

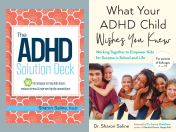
SOLUTIONS FOR SOCIAL ANXIETY IN CHILDREN AND TEENS WITH ADHD

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DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

- *What I mean by anxious is...* Evan, age 11
- *"My worries start as a hair clip ..."* Maya, age 10
- *"I worry about things I have to do ..."* Jerell, age 16
- *"I'm scared of what other kids will think about me..."* Kyla, age 13



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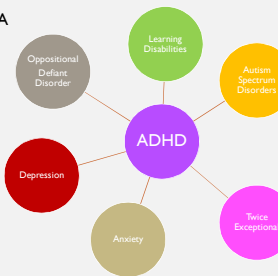
POLL #1: WHAT IS THE BIGGEST ISSUE CONFRONTING YOUR CHILD/TEEN RIGHT NOW?

1. Loneliness
2. Increased agitation or anxiety
3. Low motivation
4. Trouble making friends
5. Trouble keeping friends
6. Depression or lack of energy
7. Isolation

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DIAGNOSTIC OVERLAP

- ADHD: Affects 9-10% children and teens in the USA
- Autism Spectrum Disorders: 50% with ADHD (14% ADHD as primary diagnosis)
- Learning Disabilities: 2.3 million student in USA: ADHD 70%, ASD 80%, 2E 9.1%
- Anxiety: 34% (7.1% general population of kids 3-17)
- Depression: 16-30%
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder: 40%



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EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING SKILLS

Learning Disabilities

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- *Inhibition (verbal and behavioral self-regulation)
- *Emotion (emotional control)
- *Action (initiation, organization, time management planning/prioritizing)
- *Energy (alertness, perseverance and sustained attention)
- *Recall (working memory)
- *Focus (staying on task, shifting easily to new things, flexibility)
- *Goals (setting, persisting and finishing tasks)
- *Self-Evaluation (self-awareness and judgment)

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Twice Exceptional (2E)

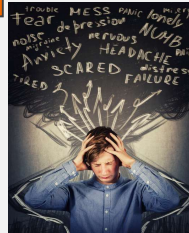
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WHAT IS ANXIETY?

- Scanning for threats
- Catastrophizing
- 'What if' thoughts and worries
- Unreliable emotional messages
- Interpreting predictions as facts

➤ CDC reports 7.1% kids ages 3-17 have anxiety problems

➤ 35% of kids with ADHD have co-existing anxiety disorder



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THE ADHD BRAIN UNDER STRESS AND ANXIETY

- ❖ Flooding by intense feelings overwhelms thinking and behavioral choices.
- ❖ Weaker working memory reduces coping strategies
- ❖ Stress will weaken already challenged executive functioning skills.
- ❖ Decreased recall impairs ability to keep track of things.

➤ People with ADHD tend to have more severe anxiety reactions than those without it.



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WHAT KIDS SAY ABOUT ANXIETY:

- *“What I mean by anxious is...” Eva, age 11*
- *“My worries start as a hair clip ...” Maya, age 10*
- *“I worry about things I have to do ...” Jamie, age 12*
- *“I’m scared of what other kids will think about me...” Kyla, age 13*



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NERVOUSNESS VS. WORRY VS. ANXIETY

- **Nervousness:** unfamiliarity with novel task or situation
- **Worry:** how we think about something
- **Anxiety:** physical response based on negative thoughts
- Worriers have good imaginations
- Productive vs. poisonous worry

Worriers will:

- ❖ Catastrophize situations, outcomes and concerns
- ❖ Interpret predictions as facts



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TYPES OF ANXIETY

- Separation Anxiety: fear of leaving caretaker
- Specific phobias: fear of specific object or situation
- General Anxiety: fear about typical aspects of daily life
- Social Anxiety: fear of social situations where you may be judged
- Agoraphobia: fear of being in public spaces
- Panic Disorder: intense fear that reaches a peak including physical symptoms
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): witness or victim of traumatic event followed by intrusive thoughts, intense reactivity and avoidance
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: recurrent thoughts or behaviors aimed at reducing anxiety that cause distress in daily functioning
- Hoarding, Skin-picking, Selective Mutism



DIAGNOSING ANXIETY

- Does a child or teen's behavior seem atypical for their age?
- Is their reaction out of proportion to the actual danger?
- What is the frequency and consistency of these behaviors?
- What, if anything, is happening at home or at school that could be contributing to their emotional state and behaviors?

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SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

- Social anxiety disorder is a debilitating fear of judgment, humiliation or rejection by others in social situations based on a core belief of deficiency.
- Fundamental disconnect between how a person actually appears to others and their own exaggerated, often negative perceptions of themselves.



DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

Typical Symptoms include:

- Feeling uncomfortable talking to people outside of your immediate family and/or keeping conversations very short (including public speaking).
- Having trouble making or keeping friends.
- Avoiding experiences or places where social interaction will occur (parties, classes, stores, restaurants, gyms, grocery stores, etc.)
- Feeling self-conscious around other people and intensely worried about negative judgment.
- Embarrassed to eat in front of others.
- Experiencing panic attacks including nausea, shaking or perspiration in social environments.

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COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL ANXIETY

- **Cognitive:** Conscious (hot) thoughts based on underlying assumptions and negative core beliefs including rumination.
- **Behavior:** Safety-seeking actions that include avoidance.
- **Emotional:** Self-criticism, self-doubt, shame, distress.
- **Physiological:** Perspiration, blushing, jittery limbs, quivering voice, stuttering, nausea, etc.



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WHAT IS THE PRIMARY CORE BELIEF FOR YOUR CHILD OR TEEN RELATED TO SOCIAL ANXIETY?

1. I will embarrass myself.
2. I will make a bad first impression.
3. People won't like me right away.
4. I am unattractive.
5. I am not that smart.
6. I say or do something offensive



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REJECTION SENSITIVITY DYSPHORIA

- Intense feelings based on a *belief* that you've let other people down or embarrassed yourself
- Difficulty letting go of past hurts and/or rejections
- Heightened emotional sensitivity
- Shame related to any missteps or mistakes



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POLL #2: HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO SOCIAL ANXIETY IN YOUR CHILDREN OR TEENS?

1. Exasperated patience.
2. Frustration.
3. Dismissing it.
4. Reassurance.
5. Try to understand but struggle to grasp it.
6. Feel anxious yourself

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THE 5 C'S SOLUTION TO MANAGING ANXIETY

- **self-Control:** Interrupt anxious thinking and use breathing techniques.
- **Compassion:** Consider the situation or fear from child's perspective.
- **Collaborate:** Work together on creating solutions to reduce the power and influence of their worry.
- **Consistency:** Encourage regular daily routines and respond similarly.
- **Celebration:** Acknowledge courageous behavior.



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CHANGE THE RELATIONSHIP TO WORRY

- * Change the relationship to worry.
- * Teach different coping skills based on collaboration.
- * Name bodily signals as warnings about worry.
- * Identify the goal: "I want _____; so I'm willing to _____."
- * Shift focus from what isn't working to things that are.
- * Rely on past successes to improve coping skills and foster a growth mindset.

NOPE.

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STOP REASSURING AND START ENCOURAGING

- * Reassurance offers short-term relief but long-term anxiety.
- * Stay neutral and compassionate without fixing.
- * Try the worse case scenario exercise.
- * Encourage them to take a small risk and see what happens.
- * Reframe "I can't" into "I'm not sure if"



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TOOLS FOR RESPONDING TO ANXIETY

1. Name the worry and empathize.
2. Instead of reassurance, use validation.
3. Probability
4. Best case/worse case scenario
5. Pleasure Predicting
6. Fake it to Make it
7. Taking a Risk



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COGNITIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR SOCIAL ANXIETY

Shift your thinking:

- Identify limiting core beliefs and negative self-talk.
- Find evidence that contradicts or supports those beliefs.
- Name safety-seeking behaviors and their function
- Recall a situation when they were uncomfortable and did something anyway
- Set a small goal that challenges their fear and is doable.



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MINDFULNESS AND SOCIAL ANXIETY

Mindfulness refers to paying attention to something in the present moment without judgment or shame.

- **Curiosity about self:** Wonder about what's going to happen instead of worrying about it and turn attention away from the internal noise.
- **Curiosity about other:** Take interest in what the person is saying or doing with reflective listening.



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TOOLS FOR ADDRESSING REJECTION SENSITIVITY DYSPHORIA

- **Manage big feelings with START-Stop, Think, Act, Recover & Teach**
- **Plan ahead and practice positive self-talk phrases to quiet the inner critic**
- **Reinforce strengths and pay attention to what works**
- **QTIP-Quit Taking It Personally-and consider the source**



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TEACH SOCIAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Enjoy an APPLE:

- **A**=Ask to join
- **P**=Physical proximity and volume
- **P**=Participate with curiosity
- **L**=Lay off self-criticism and Listen
- **E**=Enjoy connecting



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RESILIENCE: THE ANTIDOTE TO ANXIETY

➔ RESILIENCE REDUCES ANXIETY AND SHAME

Focus on developing:

- ❖ Islands of competency
- ❖ Charismatic adults
- ❖ A growth mindset



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