



Helping Children With Anxiety FB Live Event Highlights



Highlights from October 3, 2018

Disclaimer

This is not all there is to know about childhood anxiety. The information presented is not meant to place blame or judgment on parents. We are all doing our best. These highlights are from our **Helping Children with Anxiety Facebook Live Event** with Taylor Gaunce, a Canadian Certified Counsellor and Licensed Counselling Therapist Candidate with [Atlantic Wellness Community Center](#). If you or your child experience or have experienced anxiety or you wish to know more about it and how to manage it, you'll find key information, strategies, and resources to help you below.

Common Forms of Anxiety (all three = generalized)

Generalized Anxiety

Nervous about many things: future, friends, family, school

Separation Anxiety

Nervous about starting a new school, daycare, having a babysitter

Social Anxiety

Fear of being judged by others. Also, a fear of excessive positive attention

Why is Anxiety so Common?

- Less than one percent of children receive treatment for what they face
- Children need constant stimulation; it's hard for them to cope with downtime
- All age groups can experience anxiety, but we typically see it starting at age six
- Major life events can trigger it: loss of a family member or pet, a friend moving away, and even small events such as a new babysitter, making a new friend in school, or grades

What are Some Signs we Should Watch for?

- Anxiety is different for everyone. If your child acts differently than they normally would in a particular setting, check in. For some, this might be anger/acting out. For others, it could be shyness.
- **Physiological signs:** headaches, stomach aches
- **Family History:** anxiety can be passed down and it can be a learned behavior. If your child sees that you are anxious or overprotective, they start to learn that they always have something to worry about



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How Do we Approach Talking about Anxiety?

- Ask about what's going on, what your child is feeling, and what you can do to help
- Start talking about it as soon as possible - it's OK to talk about anxiety!
- Validate your child's feelings: let them know it's OK to feel a certain way
- Bring in your own experience: tell your child a story about when something was hard for you

Try These Questions:

1. "I've noticed you've been a little quiet lately. Is there anything you want to talk about?"
2. "What's going on at school?" "Is there anything coming up at school?"
3. "What do you need from me?"
4. "How can I help?"

What Should we Avoid Doing as Parents?

- Try to avoid jumping right in and trying to fix your child's struggles before letting your child first learn about trying to cope with anxiety for future events
- Avoid dismissing your child's feelings. Don't tell them not to worry about something
- Avoid waiting to talk about anxiety or waiting for it to pass
- Don't think of anxiety as "just a phase" or "everyone goes through it and they'll figure it out." Children don't have those coping skills until we teach them
- Don't believe that anxiety is only associated with large outbursts such as panic attacks/crying. It's not always a big reaction

"By jumping in right away and rearranging schedules, they won't learn necessary self-help skills"

What if I have Anxiety as a Parent?

- Take care of yourself first
 - When you don't, you aren't able to be the best version of yourself and allow your anxiety to get worse. Similar feelings can build in your children as a result
- Use resources and don't be afraid to talk about what you're feeling with your children



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Great Strategies

- Allow your child to have a say in their treatment and ask them what they want to do
- **Breathing:** give your child this tool to use whenever they feel anxious
Start at your belly and inhale deeply. Hold it for a few seconds, and then exhale
- Get to know the people around your children and build relationships with them (their teachers, family doctor, pharmacist, etc.)
- Is your child afraid of meeting new people? Introduce them to smaller groups first and acknowledge little successes such as smiling or looking at others
- If your child struggles with stage fright or trying new things, admit that it's hard but also acknowledge that they're fantastic for still trying
- For severe anxiety, see a private practitioner

"The more a child challenges themselves, the stronger they'll feel. They'll feel more able to conquer something even if it's hard"

Where to Go

Atlantic Wellness Community Center - services available to youth (12-21); individual therapy and group sessions; clinic also available every Monday (starting at 8:30 a.m.)

Phone: 506-382-0298

Website: www.atlanticwellness.org

Kerri Gaskin, Private Practitioner - individual counselling for children, youth, adults, and groups

Phone: 506-800-6998

Website: <https://coverdalecounselling.ca>

Email: kerri@coverdalecounselling.ca

Taylor Gaunce, Private Practitioner - individual therapy for children ages 6-11 and adults 22 and up

Phone: 506-567-1245

Website: <https://taylorgaunce.wixsite.com/gauncecounselling>

Email: taylorgaunce@outlook.com

Emily Fawkes, Private Practitioner - individual counselling and has experience with youth

Email: efawkescc@gmail.ca

Kelly Hogan, Private Practitioner - counselling for children and youth

Phone: 902-292-5583

Website: <https://klhogan85.wixsite.com/khogancounselling>

Email: kellyhogancounselling@gmail.com

Great Web Resource: www.gozen.com offers interactive tools and strategies for children and parents