

ANXIETY

What is Anxiety?

- Broad definition – emotional uneasiness with anticipation of danger
- Distinguished from fear – the emotional response to objective danger
 - Healthy vs. unhealthy anxiety
 - Adaptive anxiety – prepares us to face danger stress, challenges. Motivates us to learn, change, and cope
 - Maladaptive anxiety – inhibits learning and successful responses. Avoids, procrastinates, have to hurry to get it done

What are Anxiety Disorders?

1. General Anxiety Disorder
2. Separation Anxiety Disorder
3. Social Phobia
4. Specific Phobia
5. Panic Disorder
6. Anxiety Disorders not specified
7. Obsessive Disorders

What are factors of Anxiety Disorders?

- Worry about multiple areas of life
- Anxiety for longer periods of time
- Difficulty controlling worry
- Physical complaints
- Irritable
- Easily fatigues
- Muscle tension
- Sleep disturbance
- Physical symptoms (gastric and headaches)

Anxiety and Learning

- Resistance, fear, depression, confusion – side issues correlated with learning disabilities
- 1/3 – 2/3 of kids with LD have attentional issues
- ¼ of kids have anxiety disorders associated with LD
- 2-3 time increase in depression in LD kids by the time they are teenagers

- You have to grapple with these issues at least at the same time as you deal with learning issues.

Long term effects of anxiety and learning disabilities

- Low academic self-concept
- Self-attribution for success and failure
- Higher level of trait anxiety
- Higher prevalence of minor physical complaints
- Sleep problems – nightmares – fears of making mistakes
- Higher rates of depression 2-3 times more!

Treatment

- Pharmaceutical
- Psychological intervention

“Skills are fine but we need the mindset to accomplish, learn and move forward”

Techniques:

Relaxation	Model of coping	Role play
Contingent reward	Individual performance based practice	
Graduated sequence of tasks		Repetition to mastery

Long Term effects of LD on Adolescents

- Lower academic self-concept: they always don't think of themselves as “smart”
- Self-attributions for success and failure: Take credit for success, don't blame others for failure (taking credit for their failures is not the normal way)
- Higher levels of trait anxiety: one standard deviation above the mean
- Higher prevalence of minor physical complaints: headaches, stomachaches sleeping disorders
- Sleep problems: related to fear of making mistakes, being teased, getting poor grades, being criticized.
- 2-3 times as depressed as “normal” kids

Long term effects of LD in Adulthood

- Decreased academic, occupation, financial achievement
- Greater interpersonal/emotional problems

- Higher rates of challenging behavior (negatives, self-injurious behavior, antisocial acts, refusals)

Feeling frightened

Expecting bad things to happen

Action to take to stop those thoughts

Reaction to the plan

“There is no single path”