

Counselor's Corner  
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***Helpful tips for dealing with an anxious child***

Anxiety is a subjective sense of worry, apprehension, and or fear. Although everyone feels anxious from time to time, approximately 10 percent of children have excessive fears and worries that can keep them from enjoying life (Helping Anxious Child 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). It is normal for everyone to feel fear, worry and apprehension from time to time, but when these feelings prevent a person from doing what he/she wants and/or needs to do, anxiety becomes a disability.

**Here are a few tips for dealing with an anxious child:**

- Genuinely accept your child's concerns.
- Listen to your child's perceptions and gently correct misinformation.
- Patiently encourage your child to approach a feared situation one step at a time until it becomes familiar and manageable.
- Always try to get your child to events on time, or early- being late can elevate levels of anxiety.
- Continually set equal expectations for all kids anxious or not. Expecting a child to be anxious will only encourage anxiety.
- Role-play strategies- how to react in certain situations. Explore both best case scenarios and worst-case scenarios using realistic evidence.
- Build your child's personal strengths.
- Help your child organize their school materials for the next day the night before.
- Allow and encourage your child to do things on his own.
- Designate a "safe person" at school that understands your child's worries and concerns.
- Try not to pass your own fears onto your child.
- Work together as a team (family members, teachers, child, day-care providers, etc.)
- Set consequences- don't confuse anxiety with other types of inappropriate behavior. Set limits and consequences so that you don't allow anxiety to enable your child.
- Have reasonable expectations.

**Resources for parents:**

- <https://psychcentral.com/health/books-about-anxiety-for-kids-and-parents>
- [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/books-anxiety-parents-kids\\_1\\_5c93c5fde4b093dbd8193cd8](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/books-anxiety-parents-kids_1_5c93c5fde4b093dbd8193cd8)
- <https://www.andnextcomesl.com/2019/07/books-about-anxiety.html>
- <https://childmind.org/article/what-to-do-and-not-do-when-children-are-anxious/>
- <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/23/772789491/how-to-help-a-child-struggling-with-anxiety>