

2022

Coping with Anxiety

Approaches to reducing youth
anxiety that *actually* work

University of Florida

Clinical and Health Psychology
Supervised by Joy Gabrielli, PhD

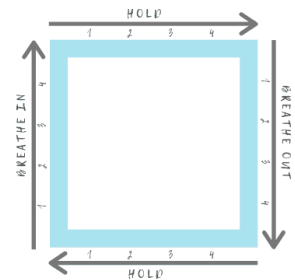
COPING STRATEGIES

Expressive activities

- Exercise: dancing, talking a walk
- Expressive hobbies: painting, writing, cooking, baking
- DIY Worry Box
 - Have your child write down their worries on sticky notes. Ask them to rate their worries from 1-10. Schedule a time for your child to review the notes (alone or with you), re-rate their worries and compare, and/or add or remove worries in their box.

Relaxing activities

- Yoga poses and routines
- Progressive muscle relaxation
 - Breathe in and tense body (or specific area with tension) for 5 seconds. Exhale and release the tension. Repeat.
- Mindfulness exercises
 - **Deep breathing**
 - Square breathing
 - 5-5-10 (breathe in for 5, hold for 5, breathe out for 10)
 - **Visualization**
 - Special place exercise: *Think of a place and time you felt relaxed and happy. Imagine the place in detail, using all 5 senses.*
 - Guided imagery audios
 - **Grounding**
 - 5 senses exercise
 - 5-Look: Notice 5 things you can see around you.
 - 4-Feel: Notice 4 things you can feel.
 - 3-Listen: Notice 3 sounds you can hear.
 - 2-Smell: Notice 2 things you can smell (or 2 of your favorite smells).
 - 1-Taste: Notice 1 thing you can taste (or 1 of your favorite foods).
- Apps: Calm, Smiling Mind, Worry Tree



PARENTING STRATEGIES

Less helpful strategies:

- Dismissing fears or stressors
- Accommodation
- Criticism or "tough love"
- Not addressing your own anxiety

More helpful strategies:

- Promote facing fears
- Help identify emotions
- Provide a listening ear
- Reward bravery
- Encourage strategies for relaxation
- Avoid answering worry questions more than once





ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Articles/podcasts**

- Child Mind Institute: [What to Do When Children are Anxious](#)
- NPR's [How to Help a Child Struggling with Anxiety](#)

- **Books**

- [Anxious Kids, Anxious Parents](#) by Reid Wilson, PhD & Lynn Lyons, LICSW
- [Helping Your Anxious Child](#) by Ronald Rapee, PhD

- **Videos/songs**

- Tiny Docs: [Worry Monster, Going Back to School](#)
- Steven Universe: [Here Comes a Thought](#)
- [UF Fear Facers Summer Camp](#)

Contact Information:

Joy Gabrielli, PhD

Email: jgabrielli@phhp.ufl.edu

Office Line: 352-273-8248