

## Is your student dealing with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)?

### Here are some red flags to check whether a student could be dealing with OCD:

- ❖ Excessive concerns about writing, e.g. scratching words if there is a minor mistake, erasing repeatedly until the paper has holes, or tearing the paper and starting over and over the writing task multiple times.
- ❖ Excessive frustration when things are disorganized from the usual routine or arrangement of school items.
- ❖ Excessive distress when there are not clear expectations about what comes “next” or what’s expected for homework.
- ❖ Excessive slowness when completing homework.
- ❖ Asking teacher multiple times what’s the instruction for homework or assignment.
- ❖ Re-reading multiple times just to make sure the material was understood.
- ❖ Odd behaviors such as walking in specific patterns through doorways, counting tiles or syllables, touching or tapping, or sitting and standing repeatedly may be “just right” rituals.
- ❖ Frequent checking of the backpack, lockers, pockets, , lockers, pockets, or under the desk and chair to make sure nothing has been forgotten.
- ❖ Opening doors, lockers, desks, or books with elbows or with tissue in hand, holding hands in the air to avoid physical contact, refusal to shake hands or share pencils or other supplies may reflect contamination fears.

#### What is OCD?

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a disorder that characterized by distressing and unwanted thoughts, images, or impulses (obsessions) that result in strong urges to engage in repetitive thoughts or behaviors (compulsions) to reduce this distress. In a nutshell, a student has a thought, image, or urge they don’t want to have and it’s extremely stressful.

#### Treatment:

The most effective treatment for OCD is Exposure Response Prevention (ERP), that helps students to face step-by-step the unwanted obsessions and eliminate their compulsive responses. ERP is the most effective treatments for anxiety problems, with up to 80% of patients experiencing a significant reduction in anxiety after only a few sessions.