Parent Chat

September 13, 2024

Helping children cope with anxiety

Deb Price
BMSS Guidance Officer

Children, like adults, have all sorts of strong feelings about what is happening to them. At times, the world can seem frightening or uncertain, which may create fearfulness, worry or anxiety. Here are 7 ways we can help.

#1. Talk to your child: Show your child that you care and want to understand the reasons for their anxiety.

#2. Help them reframe their thinking: Encourage them to focus on helpful thoughts rather than unhelpful thoughts.

#3. Put things in perspective: Ask your child to rate their problem from 0 (no problem) to 10 (worst ever). Discuss what a '10' problem would be e.g. grief, loss or sickness. This may help them understand that what is making them anxious may not be as bad as they first thought.

#4. Prepare your child for changes: If possible, give sufficient warning. Talk to them about what might happen and why, as well as ways to manage the changes.

#5. Establish routines: For children with school or separation anxiety, regular routines and consistency around sleep, getting ready for school and having breakfast will generally improve the outcome.

#6. Be aware: Be mindful of school or family situations that may be creating worries for your child. Also be aware of your own anxiety and protect your child from taking on your woes.

#7. Teach relaxation techniques: Encourage your child to control their breathing, listen to peaceful music or do something they enjoy.

Recommended resources

- **Anxiety fact sheet - Beyond Blue**
- **The Brave Program - University of Queensland**

Tip of the week

When your child's emotions are big, try to talk less and show less emotion... do the opposite to how you feel!

Podcast

Happy Families with Dr Justin Coulson

This podcast with Dr Justin Coulson is designed for the time-poor parent who wants answers now. Every day Justin and his wife Kylie provide practical tips and a common sense approach to parenting that Mums and Dads all over the world are connecting with.

Weekly parent chat

Thank you to the 60+ parents and caregivers who attended the parent chat sessions in term 3.

Join us in term 4 as we discuss:
School refusal * Resilience * Boys * Juggling work & parenthood * Friendship using a restorative model * Self care for parents
If you have feedback or would like to share topics you're interested in, please let us know.

When: 8:45-9:30am every Wednesday
Where: Hall verandah near Banksia Cafe
With: Chappy Alexia & Guidance Officer Deb Price