

Tips for Children and Teens with Anxiety

General Tips

Don't

Enable – that is, modify your behavior to accommodate the individual's anxiety. Avoiding difficult situations is not helpful to the person with anxiety.

Force confrontation with the anxiety making situation or thing – Don't force the person to do something they are afraid of.

Don't Ask Leading Questions – Instead of, "are you concerned about x?" ask, "how are you feeling about x?"

Do

Provide validation – Do ask how you can support them. What the person is experiencing is real and they need validation.

Express concern in a positive, warm way - Listen, help the person understand why s/he is anxious and that you are there to support them.

Express positive, realistic expectations - Express that she will be able to handle the situation.

Encourage the ability to tolerate anxiousness through supported exposure to the object of concern.

Keep the period of anticipation short – e.g., tell the person of an appointment later than sooner to reduce the period of rumination.

Talk things through with the child so he has a plan. Having a plan may reduce anxiety.

Sources:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/treatment-tests-and-therapies/how-to-help-someone-with-anxiety>

<https://childmind.org/article/what-to-do-and-not-do-when-children-are-anxious/>

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Classroom Tips

Classroom Accommodations for Anxiety by Amanda Morin

- Providing emotional support
- Classroom setup, schedules, and routines
- Giving instructions and assignments
- Introducing new concepts/lessons

<https://www.understood.org/articles/en/at-a-glance-classroom-accommodations-for-anxiety>

How to Show Empathy to Your Students with Compassionate Curiosity by Amanda Morin

- Acknowledge there's a lot you don't know
- Asking caring questions
- Listen and observe
- Imagine the student's experience
- Believe that every student wants to be known
- Be patient

https://www.understood.org/articles/en/using-compassionate-curiosity-to-drive-empathy?_sp=d471ee01-5b62-4068-948f-402547bbaeaf.1633634969241

Other Resources

From the Anxiety and Depression Association of America.

Got Anxiety? A resource of college students with anxiety. May be helpful to older high school students as well. <https://adaa.org/sites/default/files/GotAnxiety-2014.pdf>

How to Deal with Stress and Anxiety PDF For all of us.
<https://adaa.org/sites/default/files/downloads/Stress%20and%20Anxiety%20Tips.pdf>

Five Ways to Support Your Teen's Mental Health PDF
<https://adaa.org/sites/default/files/downloads/Teen%20Mental%20Health.pdf>

Spiritual

Examen for Teens with Anxiety <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/examen-for-those-experiencing-anxiety/>