

Welcome, and thanks for joining us!

Special Education Parent Resource Center (PRC)

The PRC is a space and a program that provides information and support to parents, primarily those with children with disabilities, as they work with school staff to identify and meet their children's unique needs. We look forward to supporting your work this year, and welcome you to borrow materials from our lending library, attend our learning events, visit the PRC, and refer your families to us. SUBSCRIBE to our weekly messages to keep up to date with PRC Events and News!



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APS School Talk

Parent
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Monday Message



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Many thanks!

- Arlington Public Schools Office of Student Services, and



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Parenting a Child in the Age of Anxiety: Counterintuitive, but Effective Strategies

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Center for Anxiety and Behavioral Change

Intelligence, Creativity, Compassion...



“Having an anxiety disorder is like being stuck in that moment when you realize you’ve leaned too far back in your chair, but have not yet fallen.” – teenage patient



“You can’t tell if you burnt your toast or if the curtains are on fire based on how loud the alarm sounds”



Adaptive Anxiety vs. Disordered Anxiety

Adaptive Anxiety

- Keeps us safe
- A response to real danger
- Prevents the repeating of mistakes

Disordered Anxiety

- Results in functional impairment
- Equivalent to a “false alarm”
- Leads to unnecessary avoidance

Avoidance and Fear are Teammates



The way to respond to anxiety is just as counterintuitive as diving into the wave that's about to hit you.”



Important

- Doing the scary things is not the outcome of treatment – It is a central component of the treatment



Why this is so important

Children and Adolescents

- Median age of onset 11 – earliest of all forms of psychopathology
- 8 % of children between ages 13 and 18 currently have an anxiety disorder
- 31.9% will have an anxiety disorder between the ages of 13 and 18
- 8.3% will have “severe” anxiety disorder
- Only 18 % of these teens receive treatment

Adolescents Girls

- 38% of girls will have at least one anxiety disorder between the ages of 13 and 18, (compared with 26.1% for boys)
- Compared with 4.2% of girls will have ADHD, 10.2% will have a substance abuse disorder, 3.8% will have an eating disorder

It Didn't Use to be This Way

- Teens are 5 to 8 times more likely to show symptoms of an anxiety disorder compared with teens during WWII, The Great Depression, and the Cold War



Now put this in terms of all expectations

“Imagine trying to learn calculus right now”



Cognitive Elements of Fear Reduction

“Don’t believe everything you think.”

- Education regarding reality of danger
- Education regarding fear response
- Reframe anxiety as “false alarm” that is an annoyance (e.g., oversensitive fire alarm that sounds when you burn toast, etc.)
- Label the anxiety disorder as a “bully”

Fire alarm at the top of the Empire State Building



“Stop swatting the butterflies.”



“Behind the Scenes Footage of Your Own Scary Thoughts”



“The perfect igloo can kill you.”



“ You can be Scared and Brave at
the same time”

Fill in the Blank:

I can be anxious and _____
at the same time.

Self-Coaching

- “Right now I’m having a scary thought that...”
- “Fear is temporary and harmless”
- “Scary thoughts can’t hurt me”
- “Just because I feel scared doesn’t mean anything bad is going to happen”
- “Just because I am scared doesn’t mean I can’t do it”
- “I am stronger than my fear”

Self-Efficacy

- An individual's belief in his/her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments
- I know I can do it because...
 - Mastery experiences
 - Vicarious Experiences
 - Verbal Persuasion
 - Emotional States

Why Does the Bird not Fear the Branch Breaking?



Flexibility is Strength



Fear Reduction

Through Behavior Change

“Courage is what you do, not what you feel”

- Exposure to the feared situation in the absence of the feared consequence produces fear reduction
- Exposure can be conducted in a variety of manners, but exposure always remains the “active ingredient” (e.g., acetaminophen comes in tablets, caplets, gelcaps, etc.)

“I’ve given you what you want. Now go away and never beg again.”



“No good parent would just give their child the answer. They need to learn how to solve it.”



“Model what you want the child to fee;.”



“Water the seeds, not the weeds.”



Ray Charles



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