



ANXIETY

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Feelings of anxiety arise when something isn't quite right. The presence of anxiety can make sense, such as when a child hasn't started on an assignment that's almost due, or it can be irrational, such as becoming overly anxious about germs.

When feelings of anxiety become exaggerated, they can interfere with everyday life. Therefore, it's important to identify when your child is anxious and remain compassionate and understanding when addressing their anxieties.

What does anxiety look like for your child?

If your child is anxious, they might try to pull away. They might not want to talk or do things. They may seem upset or scared. Sometimes, it can be helpful to ask other trusted people around your child if there are any things that could potentially be causing the anxiety.



sense, help them address the source of their anxiety. If their worries are exaggerated, help them to re-evaluate the situation. Irrational anxiety arises when we overestimate the problems we're facing and we underestimate our ability to manage them.

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT ANXIETY

In conversation

When discussing anxiety with your child, reassure them that anxiety is often a normal, healthy emotion. We only want to worry about it (or want kids to worry about it) when it arises out of overestimation of perceived threat and an underestimation of the ability to address that threat. Be patient — don't interrupt or try to correct your child's perception or minimize their concerns. Let them talk.

NEXT STEPS

Understand the conversation

Ask if there's anything else you should know. Sometimes, anxiety may come from a variety of situations. For example, it could be from home, school, family, or friends. Then, ask if your child knows what might help them feel better.

SOUND IT OUT

topic



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Our Conversation Starter Pack (CSP) is an interactive resource, available in English and Spanish, that supports parents, caregivers, trusted adults and young people in discussions about emotional wellness. It



CONVERSATION STARTER PACK



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