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## PINEWOOD AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

### **Mental Health Warning Signs**

*Updated May 20, 2025*

Recognizing the early warning signs of mental health challenges is a critical step toward timely support and intervention. While emotional ups and downs are common, persistent patterns such as withdrawal from others, changes in eating or sleeping habits, loss of motivation, or noticeable mood swings may signal that a student is struggling. These signs often appear subtly at first, but if left unaddressed, they can escalate and impact a student's daily functioning, relationships, and overall well being. By learning to identify these warning signs early, we can create a more supportive environment where mental health is prioritized.

Below are the most common warning signs students may present:

#### **Early Years/Elementary**

- Feeling excessively sad, low, or worried and anxious
- Confused thinking, or problems concentrating and learning
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains"), often paired with frequent visits to the school nurse
- Changes in school performance
- Hyperactive behavior
- Frequent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums

#### **Middle/High School**

- Change in personality
- Uncharacteristic levels of anxiety, anger or moodiness
- Aggressive behavior
- Social Withdrawal and Isolation
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance
- Lack of self-care or risky behaviors
- Abuse of substances like alcohol or drugs
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains"), often paired with frequent visits to the school nurse



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- Self-harm
- Thinking about suicide