



How to Help an Anxious Child

*A Short Book of Tips for
Parents, Carers & Teachers.*



Introduction

Thank you for downloading this e-book which was created by the NLP4Kids team, during one of our monthly webinars. The idea behind this document is to give you, the reader, some easy to grasp, yet highly effective ideas that can help a child who is feeling anxious.

None of what you read will be rocket science and you don't need to be a wizard to make the symptoms of anxiety disappear (or at the very least reduce drastically) in the anxious child you know.

What you will need however, is to persist, consistently with the techniques we have suggested below so that you can both begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

The NLP4Kids practitioners are dotted all around the UK and have trained specifically in how to use NLP with children, young people and their families. They run workshops for parents and teachers helping with many different aspects of emotional and mental wellbeing.

Using the techniques from NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) we offer children and teenagers techniques and strategies that they can use to help better manage their thoughts and emotions.

Most of our practitioners offer a free consultation service, so if you know an anxious child who would benefit from some additional one to one support, hop over to the NLP4Kids website so see which of our lovely practitioners might be nearby and able to help.

CLICK HERE: www.NLP4Kids.org

Alternatively you can call the NLP4Kids head office to discuss your needs in greater detail and we will help you find a practitioner who is the best match for you.

Remember, anxiety can feel completely debilitating. It can block not just positive rational thought, but also the ability to learn and succeed.

By using the tips below or speaking to a member of your team, you are helping your child to feel better, but also to create a brighter future!

Visit the NLP4Kids website today to find out more:

www.NLP4Kids.org

Email: info@NLP4Kids.org

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Our Simple Top Tips:

1. Think calm thoughts to help your emotions stay calm. Breathe and use your body in a calm way. Due to the mind/body connection, we can inadvertently increase anxiety by tensing our bodies. Help your child to influence their mind by changing this physiology. It may be difficult for them to start dancing to their favourite song during times of high anxiety, however simply stretching their fingers and toes, lifting arms and moving their legs will all start to release the emotion.
2. Use an easy to learn breathing exercise: Ask the child to breathe in for a count of 5, hold their breath for a count of 5 and then breathe out for a count of 5. This helps to regulate their breathing pattern and prevents them from using 'panicked' breathing. Another method is to teach them slow deep breaths to manage their breathing. A great & fun way of teaching this is using a drink and a straw. Get your children to blow into a straw and watch their drink bubble for the count of 6. These are the kind of breaths they can use when they feel anxious.
3. Get your child to consider how they would be acting, if they felt calm and confident. Sometimes, when we think of how we would like to be, it puts our brain and body into that state. This means that you can start to become calm and confident by thinking about how it would be if you really reacted that way.
4. Ask your child to *briefly* consider what makes them anxious. As they do, get them to change the image they recall so that it is in black and white, smaller and further away. Doing this can help alleviate the emotions.
5. Dependent on the situation that makes them anxious, perhaps they could begin to consider that the emotion they are feeling is in fact excitement. The feelings of anxiety and excitement are very close friends!
6. Share some stories or metaphors about anxiety where the problem is resolved and a solution is created.
7. Have the child step back from the situation that is making them anxious and talk about what they see differently about from a distance, compared to when they are in the moment.
8. Distract them with something fun or engaging. When one of our practitioners was a child and felt stressed or couldn't sleep her mum used to get her to think of a cake shop window and all the lovely cakes she'd like to eat.
9. Chat with them about where the anxiety is, how big it is, does it have a shape or colour? Is it making a noise and if so what kind of noise? Maybe even give it a name! Once all this information is gathered, start a game of changing the aspects of the anxiety. For example start playing with moving it further away from you, perhaps change the shape of the feeling, make it spin away and add funny music to it. The game itself will take the child's focus away from the anxiety and change the ingredients that create the feeling.



10. Talk with your child about the cause of the anxiety using the 4Ws of Where what when who. Once you know these you can work out simple strategies for each place, situation, time and person. For the where look for patterns - are they usually busy places? Quiet places? You can the work out ways to address these e.g by going when it is quieter, after you've eaten etc. Look for patterns in the times your child gets most anxious. It may be linked to going to particular places (e.g school) or when they are hungry or tired. If it is specific people your child is anxious around then find out what specifically makes them anxious about that person. It may be that there is a pattern or they remind them of a scary teacher they had. Using NLP techniques to break the memories we can them make them into cartoon memories to make the child laugh.

11. Empathise - Sometimes, in order to release anxiety, we simply need to know that others may feel the same way as us. Tap into times when you have felt the same in the past and explain to your child how you felt and what you did about it.

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