



# Childhood Anxiety Workshop

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January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

# What is Anxiety?

- Anxiety is your body's natural response system to fear or stress. It's a feeling of fear or apprehension about something that is to come. If Anxious thoughts are extreme, last for longer than 6 months, and are interfering with your every day life, you may have an an anxiety disorder.

# What is Childhood Anxiety?

## **Signs of anxiety: (Younger children)**

- Irritability, tearful or clingy
- Difficulty with sleep
- Wake in the night
- Start wetting the bed (regression)
- Having bad dreams

## **Signs of anxiety (Older children)**

- Lack of confidence
- Difficulty with concentration
- Angry outburst
- Sleep or eating issues
- Avoiding everyday activities (school, friends, public outings)
- Irrational thoughts/negative thoughts start to appear.

# STATISTICS

- 20% of adolescents may experience a mental health problem in any given year.
- 50% of mental health are established by age 14; and 75% by age 24.
- 10% of children and young people (5-16 years old) have a clinical mental health problem, but 75% of them will go untreated due to lack of intervention.  
([www.nopanic.org](http://www.nopanic.org))
- Girls experience higher rates of anxiety than boys.
- Boys often show anxiety with anger vs girls who are more tearful.
- Girls engage in more self-harm behavior, while boys will use lethal ways of self harm and suicide.

# Why does it happen?

- Genetics
- Environment
- Social media
- Learned behaviours
- Growing up in a family where there is increased conflict/fear.
- Loss, death, violence, and sexual abuse (triggers)

# Types of Anxiety disorders:

- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Separation anxiety disorder
- Selective Mutism
- Specific Phobia
- Panic Disorder
- Social Anxiety

# Conflict Resolution Between Friends or Groups of friends

- Identify that your child is experiencing a conflict
- Come down to your child's level and understand what is causing the issue.
- Teach children to build resilience (walk away, write about what they are experiencing, take a minute to cool off, talk to to an adult).
- Monitor social media (Tik Tok, Whatsapp, Instagram, Snap Chat, Facebook)
- Talk: Work it out with the peer in a mediation session.
- Be open parents and accepting that your child may be hurting another child's feelings.

# Resilience Building

- Build a strong emotional connection
- Promote healthy risk-taking
- Resist the urge to FIX-IT and ask Questions instead.
- Teach problem-solving
- Label Emotions
- Demonstrate coping skills (role play)
- Embrace mistakes. (Theirs and Yours)
- Avoid “why” questions. “What is making you feel this way?”
- Lets your kids make mistakes.
- Avoid talking in catastrophic terms
- Don't provide all the answers.



# Performance in School & Impact

- Jess is a 10 year old girl. She has always had perfect attendance. She attends Ballet, Piano classes, 11+ tutoring, swimming, and stage coach on Fridays and Saturdays.
- She has a good group of friends, but does not get much time with them.
- Her friends invite her out, but she cannot go due to her busy schedule.
- Mum & Dad are divorced (5 years ago) and she has to visit her father every other weekend as well.
- She spends Sunday doing her homework
- Headaches, stomach pains, IBS symptoms, and has now started isolating herself from friends and says she doesn't want to go to school anymore.
- Failing in Math, but scared to ask for help.

# Growing Pains

- Mental- Cognitive changes
- Physical- Body changes
- Puberty- A combination of the above; along with changes in hormone production.

# Parental Relationships

- Divorce
- Family Dynamics
- Sibling relationships
- How are parents co-parenting
- Trusting their parents to listen

# Self Identity

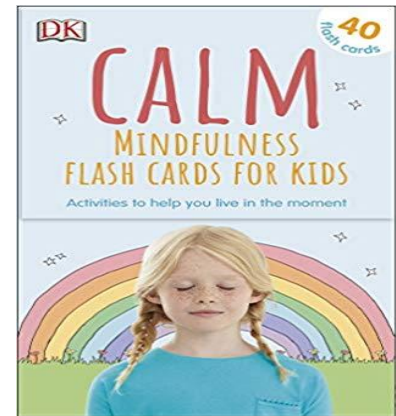
- When does self identity build?

Age of 3: Kids build “categorical self” –concrete way of thinking: viewing themselves in “ this” or “that” labeling.

How does your child speak to themselves or describe themselves?

- Focus on the individual
- Facilitate self praise
- Promote responsibility for choices
- Realistic goals
- Emphasize the positive
- Warm, comfortable environment
- Acknowledgement of child without judgment
- Recognise your child may be able to make decisions.

# Tools



- Mindfulness Cards
- CBT based therapy or Play Therapy
- Poppy O'Neil ( Don't Worry Be Happy)
- Seeking support and help from teachers, professionals, and even other parents.
- Art therapy, relaxation techniques, schedules, timetables, mindful parenting.
- Marble Jars, sticker charts, point systems etc.

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