OCD Video**

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**You See the Symptoms – Now What?**


- **If obsessive compulsive symptoms are observed, the situation should be brought to the parents' attention**
  - Parents may not be aware of the problems or the severity
  - Early diagnosis is important
- **Teacher & Parent discussions may include the student**
  - Need to develop strategies and techniques to manage the symptoms
- **An outside, formal evaluation may be beneficial**
  - Treatments are available, but are particularly challenging for OCD+TS

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**OCD Management at School**


- **Use Assistive Technologies where applicable**
  - Computers can help address compulsive erasing and having to re-write to achieve perfect letter formation
  - Audio books for students who count lines and letters in text books, etc.
- **Provide extended time for test taking and assignments**
- **Stay in touch with the parents**
  - Therapists may be available to provide school strategies
- **Educate the students, teachers and support staff**
  - Understanding and compassion are essential in the classroom
- **Involve the student!**



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**Summary**

- **OCD is an anxiety disorder that includes compulsions (rituals) that impact school performance**
- **Teachers may recognize OCD before the parents or student**
  - Early diagnosis is important
- **OCD management strategies are needed at school**
  - Teachers and parents must communicate and involve others
- **OCD waxes and wanes like TS**
  - Stick with strategies that are working and involve the student



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**Contact TSA for More Information and Resources**

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