

How to Help your Child & Teenager with Anxiety During COVID-19

<p>Helping your child with anxiety symptoms during COVID-19</p>	<p>Helping your teenager with anxiety symptoms during COVID-19</p>
<p>ANXIETY Disorders in Children If your child has anxiety symptoms, they tend to present as worried. Their worries may include school performance, fear of initiating new ventures, worry about bad things happening to their parents or caregivers or having a vague sense of something terrible occurring while separated from loved ones.</p>	<p>ANXIETY Disorder in Teenagers If your teenager has anxiety symptoms, they tend to worry excessively. Their worries include grades, family issues, relationships with peers, and general performance. Teenagers with anxiety symptoms tends to be very hard on themselves and strive for perfection. They may also seek constant approval or reassurance from others.</p>
<p>Symptoms of Anxiety in Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless, wound-up or on-edge • Easily fatigued, irritable • Difficulty concentrating, mind going blank • Sleep problems, such as difficulty falling or staying asleep • Nightmares • Separation avoidance • Difficulty controlling feelings of worry 	<p>Symptoms of Anxiety in Teenagers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having trouble focusing on school work or following simple instructions from a parent • Irritability which may result in an outburst • Problems with concentration and memory • Difficulty falling or staying asleep or restless sleep • Complaints of being tired or fatigued • Not following through on given tasks
<p>How can I help at home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain calm and reassuring. This will help your child feel safe. • Answer questions using simple words that they can understand. • Help your child cope with new academic demands. Make them feel like they accomplished the task at hand-success will lead to a sense of competence! • Keep as much of a routine as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan the day. Start with mealtime and end schedule at bedtime, plan schoolwork, play time, etc. • Help them feel connected with others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children are aware that their parents and “older people” such as grandparents are at a higher risk for the Coronavirus. It is important for your child to stay in touch with friends and family on the phone and online. • Allow your child to talk about feelings and worries: normalize these feelings, “Yes, this is scary” and then reassure them that they are safe. If they do not want to talk, encourage drawing, journaling, writing a story. Check back on them on a regular basis and if things change, do not try to hide it from them, keep them informed. • Help your child feel in control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide choices and engage them in age-appropriate self-care. Help them use their “germ eliminator” powers such as washing their hands often with their own special 	<p>How can I help at home?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents should give teens “reasonable” choices, such as helping a teen make their daily school schedule • Make your teenager feel like they made choices throughout the day • Schedule “down-time” along with rewards when daily responsibilities are met • Keep as much of a routine as possible • Encourage your teenager to talk about their worries and try to listen without giving advice. Listening to your teenager will help validate their worries and not allow them to feel as isolated. • Help them feel connected with others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is important for teenagers to stay in touch with friends and family on the phone and online.

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<p>antibacterial soap and have tissues around the house so they don't touch their face.</p>	
<p>The FEEL method</p> <p>Freeze: Pause and take some deep breaths with your child. Deep breathing can help reverse the nervous system response.</p> <p>Empathize: Anxiety is scary. Your child wants to know that you get it.</p> <p>Evaluate: Once your child is calm, it's time to figure out possible solutions.</p> <p>Let go: Let go of your guilt. You are a great parent giving your child the tools to manage their worry.</p>	<p>The Box Breathing Method</p> <p>Lie down on your back and breathe ONLY through your nose.</p> <p>Inhale for 4 seconds, letting the belly fill up like a balloon.</p> <p>Pause the breath at the top of the inhale for 4 seconds.</p> <p>Exhale through the nose for 4 seconds, fully emptying the lungs.</p> <p>Pause the breath at the bottom of the exhale for 4 seconds.</p> <p>Repeat 3-5 times.</p>
<p>Online Resources:</p> <p>Helping children understand the pandemic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for kids from Nemours / KidsHealth • Comic for school-age kids explaining the new coronavirus • Tips from PBS - includes list of material from popular characters/shows • Help children understand "social distancing" from CHOP (VIDEO) • Plain language information on coronavirus by and for people with disabilities (not just for kids) in English / Español <p>Stress and coping tools for kids and teens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relax & Unwind Center for Kids from Nemours / KidsHealth • Stress & Coping Center for Teens from Nemours / KidsHealth 	<p>On-line Resources</p> <p>Box Breathing App</p> <p>Calm</p> <p>Worry Time</p> <p>Books</p> <p>What You Must Think Of Me: A First Hand Account of One Teenager's Experience with Social Anxiety Disorder Author: Emily Ford</p> <p>What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety Author: Dawn Huebner, PhD</p>