

Angst Parent Handout

What's the difference between "normal" anxiety and an anxiety disorder?

Anxiety is normal. It can help us get out of harm's way or prepare for an important task.

However, if anxiety is persistent, irrational, and overwhelming to a point where it interferes with daily activities - it may be an anxiety disorder. (aada.org)

What are possible signs of anxiety in children?

- Agitation
- Restlessness
- Inattention, poor focus
- Somatic symptoms like headaches or stomachaches
- Avoidance
- Tantrums
- Crying
- Refusing to go to school
- Meltdowns before school about clothing, hair, shoes, socks
- Meltdowns after school about homework
- Difficulties with transitions within school, and between school and an activity/sport
- Difficulty settling down for bed
- Having high expectations for school work, homework and sports performance

How do I know when to seek out help for my child?

If your child's anxiety is interfering with their ability to handle everyday situations, or prompts them to avoid things that kids their age enjoy, it may be signs of more than "normal" anxiety. As with most mental health conditions, it will depend on the severity, intensity, and duration.

What are things that I can do to help my child with anxiety?

1. **Reach out for help from a mental health professional.** Anxiety disorders are treatable. If untreated, it can lead to other conditions like depression.
2. **Let your child worry.** Acknowledge and empathize with their feelings, but express your confidence in their ability to manage it. Your reaction to your child's anxiety has a huge impact on their ability to overcome it.
3. **Avoid avoidance.** Allowing your child to avoid situations that trigger their anxiety only amplifies their symptoms.
4. **Help your child develop a coping skills plan** for managing anxiety.
 - a. Deep breathing
 - b. Progressive muscle relaxation
 - c. Talking back to anxiety
 - d. Asking an adult for help

Where do I go for help?

If your child is struggling with anxiety, help is available. Reach out to a mental health professional for assistance. ALCSD is committed to ensuring that your child has the supports needed to be healthy, happy, and successful. We can assist you in connecting to needed supports and resources. See contact information and resources on the next page. You can also visit AngstMovie.com for additional resources.

Parent Resources

Avon Lake City Schools Contacts

Counselors:

Allen Skierski (**Avon Lake HS**) - last name A-G: allen.skierski@avonlakecityschools.org

Erin Grieger (**Avon Lake HS**) - last name H-O: erin.grieger@avonlakecityschools.org

Mike Kaminski (**Avon Lake HS**) - last name P-Z: mike.kaminski@avonlakecityschools.org

Linda Schanz (**Learwood**) - 7th grade: linda.schanz@avonlakecityschools.org

Mike Kaiser (**Learwood**) - 8th grade: mike.kaiser@avonlakecityschools.org

Pat Walsh (**Troy Intermediate**): pat.walsh@avonlakecityschools.org

Hope Hayden (**Troy Intermediate, Redwood/Erievew**): hope.hayden@avonlakecityschools.org

Ann Speier (**Redwood/Erievew**): ann.speier@avonlakecityschools.org

Amanda Kelber (**Eastview/Westview**): amanda.kelber@avonlakecityschools.org

Social Worker:

Kristin Acton (**District**): kristin.acton@avonlakecityschools.org

Local Mental Health Agencies

OhioGuidestone (ohioguidestone.org): 440-234-2006

New Leaf Counseling (counselingwithnewleaf.com): 440-742-1661

Psych BC (psychbc.com): 216-468-5000

Lorain County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (mharsloraincounty.org):

Mental Health Navigator: 440-240-7025

Meghan Barlow & Associates (meghanbarlowandassociates.com): 440-409-0307

Websites

Connecting for Kids: www.connectingforkids.org/anxiety

WorryWise Kids: www.worrywisekids.org

Anxiety Disorders Association of America: www.adaa.org

Child Mind Institute: www.childmind.org

Anxiety Canada: www.anxietycanada.com

Books

