

Exercises to Manage Anxiety

Helping your child manage and cope with their anxiety can be difficult. Below are some helpful tips for you to try at home with your child

Work with your child to name their fear or worry. For example you may choose to call your child's anxiety "the worry bully".

Why it works: Naming the problem helps your child see it as separate from themselves

Have your child tense and relax each muscle group in their body, starting with the toes.

Why it works: Your child releases tension, and when the body relaxes, the brain does, too.

Ask your child to pay attention to and label the noises around him until he hears five different sounds.

Why it works: Focusing on thoughts helps your child stay in the moment rather than worry about the future.

Ask your child to remember a time when they faced a similar situation and overcame it or succeeded.

Why it works: Picturing a previous success can help your child feel more confident.

Help your child practice deep breathing. One way to do this is to tell the child to pretend they are holding a slice of pizza. Have the child inhale the aroma by breathing in deeply through the nose and cool the pizza by blowing out through the mouth.

Why it works: Focused breathing sends the brain a message that it's time to relax.

Try making a sensory bottle or download anti-anxiety app like the Meditation Jar (Free on iTunes). Allow your child to have some quiet time while they shake the bottle and watch the particles settle.

Why it works: This tool gives children something to look at as they calm down and or breathe.

For older children, try having the child write their fears and anxiety's down on paper and stashing them away in a box with a lid.

Why it works: Writing worries helps minimize them and gives kids permission to put them away.