

A Parent's Guide to Understanding and Managing Your Child's Anxiety

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD)

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) in children is a mental health condition characterized by excessive and persistent worry and anxiety about a variety of everyday events and activities. This anxiety is often difficult for the child to control and can interfere significantly with their daily life.

SYMPTOMS

- Chronic and uncontrollable worrying
- Restlessness and irritability
- Muscle tension, jaw-clenching, teeth-grinding
- Difficulty focusing and concentrating
- Sleep disturbances such as trouble falling asleep or staying asleep



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S ANXIETY

Learn About Anxiety: Research anxiety and adolescence from trusted sources, such as the national Institutes of health, nami.org, or other professional resources on the web.

Recognize when it is time to seek help: Talk therapy, DBT therapy, and even safe-for-kids medications can help tremendously. Don't be afraid to reach out to your child's pediatrician for a referral to a mental health clinician.

Open Communication: Create a safe space for your child to express their feelings and concerns.

Patience: Understand that overcoming anxiety is a gradual process, and improvement may take time.

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

Validate Their Feelings: Acknowledge and validate your child's emotions without judgement.

Establish a Routine: Create a predictable daily routine to provide a sense of security and stability.

Encourage Healthy Habits: Promote a balanced lifestyle with regular exercise, nutritious meals, monitored screen-time, and sufficient sleep.

Model Coping Strategies: Demonstrate healthy ways to cope with stress and manage emotions.

Set Realistic Goals: Break down tasks into small, achievable steps. Celebrate even small wins.

Seek Support: Consult mental health professionals like therapists, school counselors or social workers who are trained to provide support and guidance.

Reviewed by Dr. K. Schlichting 01/2024

Hopewell Health Solutions

Phone: 860-946-0447

Email: hhs4help@hopewellhealthsolutions.com