

Parent Talk

MARCH 2025

Tips For Social Anxiety

It can be tough to be a teen struggling with social anxiety. As we're growing and developing, we're constantly exposed to new situations which can cause anxiety levels to spike. Teens, and their parents, can prepare to tackle anxiety early on and help develop critical coping mechanisms to use when things get tough. Below are just a few ways you can start to work on social anxiety!

Know What Triggers Your Anxiety

Many people with anxiety may know they experience symptoms at certain times but may not know exactly what triggers those symptoms. Being aware of things that can potentially set off anxiety can help you come up with an action plan and gradually control your symptoms before they get unmanageable. This process is typically done alongside a licensed mental health clinician, but you can start by just jotting down a list of things you know have the potential to make you very anxious. This isn't to say that you should always avoid all of these things, but it can help you ground yourself during difficult times.

Get Outside Your Comfort Zone (Slowly)

Once you know which things have the potential to set off your social anxiety, another good step is to gradually get outside your comfort zone with these things. Try to think of situations that you can't cancel or avoid, like getting food or going to the doctor. These things are vital for our everyday lives, so it's harder for your anxiety to convince you not to do them. The more you slowly experience these situations, the easier they will become. This technique is known professionally as exposure therapy and a qualified professional can assist with tracking your progress.

Join A Community

Once you're feeling a bit more secure with managing your anxiety, a good step is to try to find a community of people to join. Many high schools and colleges have various clubs, sports, or other communities you can sign up for to make friends and socialize. The benefit is that you can pick any community that aligns with your interests. This can greatly help with handling social situations, as you will already have something in common with anyone in that group. Clubs and communities are a great way to get regular exposure to social situations, especially if you're finding it hard to make new friends.

Build Confidence

After you've worked on your social anxiety a bit and are feeling like you want to branch out more, try focusing on building your confidence and self-esteem. If you've already pushed yourself outside your comfort zone and are regularly participating in social circles, the next step is to think about how you can transform your way of thinking. Listen to what your anxiety is telling you and make a list. Sit down and really think about if the things you wrote are true or if it's just your anxiety warping things. Think about all the things you'd like to do but can't because of your anxiety. Which of these things could you realistically achieve by changing your way of thinking? Your anxiety may be telling you that it would be too embarrassing to go out to the movies alone but really think about if that's the truth or not. If you can work on building that confidence within yourself, you can start to tackle all of those goals on your list.

Need more help?

Resources at The Baker Center are just a click away

Therapy & Treatment Services

CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE THERAPY →

Special Education

MANVILLE SCHOOL →

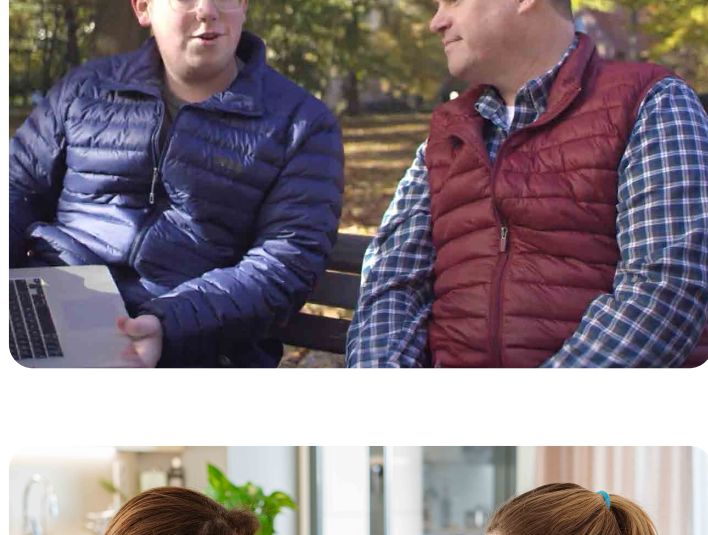
Therapeutic Summer Camp

CAMP BAKER →

College Preparation

NEXT STEP →

Featured Resources



Next Step: College Success & Independent Living

Next Step is designed to help students with social language and anxiety challenges prepare for college. The program serves as a simulation for independent living.

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Parenting Anxious Children: Useful Skills for Encouraging Bravery

In this seminar, we talk about what anxiety might look like for kids and teens, how caregivers can help encourage bravery, and some tangible skills you can use at home to help your child face their fears head on.

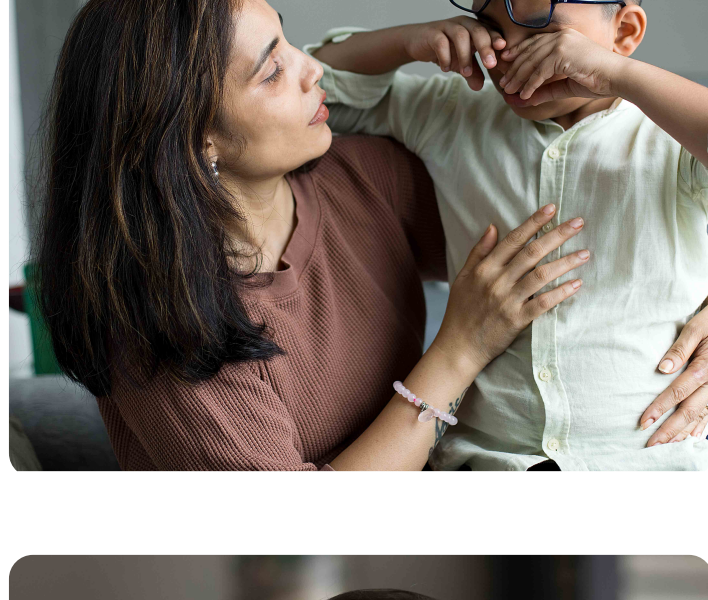
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Learning About Anxiety

In this seminar, we'll discuss what anxiety is, how it functions, and how children experience anxiety. We'll also review evidence-based treatments for anxiety in youth and provide some skills that parents can use to support their anxious child at home.

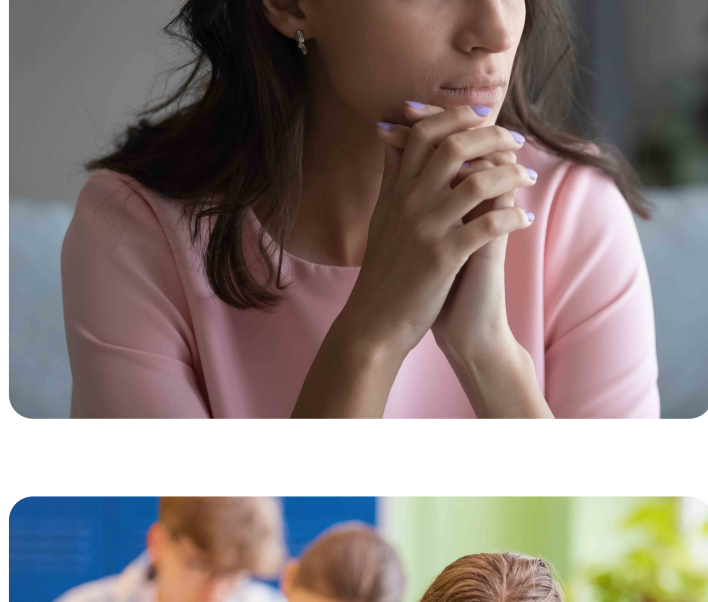
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Helpful Tips for Parenting Anxious Kids and Talking About Anxiety

If you have an anxious kid, you may be well aware of how anxiety functions in the day to day, why anxiety exists, and effective approaches to addressing anxiety. Having familiarity with this knowledge base can be a step towards feeling like a helpful support for your child.

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How to Manage Your Own Anxiety While Parenting, and Why It's Important

Parenting can be stressful, regardless of your own relationship with mental health and anxiety. For caregivers that experience their own anxiety, managing anxious thoughts and behaviors can be an important factor to address considering that anxiety often has a genetic component.

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What Is Anxiety and How Does It Work?

Anxiety does not always function as intended. People with a predisposition to anxiety often experience symptoms significantly more than their peers and it can impair their ability to function in day-to-day life.

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How Can I Help My Anxious Child?

If you notice that your child is often nervous or worried, has a hard time separating from caregivers, acts differently around peers, or can't speak in school or in public, it might be time to seek out some support from mental health professionals. Identifying what makes your child anxious, and understanding how this anxiety impacts them, is the first step to diagnosing anxiety.

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Client Spotlight: Overcoming Anxiety

This is a real interview with the mom of a 10-year-old girl diagnosed with Separation Anxiety Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and a Specific Phobia of stinging insects and birds. They have recently graduated from treatment at [the Center for Effective Therapy](#).

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