

Anxiety Intervention Tip Sheet

Impact of Anxiety on Learning and Everyday Functioning

Isolates self from peers and family

Reluctant to participate

Difficulty with social skills

Avoids new experiences

Low tolerance for frustration

Quick to anger

May abuse alcohol/drugs in attempt to self-medicate

Negative comments about self

Cycle of academic failure

Feelings easily hurt

Gives up easily

Appears unmotivated

Interventions for Home

Interventions	Examples
Post household activities.	Daily schedule on refrigerator.
Keep a regular schedule.	Establish and keep a regular homework time.
Modify home tasks.	Ask child to complete one step of a more complex job.
Provide frequent breaks.	Snack time/short break between chores.
Schedule parent/child activities.	Movie and pizza night on Fridays.
Encourage peer interactions.	Host a structured play group.
Gradually increase responsibilities.	Add more steps to task as child demonstrates proficiency.
Build on assets and strengths.	Provide access to music and art lessons.
Teach and use calming techniques.	Play soft music.
Promote self-care.	Demonstrate how to relax, breathe and exercise.
Strengthen parent/child relationship.	Spend time together doing things you both enjoy.

School-wide Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Peer mentoring programs.	Study buddy.
Use a social skills curriculum.	"Skillstreaming" (Goldstein).
Positive mental health posters and signage.	Display MACMH children's mental health posters. (www.macmh.org)
Use restorative practices.	Create peacemaking circles.
Focus on health and nutrition.	Advocate for healthy, nutritious school lunch menus.
Post school values and philosophy.	Display a Circle of Courage poster (Brentrow).
Use a self-esteem curriculum.	"Self-esteem Games" (Sher) – elementary school "Respect, Self, Value, People" (Pryor and Konek) – secondary school.
Build community awareness.	"Early Warning Signs" training.
Physical exercise.	Take child on "pair share" walks.
Develop a pro-social school theme.	"Bully-Free School".
Professional Learning Community.	Group book study, "Worry" by Hallowell and Ratey.
Character education.	Teach responsible behaviors.

Classroom Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Allow for flexible deadlines.	Ask child to name his/her own due date. Check on progress at regular intervals. Help child to get started.
Check for understanding.	Break assignments into segments.
Modify workload.	Reduce volume and/or complexity of spelling list.
Establish and maintain a regular schedule.	Post daily activities on bulletin or whiteboard.
Reward small successes.	Give extra earned computer time.
Create a low competition environment.	Integrate some cooperative group activities.
Give advance notice of changes to routine.	Prepare students for upcoming changes in routine.
Create classroom rituals.	Use a daily check-in time.
Reward good attendance. Call when student is absent.	Issue a school store voucher as a reward.
Utilize technology.	Use a computerized reading program.
Play soothing music during reflective time.	Allow students to select music. Screen for appropriateness prior to playing music during class.
Utilize movement.	Build in a regular stretching routine. Have students lead the activity.

Interventions for Individuals

Interventions	Examples
Develop a supportive relationship with student.	Individual time spent with student.
Develop an organizational system for the individual child.	Use color-coded folders, colored homework bins, "No Name Papers" basket.
Provide a detailed course outline.	Use daily advance organizers.
Promote low-risk leadership activities.	Rotate classroom duties such as feeding the fish.
Teach relaxation techniques.	Experiential brain-based activities (i.e., soothing statements, Koosh Balls, movement).
Encourage peer support.	Use peer meditation/conflict resolution programs.
Teach physical self-soothers.	Deep breathing techniques.
Promote a low competition environment.	"Who learned something today?"
Promote a cooperative environment.	Allow students to work in teams.
Allow re-takes and re-dos.	Allow best effort to be scored.
Encourage use of alternate methods for demonstration of mastery.	Let student choose oral, written or video report.
Value child's cultural traditions.	Acknowledge, respect, and build on diversity.

Resources:

Note: These are suggested resources. This is not meant to be a complete list.

Anxiety Disorders Association of America

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

National Alliance for Mental Illness-MN

Parent Advocacy Center for Educational Rights

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

National Institute of Mental Health

Toll-free information line:

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

www.adaa.org

www.macmh.org

<http://mn.nami.org>

<http://www.pacer.org>

www.casel.org

www.nimh.nih.gov

1-888-Anxiety

www.pbis.org

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Intervention Tip Sheet

Impact of ADHD on Learning and Everyday Functioning

Hyperactive – fidgety, squirmy, difficulty listening and staying “connected”.

Inattentive – distractible, short attention span, difficulty staying on task and completing tasks, performs poorly on tests; at times, inability to intensely focus.

Impulsive – Interrupts, blurts out, accident prone, poor socialization skills, may be viewed as “odd” or “weird” due to sub-vocalizations.

Interventions for Home

Interventions	Examples
Develop a positive relationship with child.	Learn about and validate child’s interests.
Regularly review homework and ask to see completed assignments after grading.	Break assignments into smaller tasks, use visual reminders and closely monitor homework time.
Help child get organized.	“Let’s put this in your folder and then in your backpack.” Use organizers and lists.
Tap child’s strengths in the arts and with “hands-on” activities.	Ask child to help with design ideas.
Educate child and other family members about ADHD.	Share library books and videos. Suggest MACMH, NAMI and PACER.
Use a collaborative problem-solving approach.	Give the child a voice in rule setting and enforcing. Use “we” language.
Promote self-care.	Demonstrate how to relax, exercise and eat healthy foods.

School-wide Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Promote physical activity in the school.	Sponsor fitness initiatives. Ask adults to model regular exercise.
Form a Professional Learning Community.	Read and discuss “Different Brains, Different Learners” by Eric Jensen (as an example).
Create a bully-free school.	Develop procedures to prevent bullying and intervene early.
Peer helper programs.	Cross-age tutors, study buddy and cooperative learning.
Conflict resolution.	Train peer mediators and utilize them.
Student Support Services available to all students.	Social skills and anger management groups for all grades.
Sponsor parent information nights.	Parent/teacher groups have guest speakers.

Classroom Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Use brain-based teaching techniques.	Use social interaction, movement, the arts and "hands-on" learning.
Integrate experiential learning and service learning.	Partner with a nursing home or day care center and help students to collaborate with others.
Classroom environment should reinforce desired learning.	Display maps, posters and artwork relevant to the curriculum.
Manage an organized classroom.	Display daily schedule, classroom expectations, and teach organization skills.
Teach students memory strategies.	To aid memory, use mnemonic devices, rhymes, songs and movement.
Use differentiated instructional techniques.	Chunk information, use emotion to aid memory, provide rehearsal opportunity.
Be consistent, use repetition, but be brief.	Be a role model.

Interventions for Individuals

Interventions	Examples
Develop a positive relationship with the child.	Build a relationship based on the child's strengths and assets.
Help child learn how to manage his/her ADHD.	Share age-appropriate factual information with the child.
Reframe child's challenging behavior as an opportunity to learn new skills.	Reinforce when the child uses new skills and behaviors.
Reinforce the development of appropriate social and emotional behavior.	Be concrete and positively reinforce small steps toward new behaviors.
Communicate regularly with parents.	Share a communication log that goes between school and home.
Use creative strategies.	Have child sit in the back rather than the front of the room.
Make learning active and dynamic.	"Let's go to the hall and measure this."

Resources:

Note: These are suggested resources. This is not meant to be a complete list.

Children and Adults with ADHD (CHADD)	http://www.chadd.org
Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health	www.macmh.org
National Alliance for Mental Illness-MN	http://mn.nami.org
Parent Advocacy Center for Educational Rights	http://www.pacer.org
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning	www.casel.org
National Institute of Mental Health	www.nimh.nih.gov
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	www.pbis.org

Bipolar Disorder Intervention Tip Sheet

Impact of Bipolar disorder on Learning and Everyday Functioning

Atypical, rapid speech patterns

Restless in seat

Annoys others

Easily angered

Delusions of grandeur (e.g., being a famous person)

Engages in risky behavior

Active much of the night, insomnia

May have uncontrollable temper tantrums

Interventions for Home

Interventions	Examples
Develop a close relationship with the child.	Build on strengths in relationship.
Provide a communication outlet for child.	Have child keep a diary of thoughts/feelings.
Don't argue with child, remain neutral.	Say, "It's okay if we don't work it out right now."
Watch carefully for mood changes.	Communicate regularly with family members.
Monitor risky behavior; intervene if there is a safety issue.	Call emergency personnel if child is suicidal. Take all threats seriously.
Communicate regularly with school.	Let teacher know child is fragile.
Expose child to creative outlets.	Use puppets, trunk show costumes, etc.
Provide "hands-on" experiences.	Give child responsibility for helpful tasks.
Provide opportunities for movement and physical exercise.	Join child in recreational activities.
Help child with insomnia.	Create a quiet soothing place to rest.
Take care of yourself.	Get respite or crisis support from friends/family.
Use music and the arts to engage the child.	Attend a play, encourage theatrical talent.
Stick to a routine.	Provide ample notices for changes.
Anticipate stressful events.	Always have a back-up plan.
Educated loved ones about the illness.	Provide books, video suggestions.

School-wide Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Encourage appropriate expression of feelings, teach feelings language.	Sponsor a school-wide talent show.
Display feelings posters.	"How are you feeling today?" posters.
Start student support groups.	Utilize experiential and service learning.
Provide cot for mid-day naps.	"If you are tired, you can use this space for resting."
Create an educational environment to engage student interest.	Involve students in creating an interesting school environment.

Classroom Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Educate students about physiological changes when they experience different emotions.	Help students identify physical location of stress.
Help students to learn to take "safe" risks.	Introduce mild risk-taking activities such as guessing games, planning recess activities, etc.
Teach student about making healthy lifestyle choices.	Allow student to take quiet, restful breaks as needed.
Regularly reinforce students when they express feelings in an appropriate manner.	"I heard you say that you feel angry. Is that right?"
Run a classroom where classmates and educational staff members share in the responsibility for the well-being of all learning community members.	Provide opportunities for restorative practices such as peacekeeping circles.

Interventions for Individuals

Interventions	Examples
Teach child to be proactive.	"Tell me if this is okay with you."
Develop a relationship with the child.	Show interest in child's hobby.
Teach child planning techniques.	Work with child to anticipate mood swings and to have an action plan.
Communicate regularly with family.	Document mood changes and share observations with student and parent to help form a pro-active plan.
Revise IEP.	Consider suggesting mental health related services.
Develop sleep needs plan.	Arrange nap period in school nurses office.
Provide opportunities for relaxation, fun and exercise.	Build in "down time" every hour.
Educate child about substance abuse.	Carefully observe and report indicators of such to parents.
Respect child's culture.	"I understand that you are fasting and that it is important for you to have a place to go during lunch hour."

Resources:

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The Child and Adolescent Bipolar Foundation	www.bpkids.org
Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health	www.macmh.org
National Alliance for Mental Illness-MN	http://mn.nami.org
Parent Advocacy Center for Educational Rights	http://www.pacer.org
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning	www.casel.org
National Institute of Mental Health	www.nimh.nih.gov
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	www.pbis.org

Depression Intervention Tip Sheet

Impact of Depression on Learning and Everyday Functioning

Sad or unhappy mood
 Loss of interest or pleasure
 Gets "stuck" in negative thoughts
 Increased worry or fear
 Delayed mental reasoning
 May abuse drugs and alcohol
 Inability to follow-through

Difficulty sustaining attention and focus
 Feelings of hopelessness
 Projects an "I don't care" attitude
 Physical signs of bodily abuse
 Slow movement, speech and thinking
 Sleeping problems (excessive or insomnia)
 Anhedonia (loss of interest in activities)

Interventions for Home

Interventions	Examples
Ask child to repeat instructions.	"Please tell me what you heard."
Break tasks into smaller segments.	"See if you can think of at least one example."
Give child time for problem-solving.	"Take as long as you need."
Demonstrate empathy.	"It looks like you could use a hug."
Give child an "out".	"Let's talk when things feel better."
Avoid personalizing remarks.	"It sounds like you're frustrated."
Use techniques to reduce negativity.	Stamp out the ANTS (automatic negative thoughts).
Make your home a "kid magnet".	Install a basketball hoop or mini-golf.
Involve child with community activities.	Visit zoos, museums, parks, etc.
Don't give undo attention to body scars.	Compliment self-care such as shampooing hair.
Seek medical attention in crisis.	Have a crisis plan.
Promote a healthy diet.	Keep healthy snacks on hand.
Establish dining and exercise routine.	Regular meal times and take daily walks.
Promote home/school communication.	Send a log back and forth between teacher and home.

School-wide Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Promote positive mental health awareness.	School theme – "Today I feel...charts."
Teach problem-solving model/conflict resolution.	"It's okay to ask for help."
Offer experiential learning opportunities.	Use brain-based learning strategies in every classroom.
Peer/staff mentoring program.	Train "study buddies".
Train staff about self-injurious behavior.	Have a Professional Learning Community as part of your staff development plan.
Imbed social/emotional learning into school curriculum.	Charter education.
Identify local resources and partnerships.	Co-located and/or integrated mental health services linked to student support services in school building.

Classroom Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Teach social skills as part of classroom program.	Use social-skills curriculum.
Promote positive classroom climate.	Intentionally foster an atmosphere where students have responsibility to promote emotional well-being among classmates.
Provide healthy "brain" food.	Serve almonds, bananas for tryptophan.
Create an organized classroom.	Review the day in advance, develop study guides and announce upcoming activities. Use organizer as part of routine.
Teach memory strategies.	Use visuals, mnemonics, poetry and music to aid memory.
Use hands-on learning.	Use manipulatives in classes.
Use "problem-solving circles".	To provide peer support and help return balance to classroom.
Ensure frequent movement.	Stretch and stand every 20-30 minutes.
Teach self-soothing techniques.	Provide basket of self-calming devices: Beanie Babies, Slinkies, worry stones, etc.
Create a "cooling off" area in the classroom.	Special corner in room with bean bag chairs, art supplies, music.

Interventions for Individuals

Interventions	Examples
Develop a caring relationship with child.	Have a conversation with child and offer a sincere compliment. Focus on child's assets/strengths.
Give directions in small steps. Check for understanding and completion.	Give directions one at a time. Check with child individually.
Develop an individual problem-solving plan.	Teach problem-solving techniques.
Collaborate with student support personnel.	Use consultative and support services to help develop interventions.
Identify the function of the behavior.	Child may be feeling helpless and need a shot of encouragement.
Teach memory strategies.	Develop a "Things to Remember List".

Resources:

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National Association of School Psychologists	www.nasponline.org
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning	www.casel.org
National Institute of Mental Health	www.nimh.nih.gov
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	www.pbis.org
International Institute for Restorative Practices	www.restorativepractices.org
Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health	www.macmh.org
National Alliance for Mental Illness-MN	http://mn.nami.org
Parent Advocacy Center for Educational Rights	http://www.pacer.org

Disruptive Behavior Disorders Intervention Tip Sheet

Impact of Behavior Disorders on Learning and Everyday Functioning

Rage/Anger
Argumentative
Takes careless risks
Lacks empathy for others
May attract antisocial peers as friends
Actions may have resulted in police involvement
Lying, stealing, destroys property

Impatience
Noncompliant
Verbally and physically abusive
Trouble holding a job
Takes no responsibility for actions
Skips school
May use mood-altering substances

Interventions for Home

Interventions	Examples
Develop a relationship with the child based on mutual respect.	Be clear, consistent and non-judgmental of the child's behavior and actions.
Avoid power struggles and arguments.	Give child choices and work on solutions when both of you are calm.
Use natural and logical consequences.	Let the child experience results of the actions.
Use collaborative problem-solving techniques.	Ask child to help with ideas to avoid future problems.
Communicate regularly with school.	Verify school attendance and check on completed school work.
Keep an eye out for substance abuse and intervene quickly.	Connect family with a chemical health counselor.

School-wide Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Create a school climate that fosters belonging and is an active, positive learning environment.	Safe and Healthy School and/or Anti-Bullying campaign.
Connect caring adults with every child.	Develop an advisor-advisee program.
Institute an attendance tracking system.	Know when students are absent, call parents and connect with student ASAP.
Alternatives to suspension.	Guided study or community services.
Restorative practices for destruction of property or stealing.	Give child opportunity to repay, repair and make amends.
Develop community partnerships.	Connect child and family to positive community-based groups and services.

Classroom Interventions

Interventions	Examples
Promote experiential learning, career preparation programs.	Partner with the local tech center.
Teach social skills and empathy skills.	Make social skills part of daily instruction.
Connect academics to everyday life.	Diverse guest speakers from community.
Structure incentives for academic work.	Use positive reinforcement for completed work.
Set up a non-judgmental, problem-resolution system.	Peer council, peer mediators, community mentors.
Surround students with support options.	Engage mentors and family in positive role modeling.
Allow for frequent movement and exercise.	Teach skills to reduce stress and have fun.

Interventions for Individuals

Interventions	Examples
Develop a positive caring relationship.	See through the tough image to the vulnerable child.
Create behavioral contracts with built-in rewards.	Teach new more appropriate replacement behaviors.
Keep discussions about inappropriate behavior concise and to the point.	Stay calm, be clear, use a rational tone of voice, repeat consistent message.
Use strategies to change the child's emotional state.	Do a walk and talk.
Function as the child's "surrogate frontal lobe" and suggest options.	Ask child what might happen if he/she tried something different.
Accept an approximation of pro-social behavior and compliment the child.	Catch 'em being good!
Role play desired social skills.	Practice new behavior in context.
Capitalize on child's strengths.	Find the child's interests and strengths and show support.

Resources:

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Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health	www.macmh.org
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Parent Advocacy Center for Educational Rights	http://www.pacer.org
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning	www.casel.org
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	www.pbis.org
National Mental Health Association	http://www.nmha.org
American Academy of child and Adolescent Psychiatry	http://www.aacap.org