

# Nurturing Courage and Competence: Tools to help kids and teens address anxiety and depression

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Plymouth Meeting, PA

# Anxiety and depression are on the rise

- ▶ Social, political, and environmental causes are likely implicated in an increase in the number of teens each year who have had a depressive or anxiety episode
- ▶ Nearly one in three adolescents (31.9%) will meet criteria for an anxiety disorder by the age of 18.
- ▶ In 2019, one in three high school students and half of female students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, an overall increase of 40% from 2009 to 2017.
- ▶ High school students today have more anxiety symptoms and are twice as likely to see a mental health professional as teens in the 1980s
- ▶ Suicide rates in young people have increased dramatically
- ▶ Child Mental Health Report 2017 [Childmind.org](https://www.childmind.org/)

# Role of the pandemic

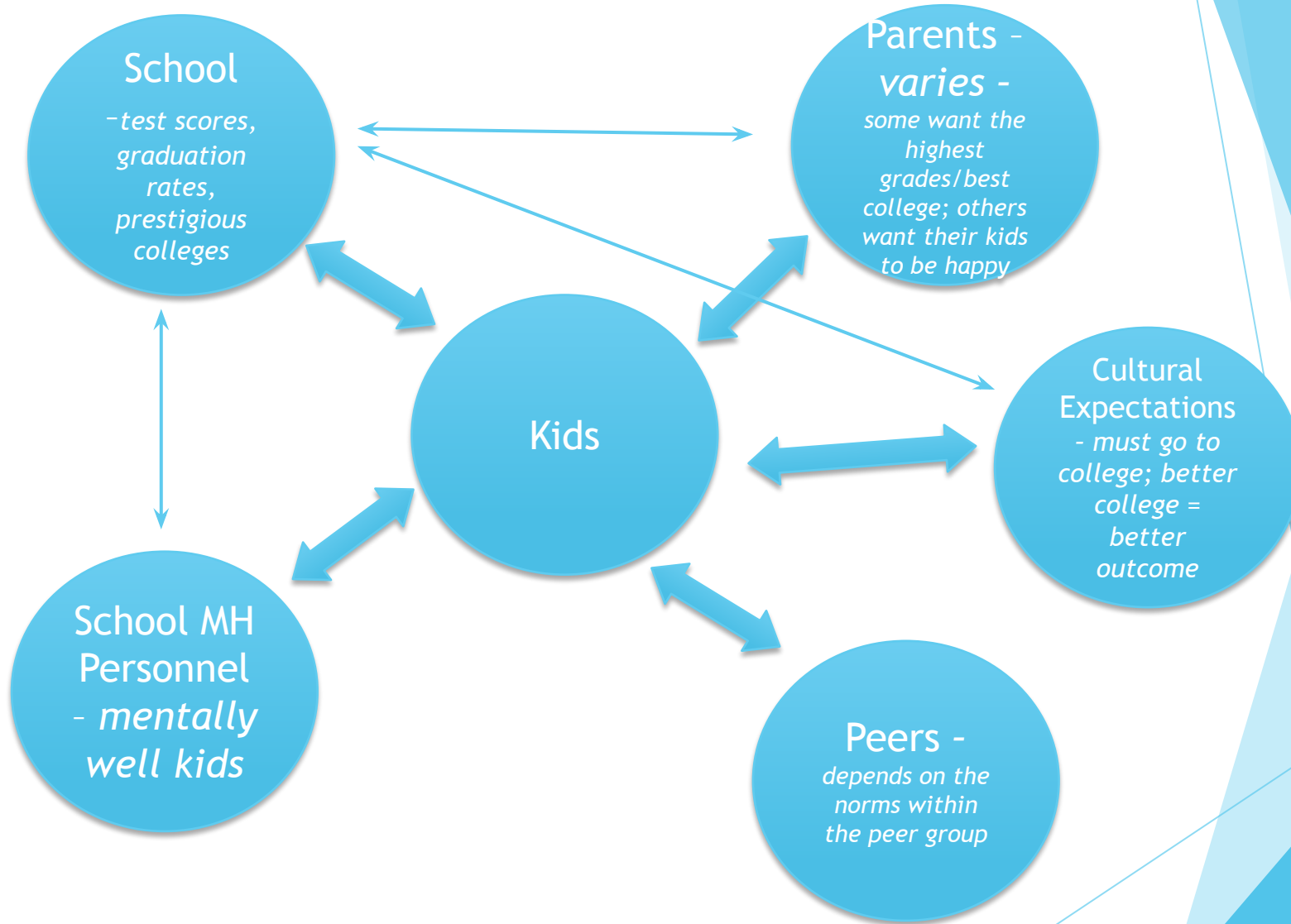
- ▶ depressive and anxiety symptoms doubled during the pandemic
- ▶ 60% of females feeling of persistent sadness or hopelessness
- ▶ In early 2021, ER visits in the United States for suspected suicide attempts were 51% higher for adolescent girls and 4% higher for adolescent boys compared early 2019.
- ▶ In 2021, 10% of female students and more than 20% of LGBTQ+ students attempted suicide.
- ▶ Kids, especially teens, lost contact with friends so important. Missed important practice in skills and developmental milestones
- ▶ Increase in parental mental health concerns
- ▶ Difficulty coping with parenting demands
- ▶ Impact on childcare options
  
- ▶ Youth Risk Behavior Survey

# Good news and benefits of pandemic

- ▶ Several measures of distress that increased early in the pandemic appear to have returned to pre-pandemic levels by mid-2020
- ▶ Some kids thrived with more sleep, less academic stress, and less bullying
- ▶ Many kids really enjoyed more time with family
- ▶ More flexibility in schedules and learned new coping

# Reasons for increase in MH issue

- ▶ partly due to young people becoming more willing to openly discuss mental health concerns,
- ▶ growing use of digital media
- ▶ increasing academic pressure
- ▶ limited access to mental health care health risk behaviors such as alcohol and drug use
- ▶ and broader stressors current environment with conflict and violence, rising income inequality, racism, gun violence, and climate change





## Push and Pull....

- ▶ Kids are affected by their schools, peers, parents, and culture.
- ▶ To differing degrees, kids in turns affect their schools, peers, parents, and culture.
- ▶ Schools are influenced by parents and by the culture, and vice versa.
- ▶ Problems arise when all parties do not share the same goals and/or when parties have inconsistent goals.

# Counter message

- ▶ Make sure your child knows you value them for more than achievement
- ▶ A lot of pressure to be defined by achievement. Need to achieve to be worthwhile
- ▶ Praise them for strengths (hard work, kindness, creativity)
- ▶ Don't ask first about how the test went
- ▶ Encourage mistakes and moving outside comfort zone
- ▶ Mattering- knowing you are valued and you provide value
- ▶ Do things for the right reason- because you are interested, you enjoy it, it makes you curious, you like to see progress or improvement, or even because it totally confuses you



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# Recognizing anxiety and depression

# Signs of depression- 5 or more

- Sadness (with or without crying)
- Anxiety
- Lack of energy and/or motivation
- Temper outbursts and/or violent episodes
- Easily irritated
- Problems with concentration
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Little or no appetite, or eating too often or weight loss
- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Loss of interest in activities usually enjoyed (including school activities)
- Hopelessness and helplessness
- Thoughts death

# Flavors of anxiety



- **Generalized anxiety**- lots of what ifs, worry in multiple areas, headaches and stomachaches. Can have high standards or perfectionism, avoid things
- **Social anxiety**- worry about how others are viewing or judging you, self-conscious, focus of attention. Concern before, during and after social interactions
- **Separation anxiety** concern being apart family or from home. Often concern harm come to child or family. Overconcern pick up or drop off and hard time w goodbyes or transitions



# Other Red Flags for Anxiety

- Avoidance - staying away from age-appropriate activities or refusing to try new things
- Lots of “what ifs?”
- Excessive reassurance-seeking.
- Inability to accept logical arguments.
- Physical complaints (headaches, belly) when faced with stressful situations.
- Difficulties with sleep.
- Perfectionism.
- Great sense of responsibility & morality.

# Why Pay So Much Attention to Anxiety?

- ▶ Negative impact in multiple domains including educational underachievement
- ▶ “Derailing” from achievement of important developmental milestones (e.g., delayed independence, development of social skills, failure to “launch”)
- ▶ Associated with depression, suicidal ideation
- ▶ Predicts substance abuse problems, depression & anxiety disorders in adults
- ▶ Related to heart disease, hypertension, insomnia, gastrointestinal problems, respiratory illness, diabetes, arthritis, skin problems, fatigue...the list goes on...

# When does anxiety become a problem?

1. Is anxiety out of proportion to the demands of the situation?
2. Can the anxiety be explained or reasoned away?
3. Does the anxiety lead to avoidance?
4. Are there a lot of physical symptoms (stomachache, headaches)?
5. Does the anxiety persist (over a few months)?
6. Does the anxiety interfere with functioning? (social, family, academic).

# Anxious and depressive thinking

## Anxiety

- ▶ Overestimate likelihood of bad outcome
- ▶ Overestimate how terrible would be if happened
- ▶ Focus on danger (safety, criticism, embarrassment)'

## Depressed

- ✓ Think in self critical ways (worthless, helpless)
- ✓ Negative about self, world and future
- ✓ Belief situation will not or cannot change

# Anxiety

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- ▶ Feeling in and looking for danger or threat
- ▶ Overestimate risk and underestimate ability to cope
- ▶ Difficulty tolerating uncertainty
- ▶ Attempts to control what feels out of control
- ▶ If uncertain and out of control, will be undone or irreparable





# What Maintains Anxiety?

- ▶ Paradoxically, the things that kids do to try to make themselves feel better (e.g., avoidance and ask lots of questions only makes things seem harder).
- ▶ The things that parents and sometimes teachers do-- reassure, help, let kids avoid-- can make kids dependent on that reassurance and validates that the fears make sense
- ▶ Accommodations need to happen, but so does a plan for growth- special assistance in the short run

# Education and engagement

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- ▶ Explain what anxiety is (body's alarm system backfiring)
- ▶ Feeling scared or stressed but not in danger
- ▶ Give it a name, draw a picture of it
- ▶ Think about what you hate about it
- ▶ Think about what you want to be doing instead.

Chansky, T. Freeing your child from anxiety

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Guilt Gobbler





# Parents and kids should expect anxiety response at first

- ▶ EXPECT that first scared response- that is how anxiety works it is not the child's response

Child responds

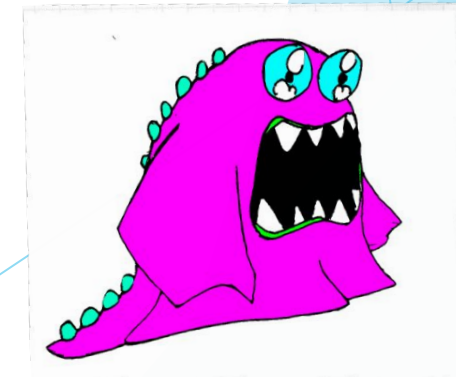
OH NO scared or freak out response

Or

NO- I am not going or I won't do it

Or BOTH

This is the flight or fight response  
(usually with get me out of here)



# A Different Kind of Solution

- It's not the Thought, it's what you do with it
  - It is just a scary thought or scary feeling
- Differentiate worry from other thinking
- Relabel the situation: Change the picture of what the child is experiencing
- Anxious (first thought) is fast, not accurate- the Oh no or No I'm not going to do it response
- Cultivate a second reaction

Chansky, T. Freeing your child from anxiety



# Anxiety Tricks

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- ▶ Their first reaction self-talk is typically about *the most awful thing instead of most likely* that could happen in a situation
- ▶ Always think twice- don't trust 1<sup>st</sup> reaction
- ▶ Feelings vs. facts
- ▶ Being in danger vs. feeling afraid
- ▶ Be in the present- not address future

Chansky, T. Freeing your child from anxiety

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# Cognitive Strategies



- ▶ Teach children what thoughts are.
- ▶ When anxiety is happening, thoughts feel like facts.
- ▶ Use detective thinking to find anxiety tricks

A new way of doing things is:

- ▶ Label it - I just had scary thought or scary feeling
- ▶ Question thoughts, see if they make sense, and if not, replace them with more sensible thoughts not necessarily positive.



# Everyday freakout homework

- ▶ Help both kid and parents recognize the pattern
- ▶ What is likely to happen
  - ▶ What likely to say? - too much, I can't, I'm stupid
  - ▶ How likely to feel?- frustrated, upset
  - ▶ How likely to act- cry, complain, avoid

How would afternoon look if you were in charge instead of anxiety

Going to help you protect down time most days

**Boss back**

It is my Oh no freakout reaction- impossible feeling

There will be time for me

I get it done even if it never feels like it

# Kids and teens coping overall reaction to anxiety

- ▶ I am not in danger I am just feeling really scared
- ▶ This is worry, fear, anxiety, stress..... nothing more or less
- ▶ I had a scary thought, feeling, etc
- ▶ This bad feeling will pass
- ▶ There is nothing special I have to do
- ▶ Don't add to it with anxiety tricks
- ▶ Face fears step by step
- ▶ Don't avoid

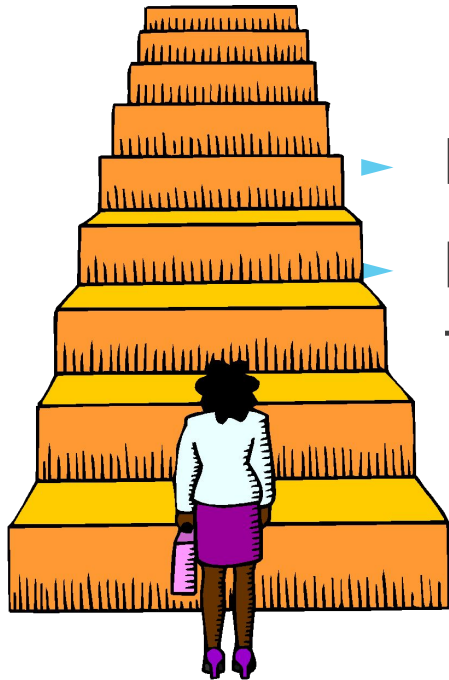


# Parent stance

- ▶ Parents can learn ways to step outside of anxiety. Rather than be trapped with their child in it
- ▶ Empathize:
  - I am sorry this is a hard day, I can see you are upset right now, I know changes are hard for you
- ▶ You are not in danger you are feeling afraid
- ▶ It is just your first reaction- this feeling will pass
- ▶ This is no surprise - it takes you a bit to get used to new things
- ▶ I know you can handle this
- ▶ How you feel before the first day is not how you will feel later

# Building competence and mastery

- ▶ Goal is coping with anxiety (not no anxiety), and being in charge of life choices (not anxiety deciding for you)
  - ▶ Overcome fears by **facing them step by step** or in manageable chunks
  - ▶ Nothing shrinks fear like a sense of mastery!
    - ▶ Avoidance increases fear
  - ▶ Build sense of competence with experience
  - ▶ Parents praise efforts at fighting anxiety/ facing fears, and not outcome



# The Key: Avoid Avoidance

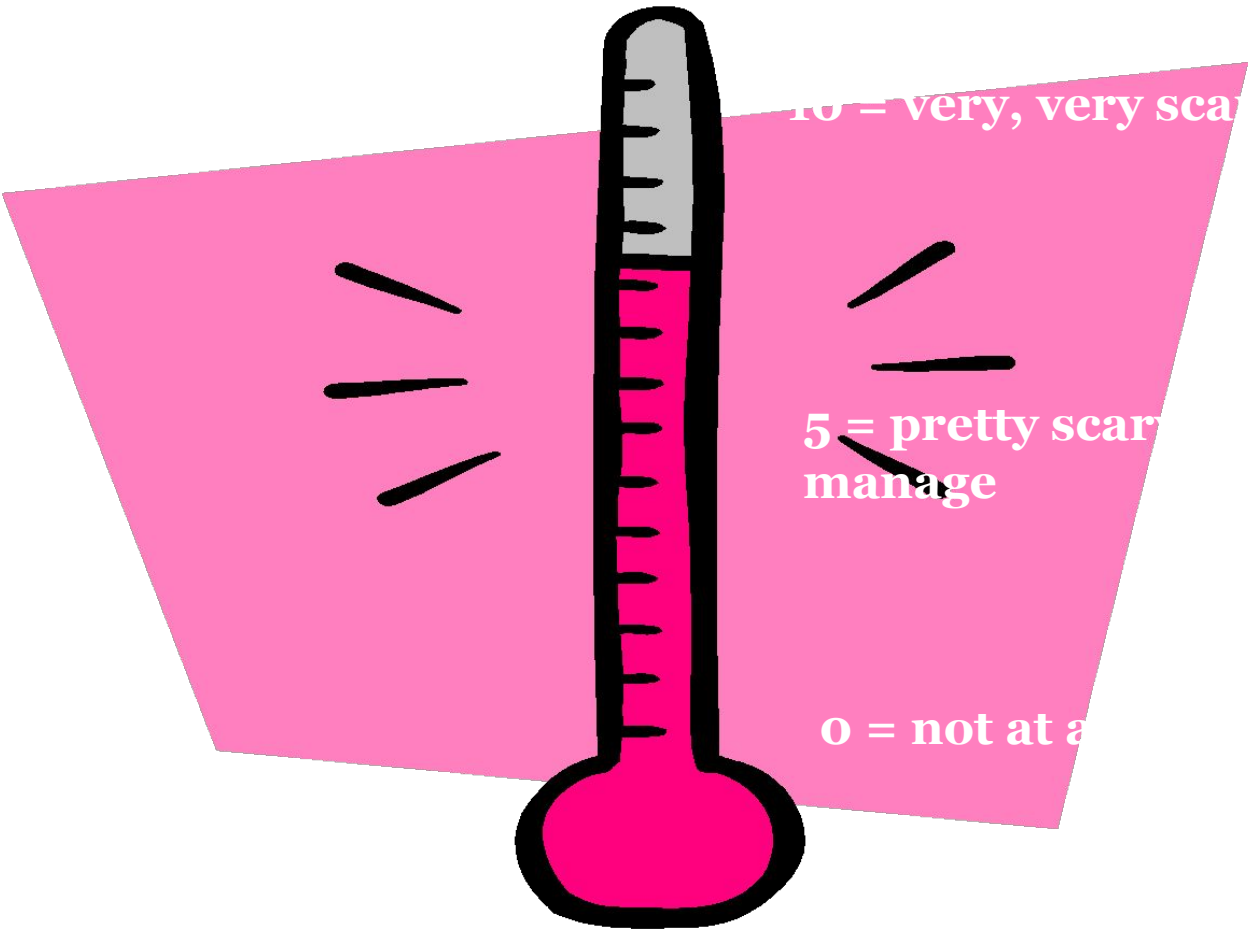
- As parents, we are all trying our best.
- We want to protect our kids from distress, in other words, we facilitate avoidance.
- BUT, for anxious kids, avoidance feeds anxiety, making it more severe and more far-reaching over time.
  - If mom and dad help me avoid dogs....This must mean....
    - Dogs are dangerous
    - Mom and dad fear dogs too
    - Mom and dad think I can't cope
- The key to helping anxious kids is to **AVOID AVOIDANCE** or facilitate **exposure** to feared situations.

# Exposures or facing fears teach us...

- ▶ Anxiety will go away on its own, without having to do anything fancy.
- ▶ Bad things are very unlikely to occur.
- ▶ I can do it!

# How a parent can help a child with exposure

- ▶ Start small! Start with success!
- ▶ Make a list of things related to what the child is afraid of
- ▶ Ask the child to tell you what is least to most scary for them (don't assume)
- ▶ Always begin exposure by making predictions and then evaluating the outcome once you are done.
  - ▶ What do you think will happen to your worry when we try \_\_\_\_\_
  - ▶ What was it like when you tried \_\_\_\_\_



10 = very, very scary

5 = pretty scary manage

0 = not at a



# Separation Anxiety Sample Hierarchy

“not certain my parent is here/scared alone”

- Play for 10 minutes parent in view- no calling out
- ▶ Play for 10 minutes parent not in view- no calling out
- ▶ Play while parent goes upstairs to do or get something brief no calling out
- ▶ Run upstairs and then walk to get something in room alone (parent bottom of stairs - night or day)
- ▶ Let parent go bathroom alone
- ▶ Parent goes upstairs without telling child where going
- ▶ Child plays in parts of house avoiding for periods of time
- ▶ Parents go outside to yard or walk in neighborhood

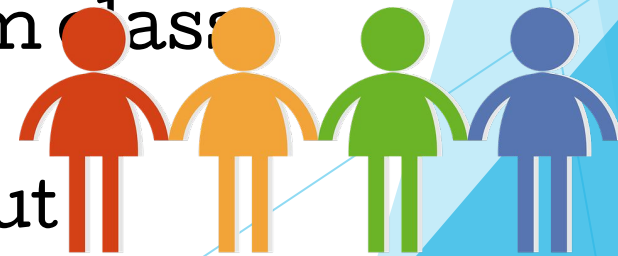
Kids who don't feel competent or are not so good at certain situations need

## LOTS OF PRACTICE

- ▶ Kids who don't like change need to practice changing - routines are good but life throws changes
- ▶ Kids not good at playdates need lots of playdates (every 2 weeks)
- ▶ Kids who don't like to try things or things they are not good at need to learn that skill- practice being not good
- ▶ Reward flexibility- Try something new! New foods, new activities, new places, new friends
- ▶ Weekend every one chooses an activity all need to do

# Hierarchy for social situations

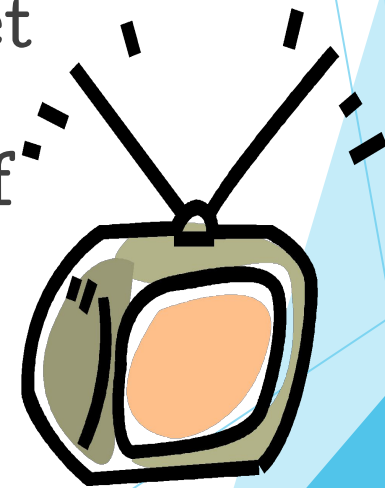
1. Go be around other people nearby without interacting
2. Make eye contact or smile at 3 people-do/don't know
3. Say hello while making eye contact with 3 people
4. Talk to someone in a store
5. Talk to someone you know from class about school
6. Talk to someone you know about something personal
7. Go up to join a group and just listen



# How to move a friendship along- steps

- Make eye contact and nod in hallway
- Say hi to everyone who says hi
- Say hi first
- Help to really identify who like to get to know
- Talk to kids about school based stuff in safest class – homeroom, band
- Talk about something cultural- tv, movies
- Share something more personal
- Easy invite offer ride to school or activity

FRIENDS



# Storms


- ▶ Look at pictures of thunder and lightning
- ▶ Listen to sounds of storms
- ▶ Watch videos of storms
- ▶ Don't close the shades when storms come or hide
- ▶ Play a game with family near the window during a storm
- ▶ Stand outside with parent in the rain in backyard
- ▶ Go and play outside on gray or rainy day

Work with parents not to go home unless unsafe, limit weather checking

# Perfectionism

- ▶ Can start with non-school practices if academics the bigger
- ▶ Do some writing with errors or draw not perfectly on purpose
- ▶ On homework for completion, leave one incorrect answer or incomplete answer on purpose
- ▶ Same thing on graded homework
- ▶ Limit number of times review for test
- ▶ Answer an opinion question rather than one know the answer
- ▶ Answer a question wrong on purpose or say I do not know



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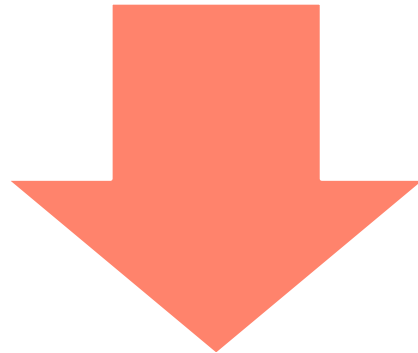
Other important ways  
parents can help  
children or teens cope  
with anxiety



# Support Instead of Accommodation



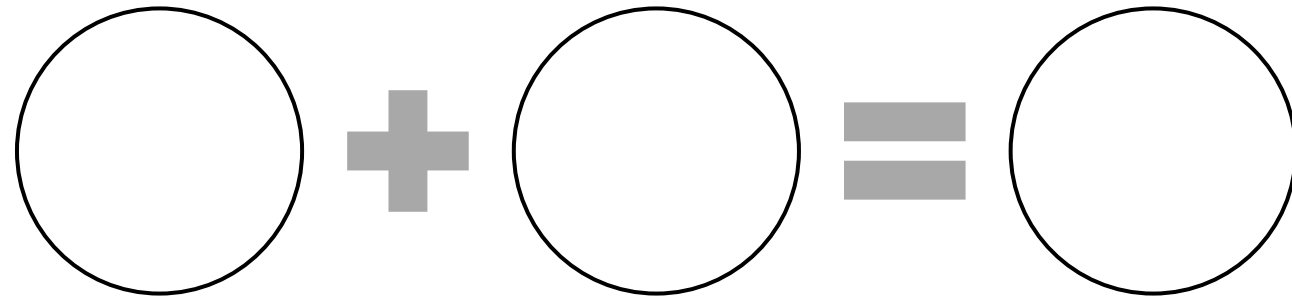
Support



Decrease  
Accommodation

**Lebowitz, E. Breaking free of childhood anxiety and OCD: A scientifically proven program for parents.**

# Parental Support



**Lebowitz, E. Breaking free of childhood anxiety and OCD: A scientifically proven program for parents.**

# Parents supportive response

## Examples validation + support

Acknowledge anxiety and tell child/teen you know they can handle anxiety or cope

- ❖ It scared you but I am sure you can handle it
- ❖ That sounds like a really bad thought- the thought will pass- good for you you're coping
- ❖ Can see you're doubting yourself, I know you got this

**Not about the particular activity or concern but managing the anxiety**

# What is family accommodation?

Accommodation is when parents change their own behavior or family's behavior to help their child avoid anxiety

**Normal parent thing to do!**

- family members provide reassurance or objects needed for compulsions or avoidance
- decrease behavioral expectations of the child
- modify family activities or routines
- help the child avoid objects, places, or experiences that may cause him or her distress

# Questions to consider

1. How much time is consumed by your child's anxiety?
2. How much time is consumed by your family accommodating to your child's anxiety?
3. How much is family life impacted by the anxiety? (change of work schedule, change of family plans, individual parent
- 1.
4. How much is your child restricting their activities/actions?
5. How often do you provide reassurance because your child is anxious?
6. How does the anxiety impact siblings attention and plans

# Impact of accommodation on child

- promotes avoidance
- overly reliant on parent for soothing or calming anxiety- cannot separate or avoid
- reduces self regulation- awareness of self and ability to soothe self
- reduces confidence in themselves
- Can feel inadequate and ashamed
  
- *kids report when asked that they know it is not helping but do not want their parents to stop*

# Avoidance

- ▶ Avoidance of things want or need to do because it makes you more anxious-

You cannot find out

that is easier than you thought or

that it is uncomfortable but you can do it

- ▶ If you have anxiety and scared of anxiety and don't feel you can calm yourself, of course you are going to feel you need to stay near your parent or not go

# Attention for coping

Anxious kids get a lot of attention for....**being ANXIOUS.**

An essential component of treatment is to attend to and reward coping behavior.

- parents should validate their kids' experience with anxiety, but at the same time, not feed into anxiety.
- attention for coping- getting busy, breathing, talking back to anxiety, surfing anxiety, and mostly reclaiming the morning the way you want it to be.
- I am going to be on your team to make you stronger and make the anxiety weaker





# Parent stance

- ▶ Empathize:
  - I am sorry this is a hard day, I can see you are upset right now, I know changes are hard for you
- ▶ Then- you are not in danger- you are feeling afraid
- ▶ It is just your first reaction- this feeling will pass
- ▶ This is no surprise - it takes you a bit to get used to new things.
- ▶ I know you can handle this
- ▶ How you feel before the first day at something is not how you will feel later. Usually you feel better when you get started

# New language

- ▶ I'm not sure, but I bet you can handle whatever happens.
- ▶ Why don't we wait and find out when we get there.
- ▶ We won't know till we go.
- ▶ I don't have a crystal ball.
- ▶ If we could predict the future, life would be pretty boring.



Deb Ledley- Children's and Adult Center for OCD and Anxiety

# New goal being ok with being anxious

- ▶ Limit the what ifs
  - ▶ With the first what if- I think worry is taking over
  - ▶ Let us stop the wind up- this is not helpful
- ▶ **One reassurance is to support the child- multiple reassurances and you are in the worry cycle**
- ▶ Do not share the goal of having to have all the info
- ▶ Being okay with uncertainty or not knowing
- ▶ Talk with the child not with the anxiety

This is different from preparation - going to the first practice together, going to visit the teacher before the school year

# Teaching child to cope & soothe self

- ▶ Teaching child to reassure or talk to themselves rather than the reassurance coming from you
- ▶ Tell the child that checking and asking over and over again keeps a child anxious rather than feeling better
- ▶ **One question is for you and the rest is for worry**
- ▶ Teen- your first time asking is for you
- ▶ I am not going to answer more than once
- ▶ Not to be mean- I don't want to make worry stronger, I want to be on your team to make you stronger

# First step to reassure oneself

- ▶ For example, child who every day asks plan for the day (if plan is relatively predictable)
- ▶ Rather than answering, remind what he/she already knows

What is the answer to that question?

You know the usual plan- what is it?

What is the plan for the day?

- ▶ I will tell you if there is something different you need to know

## 3 step to learn new skills

1. Parent can speak strategies out loud if child is too anxious or is not using the strategies

2. Parent can prompt and see what parts the child remembers- what do you remember? What would be helpful now? What do you know?

3. Child is able to use strategies- parent you got this

Can make attention focused on doing what is helpful

## Example

- ▶ Kids who worry way ahead of an event
- ▶ Talk all morning about being scared of camp or school
- ▶ Sunday night reaction

Parent response- tell worry to bug off and leave you alone. Be here now. Not helpful to talk about worry

We are not saying goodbye now

It is still Sunday and not Monday- how do you want to spend your time now

# Limit avoidance- expectations

- ▶ If child says no to everything, be clear that this is not an option. One activity each season
- ▶ Kids can propose ideas, talk together with parents. However if no discussion, parents will pick for child
- ▶ Plan it as finding out what likes and trying things
- ▶ Nothing should be decided from one session/class-plan for at least 3 meetings



## Ways to break down new activities

- ▶ Make each Saturday new activity day- each family member pick activity for week and others have to go
- ▶ Look for one day activities - sports clinic or art workshop, robotics
- ▶ Sign up for shorter activities- 3-4 sessions rather than whole season
- ▶ Parties of their best friend- how to be a good friend
- ▶ Stay with parent for part of the time only if they are engaged with peers.

# Steps for new activity

- ❑ Go to check out place, site or field before activity
- ❑ Plan for parent to go for first meeting or 2 and stay to be there
- ❑ If needed child could observe first part of class/ practice
- ❑ Plan - parent to stay but leave for bathroom, trip to car
- ❑ Plan to stay for beginning to get settled and then leave
- ❑ Drop off at activity



# Teen examples for parents

- ▶ School related- if near college increase motivation by need to succeed
  - ▶ Email teacher to clarify- can do with parent first
  - ▶ answer in class including not certain or opinion question
  - ▶ Stop by to ask teacher to clarify or review something (office hours)
  - ▶ Go into setting to ask for info (registrar or financial aid)
- ▶ Practice talking to coach or instructor (band)- clarify play or ask how to improve

# Practice for independence teen

Role play or plan what going to say or ask at first

However, get curious- if pay attention to what other person is saying, ask questions- do not need plan

Observe you doing it, go with teen to try, then go alone

- ▶ Go to bank, restaurant, laundromat, library
- ▶ Make a bunch of calls to ask questions or resolve issue
- ▶ Weekly trip to Wawa or convenience store
- ▶ Order coffee - Starbucks, cannot decide, change order
- ▶ Take bus or train- navigate on a family trip

# Behavioral experiments

## *Testing out beliefs about uncertainty:*

- ▶ Do uncertain events always turn out negative?
- ▶ If they are negative, am I able to cope?
- ▶ Evaluation of the following:

What are you afraid will happen?

What really happened?

How did I cope?

(if outcome was negative)



# Parent strategies for perfectionism

Often does not work to challenge goal or try to convince them out of it

3 parent strategies in response to self criticism

1. Whoa - I'm not going to let anyone talk to you that way even you
2. I can see what came to your mind automatically as first thought what's a 2<sup>nd</sup> thought
3. Praise work ethic see that's important and I see how badly it makes you feel

Lisa Damour- ask Lisa podcast

# Parent summary of strategies

- ▶ Use supportive statements
- ▶ Look for signs of accommodation to anxiety
- ▶ Coach kids through anxious moment- coping not trying to make anxiety go away
- ▶ Avoid avoidance
- ▶ Create behavioral experiments
- ▶ Face fears one step at a time

# Parent strategies

- Validating child's experience does not mean agreeing to child's solution
- Kid not going to thank you at first
- Can say parents don't care or do not love them
- In few days, you will see less anxiety
- Caring in a different way to help child step out of cage of fear. Have to trust this is helping
- It is okay to say we have to do this differently for family to function
- Reclaim our mornings and evenings from worry for the child and the family- I want to be with you not with worry- this is our time together



# How to help your kid or teen talk

Why kids don't talk- ask too many questions, get a lecture, goes on forever

Response - Tell me more and limit questions

Have conversations be short. More than 2-3 sentences you have lost most kids

Ask do you want - meeting child's needs  
helped, heard or hugged

# Teens

Teen or tween- Is there anything I can do that will not make this worse

Teens- did you just want me to listen or to give any feedback. Then make sure to stick with it. Teen can tell you if you are not

Support your child in solving the problem themselves. Think out loud in your presence

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Social media

# BENEFITS SOCIAL MEDIA

- ▶ providing positive community and connection with others who share identities, abilities, and interests.
- ▶ It can provide access to important information and create a space for self-expression.
- ▶ The ability to form and maintain friendships online and develop social connections,
- ▶ positive interactions with more diverse peer groups than are available to them offline and can provide important social support to youth
- ▶ Surgeon General's advisory Social Media and Mental Health

# Teens reports of positive aspects

- ▶ helps them feel more accepted (58%)
- ▶ like they have people who can support them through tough times (67%),
- ▶ like they have a place to show their creative side (71%)
- ▶ more connected to what's going on in their friends' lives (80%)
  
- ▶ Especially marginalized LGBTQ and people of color or under privileged

# Question teens should ask themselves social media

- ▶ How much time are you spending online?
- ▶ Is it taking away from healthy offline activities, like exercising, seeing friends, reading, and sleeping?
- ▶ What content are you consuming, and how does it make you feel?
- ▶ Are you online because you want to be, or because you feel like you have to be?

# Research on social media impact

- ▶ Early adolescence is when identities and sense of self-worth are forming
- ▶ Brain development is especially susceptible to social pressures, peer opinions, and peer comparison
- ▶ Frequent social media use may be associated with distinct changes in the developing brain in the amygdala (important for emotional learning and behavior) and the prefrontal cortex (important for impulse control, emotional regulation, and moderating social behavior)

# Research

- ▶ could increase sensitivity to social rewards and punishments.
- ▶ heightened emotional sensitivity to the communicative and interactive nature of social media
- ▶ Adolescent social media use is predictive of a subsequent decrease in life satisfaction for certain developmental stages including for girls 11-13 years old and boys 14-15 years old
- ▶ Surgeon General's advisory Social Media and Mental Health



# Effects of excessive social media use

- ▶ depression among youth
- ▶ Feeling less than and comparison to others
- ▶ sleep difficulties, poor sleep quality and reduced sleep duration ,
- ▶ Poor sleep has been linked to altered neurological development in adolescent brains, depressive symptoms, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors
- ▶ Having a phone in room even if don't use it impacts sleep quality

## Limit social media use

If possible limit media use in the hour before bedtime

For certain, no phone in the bedroom

Kids and teens can often not stop by themselves

Cyber bullying happens more at night

Kids and teens can feel burdened at having to support friends- guilt

Limit multi-tasking - half hour homework phone in other room then 10 minute break to check in

Have teens read Surgeon General's advisory Social Media and Mental Health

Make a media plan in collaboration with your child

- ▶ <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/fmp/Pages/MediaPlan.aspx>

# Enough as she is Rachel Simmons

- ▶ MESSAGE: Be amazing at everything you do
- ▶ RESULT: Diminished self worth and relentless stress
  
- ▶ MESSAGE: Avoid new ventures, especially where you might fail
- ▶ RESULT: Diminished curiosity, exploration and healthy risk taking
  
- ▶ MESSAGE: What you accomplish matters more than what you learn
- ▶ RESULT: Loss of extrinsic motivation

- ▶ MESSAGE: Having lots of choices = control over your life
- ▶ RESULT: False sense of control, taking setbacks personally
  
- ▶ MESSAGE: You must find your life's passion by high school
- ▶ RESULT: Forced passions lead to big costly decisions
  
- ▶ MESSAGE: everyone is doing, being and succeeding more than you are
- ▶ RESULT: Pervasive insecurity, tense, competitive relationships

# Pressure of college process

- ▶ 4% of applicants accepted at Ivy League schools
- ▶ Small percentage of athletes get scholarship
- ▶ Very good schools but only for some things
- ▶ Research shows you are not where you go to school
- ▶ Continued stressful and competitive environment
- ▶ Less interaction with teachers
- ▶ Frank Bruni Where you go is not who you will be

# Resources

- ▶ Anxiety and Depression Association of America  
adaa.org. Many webinars and blog posts
- ▶ Natasha Daniels online courses for parents and teens about anxiety and OCD- parenting support  
<https://atparentingsurvivalschool.com/courses>
- ▶ Childmind.org- lots of great articles lots of topics
- ▶ Ask Lisa Podcast- Lisa Damour all sorts of parenting topics

# Helpful books

## Kid books

Heubner, D

- ▶ What to do when you worry too much-ages 8-12
- ▶ What to do when your brain gets stuck (OCD)
- ▶ Outsmarting worry- ages 10-14

Micco, J Worry workbook for teens

Kissen, D and othes- Rewire your anxious brain for teens

## Parents

Chansky, T Freeing your child from anxiety (or OCD)- practical steps

Eli Lebowitz- Breaking Free of Child Anxiety and OCD: A Scientifically Proven Program for Parents