

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Besides seeking professional help, other helpful strategies to consider:

- Validate your child's anxiety when it presents but avoid reassuring your child repeatedly over the same matter as children with Generalized Anxiety Disorder tends to seek reassurances to avoid anxiety.
- If you feel that the anxiety presented by your child can be managed by your child himself/herself, firmly but encouragingly tell your child that while it is normal to feel anxious, you are confident that he/she has the ability to overcome it.
- If time permits, go through together with your child ways that he/she can overcome his/her anxiety or anxious thoughts by using a problem-solving approach. Brainstorm with your child possible ways that he/she can overcome his/her anxiety; evaluate their pros and cons and get the student to decide what is the best solution for his/her situation. (For specific relaxation and cognitive strategies to manage anxiety, please refer to 'F' and 'U' in the section on 'Tips to help your child cope with his/her anxiety')
- Get your child to implement his/her chosen solution and evaluate its usefulness together with your child. Regardless of the effectiveness of the solution, praise your child for actively overcoming his/her anxiety on his/her own and not avoiding the anxiety. Emphasize to your child that there will usually not be a perfect solution but the important thing is that he/she gradually tries to overcome the anxiety.
- If your child is anxious about an upcoming event, get your child to write down his/her fears before the event. After the event, get your child to evaluate if his/her fears were founded or unfounded. If his/her fears were unfounded, get your child to generate reasons why such fears are unfounded or what he/she did that helped in the situation (reinforce child's active coping strategies rather than avoidance).