



Did you know?

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE ANXIETY?

When facing danger, our bodies experience stress. This triggers a whole host of physical reactions that enable us to react to the situation. Our body's fight-or-flight response uses all available energy to deal with the emergency. **A certain degree of stress and fear is normal, and even necessary in situations where our bodies need to be ready to react.**



Anxiety and stress can become problematic and hamper regular activities when there is no clear and present danger. Anxiety can have physiological, emotional, behavioural, and mental effects.

Fear: There is a perceived stressful situation that triggers the body's normal warning mechanism. *It's the first day of school today, and I'm afraid because I don't know anyone.*

Anxiety: Emotions are expressed when facing anticipated risk or danger. *I have an oral presentation tomorrow, and I am scared I will fail and people will laugh at me.*

Anxiety disorder: Reactions are triggered without apparent risk. They are ongoing or progressively worsen, and affect normal functioning.

I don't think I will be ready for my upcoming exams, and that my parents will be upset if I fail them. It's the first thing I think about when I get up, and the last thing I think about before I go to bed. I not going to get a job.

What is happening?

- Increased resting heart rate
- Reduced blood flow causing paleness, chills, swelling
- Breath quickens, increased sweatiness
- Muscles tighten causing muscle tension, pain, shaking
- Available energy used to react to danger causing the digestive system to slow down
- Focus on danger resulting in a difficulty to concentrate

How do children express anxiety?

- Crying, difficulty speaking, self-isolation
- Stomachache or headache
- Behavioural disorders, opposition, agitation
- Difficulty concentrating

Children can experience stress:

- Failing an exam
- Getting poor grades
- Talking in front of the class
- Being rejected by their peers



I'M INVOLVED!

How can we support our children? For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have shown incredible resilience in times of hardship. Traditional models of holistic wellness work. Taking care of your **physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health** is important. Our ancestors took time out on the land to connect with their identity, and to be in tune with nature. This is a source of healing. Mutual aid and sharing are fundamental values among First Peoples. **Strong, reliable community ties are key to good mental health. Traditional knowledge is real. Trust yourself as parents or grandparents because you know what to do!**

TIPS

- Show you **care** by accepting your child's emotions. Congratulate your child for having the courage to express his or her real feelings.
- **Spend time connecting** with your child even if it is only for ten minutes. You can help your child express his or her emotions through art, play, stories, or crafts.
- **Use imagination, play, and humour** to support your child. Not enough play time actually increases anxiety. Check out this video titled "The Importance of Emotional Expression and Play": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZ7CyP7Z3Xo&list=PLie8DCLonF4FtWh9cMqNtj0NM_YkAkJfH&index=4.
- **Help your child find methods** of self-reassurance. Help your child become aware of them and use them to accept and model his emotions.
- **Spend time outdoors** by taking a walk, playing games, going for a bike ride, or going fishing.
- **Establish a relationship** with other community members including elders.
- Take part in social, sporting, cultural, or community **activities outside school**.
- Help your child **calm down** through relaxation, meditation, breathing exercises, cardiac coherence, positive thinking. Petit BamBou, Respirelax, and Prana Breath are free applications you can try.
- **Just be there!**

What went well today?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What can I do to take care of myself?

- Exercise
- Meditate
- Eat well
- Do some gardening
- Take a walk in the woods
- Make a craft

FNEC CONTEST FOR PARENTS

Enter for your chance to win a stress-buster gift basket!

Use the following form to submit a written description of how your child successfully deals with stress [CLICK HERE](#)

Gift basket contains items suitable for children ages 3 to 12. Contest closes December 6.

REFERENCES

tonanxietedomptela.org
fondationjasminroy.com

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cepn-fnec.ca/involved/

