MYTH BUSTING ANXIETY

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All children grow out of anxiety
My child will have anxiety forever, it can’t be cured

Clarity: CBT

Thoughts: What we think affects how we feel and act

Emotions: What we feel affects how we think and act

Behaviors: What we do affects how we think and feel

Cognitive behavioural therapy for anxiety disorders in children and adolescents (Review)

James AC, Reardon T, Soler A, James G, Creswell C
My child will have anxiety forever, it can’t be cured
I am a parent/teacher, I can’t help a child with anxiety

Clinical outcomes and cost-effectiveness of brief guided parent-delivered cognitive behavioural therapy and solution-focused brief therapy for treatment of childhood anxiety disorders: a randomised controlled trial

Cathy Connell, Mara Virolahti, Hannah Fairburn, Elizabeth White, Marika Parkinson, Gemma Ablalbile, Alessandro Landi, Peter J Cooper

Summary
Background Half of all lifetime anxiety disorders emerge before age 12 years; however, access to evidence-based psychological therapies for affected children is poor. We aimed to compare the clinical outcomes and cost-effectiveness of two brief psychological treatments for children with anxiety referred to routine child mental health settings. We hypothesised that brief guided parent-delivered cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) would be associated with better clinical outcomes than solution-focused brief therapy and would be cost-effective.
It’s not effective working with parents if parents are anxious too
Talking about worry makes worry worse

- Ask open, curious questions
- Be empathetic (e.g., ‘that sounds really hard for you’)
- Ensure your child feels listened to
Talking about worry makes worry worse

Can feel unnatural at first!
It’s helpful for children to avoid situations that make them anxious.
To answer an unprepared question in front of the whole class

To answer a pre-prepared question in front of the whole class

To answer an unprepared question in front of a small group of students

To answer a pre-prepared question in front of a small group of students (5 – 6 students)

To answer a pre-prepared question in front of 1 – 2 students
To be able to go to sleep when there’s a spider in the room

To sit within a metre of a spider, for half an hour

To be in the same room as a small spider, for 10 minutes

To watch a video of a spider

To look at a picture of a spider
Key points about step-by-step plans

1. Involve the child in creating the plan
2. Use curious questions before and after each step
3. Try to make the plan fun and engaging
Treatment for child anxiety only works face-to-face. **MYTH**
CBT is effective

Parents/teachers are well placed to support anxious children

Use open, curious questions to talk about worries

Encourage children to ‘have a go’ and face their fears

Gradual step-by-step approach focused on helping children to learn new information