

Anxiety Strategies

For children, adolescents &
their caregivers

There are many forms of anxiety that your child/adolescent may experience.

Separation anxiety, OCD, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, School Avoidance, Social Anxiety, Panic Disorder, Specific Phobia's & Agoraphobia.

Pastoral Institute is here to assist you in navigating this journey with your child.*



WARNING SIGNS OF ANXIETY

- Headaches/stomachaches
- Muscle tension
- Withdrawal
- Excessive worry
- Difficulty sleep/concentrating
- Irritable/moody, restless/on edge
- Heart racing
- Focuses too much on doing well
- Seeking comfort/reassurance to calm fears

DO'S AND DON'TS

- Do give reassurance.
- Do not minimize anxiety. Listen without judgment. Ex. don't say "Don't worry." "Just suck it up."
- Express positive but realistic expectations.
- Don't encourage avoidance of situations that create anxiety.
- Respect their feelings.
- Don't ask leading questions but investigate what they are feeling .
- Develop solutions together. Ex. "What can help you feel better?"

WAYS TO ASSIST IN THE MOMENT

- Explore/discuss/validate feelings.
- Praise when there is an effort to cope.
- Take slow deep breaths together.
- Use 5 senses through grounding exercises.
- Distract by naming animals in alphabetical order
- Teach positive statements to use during stressful moments.
- Ask them to think of a safe place or person in their mind.
- Be prepared ahead of time through role-play.

RESOURCES

- www.anxioustoddlers.com
- www.onoursleeves.org
- You and Your Anxious Child: Free Your Child from Fears and Worries by Anne Marie Albano
- Anxiety Relief for Teens by Regine Galanti
- Anxiety Relief for Kids: On the Spot Strategies to Help Your Child Overcome Worry, Panic, and Avoidance by Bridget Flynn Walker
- The Anxiety Workbook for Teens by Lisa M. Schab
- How to Help Your Child Clean Up Their Mental Mess by Dr. Caroline Leaf

** We believe in the benefits of collaborative care and encourage you to reach out to your medical providers to explore additional treatment options to complement the therapy resources we provide.*

A Safe Place To Tell Your Story

www.pastoralinstitute.org