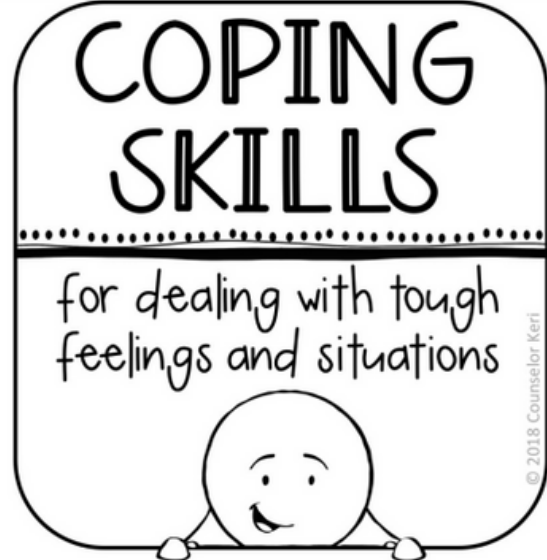


OCTOBER 2022

# gp COUNSELING CORNER



## Stress & Anxiety Management : The Facts

Anxiety is normal. Everyone experiences anxiety from time to time. It alerts us to threats, protects us from danger and helps us reach important goals. For example, it is normal to feel anxious when encountering a bear on a hike, or before taking an important exam.

Anxiety isn't dangerous. Although anxiety feels uncomfortable, it is temporary and will eventually decrease. The body sensations we experience when we're anxious, are designed to keep us safe. They're normal and part of our body's natural survival response mechanism.

Anxiety shouldn't be avoided. It's important to resist allowing your child to avoid challenges or escape scary situations. Your child may feel better in the short-term when they stay home or opt out, but in the long-term it makes things worse as your child never gets to learn they can handle the tuff-stuff. While it's hard to see your child in distress, coping with anxiety is a critical life skill.

Anxiety can take over. Although anxiety is normal, harmless, and part of everyday life, for some children it can take over. Anxiety can flood children with unpleasant physical feelings, unwanted thoughts, and result in avoidance or opting out of important routines such as playing a sport, making friends, going to school, and more.

This newsletter's source of information is: Anxiety Canada.



*Michelle Gates*  
(217)-236-9161  
gatesm@griggsvilleperry.org



*Allison Dokey*  
(217)-833-2352  
dokeya@griggsvilleperry.org

# ABC's of Anxiety

Trying to eliminate all anxiety and stress from your child's life is almost impossible in our busy 21st century lives, however for some youth their worry is excessive and can cause significant disruption in the following six ways:

**Affect:** Emotionally and physically-what we feel in our body. This can include complaints of an upset stomach, headache, or other physical ailments.

**Behaviour:** Behaviourally-what we do or our actions, such as crying, clinging, or tantrumming, seeking-reassurance about safety, and resistance/refusal to attend school, activities, or social events.

**Cognition:** Thinking-what goes through our mind like worrisome thoughts or beliefs such as "I'll mess up," "It'll be awful," "Everyone will laugh at me."

**Dependence:** Relying on parents or trusted adults too much- over time children and teens come to depend excessively on parents/adults and fail to develop their own internal compass, determination, and resilience.

**Excess and Extreme:** Anxiety becomes a problem when it is excessive and extreme in relation to the situation- having a one-hour tantrum prior to attending a 30-minute gymnastics class.

**Functioning:** Daily coping-How your child manages with routine demands such as attending school, making friends, working, playing, eating and sleeping.

 Be active	 Find your calm	 Get creative	 Connect with others	 Shift your mindset
Put on music and <b>dance</b>	Take some <b>deep breaths</b>	<b>Color, draw or paint</b>	Cuddle or play with your <b>pet</b>	Think of something <b>positive</b>
<b>Build</b> with Legos or blocks	Listen to music or <b>sing a song</b>	Play with <b>Play-Doh</b> or sand	<b>Read a book</b> with someone	Focus on one thing you're <b>grateful</b> for
Do 10 <b>jumping jacks</b>	Close your eyes and <b>count to 10</b> or backward from 100	Play an <b>instrument</b>	<b>Play a game</b> with a friend or family member	Identify your top three <b>strengths</b>
<b>Run in place</b> for 20 seconds	Take a <b>quiet break</b> or rest	Make up a <b>song</b>	Work with someone on a <b>puzzle</b>	Think about something you're <b>looking forward to</b>
<b>Bounce</b> a ball or play catch	Have a drink of <b>cold water</b>	Write about your <b>thoughts or feelings</b>	Write someone a <b>letter</b>	Focus on the <b>present moment</b>
Go for a <b>walk, run or hike</b>	Blow <b>bubbles</b>	Create a <b>dance</b>	<b>Share your feelings</b> with someone you trust	Think about something that <b>makes you laugh</b>
<b>Squeeze</b> a stress ball	Think of a calm, <b>happy place</b>	Write a <b>poem</b>	<b>Ask for help</b>	<b>Practice reframes</b> ("I didn't fail; I learned")
Do <b>yoga</b> or stretch	Look at pictures of a <b>favorite memory</b>	Make up a <b>new game</b>	<b>Call a friend</b> to catch up	<b>Focus on</b> what is in your control

