

Anxiety Intervention Tip Sheet

Impact of Anxiety on Learning and Everyday Functioning

<p>Isolates self from peers and family Reluctant to participate Difficulty with social skills Avoids new experiences Low tolerance for frustration Quick to anger May abuse alcohol/drugs in attempt to self-medicate</p>	<p>Negative comments about self Cycle of academic failure Feelings easily hurt Gives up easily Appears unmotivated</p>
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Interventions for Home

Interventions	Examples
Post household activities.	Daily schedule on refrigerator.
Keep a regular schedule.	Establish and keep a regular homework time.
Modify home tasks.	Ask child to complete one step of a more complex job.
Provide frequent breaks.	Snack time/short break between chores.
Schedule parent/child activities.	Movie and pizza night on Fridays.
Encourage peer interactions.	Host a structured play group.
Gradually increase responsibilities.	Add more steps to task as child demonstrates proficiency.
Build on assets and strengths.	Provide access to music and art lessons.
Teach and use calming techniques.	Play soft music.
Promote self-care.	Demonstrate how to relax, breathe and exercise.
Strengthen parent/child relationship.	Spend time together doing things you both enjoy.

School-wide Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Peer mentoring programs	Study buddy
Use a social skills curriculum.	“Skillstreaming” (Goldstein)
Positive mental health posters and signage.	Display MACMH children’s mental health posters. (www.macmh.org)
Use restorative practices.	Create peacemaking circles.
Focus on health and nutrition.	Advocate for healthy, nutritious school lunch menus.
Post school values and philosophy.	Display a Circle of Courage poster (Brentrow).
Use a self-esteem curriculum.	“Self-esteem Games” (Sher) – elementary school “Respect, Self, Value, People (Pryor and Konek) – secondary school
Build community awareness.	“Early Warning Signs” training
Physical exercise	Take child on “pair share” walks.
Develop a pro-social school theme.	“Bully-Free School”
Professional Learning Community	Group book study, “Worry” by Hallowell and Rately
Character education	Teach responsible behaviors.

Classroom Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Allow for flexible deadlines.	Ask child to name his/her own due date. Check on progress at regular intervals. Help child to get started.
Check for understanding.	Break assignments into segments.
Modify workload.	Reduce volume and/or complexity of spelling list.
Establish and maintain a regular schedule.	Post daily activities on bulletin or whiteboard.
Reward small successes.	Give extra earned computer time.
Create a low competition environment.	Integrate some cooperative group activities.
Give advance notice of changes to routine.	Prepare students for upcoming changes in routine.
Create classroom rituals.	Use a daily check-in time.
Reward good attendance. Call when student is absent.	Issue a school store voucher as a reward.
Utilize technology.	Use a computerized reading program.
Play soothing music during reflective time.	Allow students to select music. Screen for appropriateness prior to playing music during class.
Utilize movement.	Build in a regular stretching routine. Have students lead the activity.

Interventions for Individuals

Interventions	Examples
Develop a supportive relationship with student.	Individual time spent with student
Develop an organizational system for the individual child.	Use color-coded folders, colored homework bins, "No Name Papers" basket.
Provide a detailed course outline.	Use daily advance organizers.
Promote low-risk leadership activities.	Rotate classroom duties such as feeding the fish.
Teach relaxation techniques.	Experiential brain-based activities (i.e., soothing statements, Koosh Balls, movement)
Encourage peer support.	Use peer mediation/conflict resolution programs.
Teach physical self-soothers.	Deep breathing techniques
Promote a low competition environment.	"Who learned something today?"
Promote a cooperative environment.	Allow students to work in teams.
Allow re-takes and re-dos.	Allow best effort to be scored.
Encourage use of alternate methods for demonstration of mastery.	Let student choose oral, written or video report.
Value child's cultural traditions.	Acknowledge, respect, and build on diversity.

Resources:

Note: These are suggested resources. This is not meant to be a complete list.

Anxiety Disorders Association of America	www.adaa.org
Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health	www.macmh.org
National Alliance for Mental Illness-MN	http://mn.nami.org
Parent Advocacy Center for Educational Rights	http://www.pacer.org
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning	www.casel.org
National Institute of Mental Health	www.nimh.nih.gov
Toll-free information line: 1-888-Anxiety	
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	www.pbis.org