

A photograph of three young women in white robes and hennin hats, likely from a theatrical production. The woman in the center is crying, with her face buried in her hands. The woman on the left is looking at her with an open mouth, as if shouting or crying out. The woman on the right is also looking at the central figure, her mouth open in a similar expression. They are standing on a wooden floor in front of a wooden wall.

THE OSCAR NETWORK

WE ARE AN ORGANISATION DEDICATED TO PROVIDING INFORMATION TO O.S.C.A.R. (OUT OF SCHOOL CARE AND RECREATION) PROGRAMMES.

Our aim is to support, promote and network safe quality, accessible OSCAR services which are professional and centre around the needs of the child and their whanau.

The OSCAR Network provides information on training, development, mentoring, funding & finances, research, advocacy, management and staff support, resources and the general running of an Out of School programme. The OSCAR Network encourages OSCAR providers to operate quality services, however it is not a function of the OSCAR Network to accredit or assess OSCAR services.

The OSCAR Network has a well-earned reputation for working co-operatively alongside other groups and agencies. We work as a team in an environment based on mutual respect and trust. It is the combination of skills, ideas and energy, which achieves results from the consensus decision-making process. We enjoy our work by 'thinking differently'.

THANK YOU

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The Hundred Languages of Children

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.
A hundred always a hundred
ways of listening
of marvelling of loving
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds
to discover
a hundred worlds
to invent
a hundred worlds
to dream.
The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
but they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body

They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and at Christmas.
They tell the child:
to discover the world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety-nine.
They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.
And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says
No way. The hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi

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I AM ONLY 5

OSCAR staff play an enormous role in the easy transition for 5 year olds to school.

Research shows that children who feel more secure, are relaxed and comfortable in their new environment, are more able to negotiate the challenges that school offers.

A child's entry into school has long been associated with special expectation and excitement, as well as varying degrees of tension and anxiety. A smooth transition to school helps children feel secure, relaxed and comfortable in their new environment.

The most important transition occurs when a child feels suitable, when he can successfully negotiate the daily challenge of new entrant life, including both social (peer related) and academic (content related) challenges. Feeling suitable is crucial to the child's learning and development as well as to his fundamental and continuous sense of well-being.

Before the child begins school and OSCAR

- Get your Supervisor to occasionally visit the local kindergarten/play centre/new entrant class just to be a "known face"
- Encourage both the parents and children to visit the programme and just hang out. This is a great relationship building opportunity for staff to have with the child's parent
- Build on prior relationships children may have with each other

If the child has already started school

- Ensure you have an induction process for the new entrant e.g. a staff member who will collect them from their class, have a quick catch up with their teacher, ask about their day, assist them with their school bag, reading folder, their coat, lunchbox, special notices from school
- Have age appropriate activities for them
- Have a space they can have a kip if they need to

Skills Children Need to Begin School

- To go to the toilet independently
- To button and zip clothes independently
- To pay attention to a story
- To listen to authority figures and follow instructions
- To play with other children appropriately
- To hold a pencil and cut with scissors
- To talk in complete sentences using intelligible speech
- To recognize most letters, shapes, and numbers to ten
- To sort and count up to five objects
- To recognize and identify some letter and phonic sounds
- To name different colours

Reporting back to the parents

- Have the staff member who is keeping an eye on the child report back to the parent when they come to pick him up
- Remember these parents are "time poor" and it's good to ask how you can assist but try to encourage parents to do reading with their littlies – I find it a bit sad seeing a five year old cuddling into a staff member and reading their books to them instead of their parents

Growth Patterns for a five year old Physical

- Vision focused on objects close at hand
- Centered on task
- Gross motor control improving
- 3 fingered pincer grasp with pencil
- Falls out of chair sideways
- Paces self well
- Active, but can control physical behaviour

Social

- Likes to help; co-operative, wants to be "good"
- Likes rules and routines
- Needs approval
- Dependent on authority; wants to be told what to do, but also finds it difficult to see things from another's viewpoint

Language

- Literal, succinct
- "Play" and "good" favourite words
- Needs release from adult – "Can I...?"
- Fantasy is more active, less verbal
- Often does not communicate about

school at home

- Thinks out loud

Cognitive

- Likes to copy
- Literal behaviour, often only one way to do things
- Bound cognitively by sight and senses
- Animistic (inanimate objects have life movement)
- Learns best through play and own actions
- Does not yet think logically
- Gross Motor Ability
- Continued need for a great deal of active outdoor and indoor physical activity
- Good age for structured games – "Duck, Duck, Goose" etc

Social Behaviour

- Can work at quiet, sitting activities for 15 – 20 minutes
- Often need adult's release to next task, though able to pace themselves within a given task
- Consistent guidelines, carefully planned periods help children feel safe
- Expect and allow children to think out loud
- Dramatic play essential to language development; children can express thoughts through action
- Adult modelling, directed role play provides chances to learn and practice language skills

Activities and Interests

The five-year old's activities and interests revolve around home and school. She is content to play with her toys at home and her friends at school. A dance lesson once a week or an introduction to a sport isn't too much, but don't start a heavy extracurricular schedule this year.

Fives still love imaginative play. Girls love to play house, tend to their baby dolls, and recreate their home and school life in play. Five-year-old boys enjoy this also, if they aren't teased out of it.

Don't invest in expensive or complicated toys. Fives still love their "little-kid" toys, along with the following:

- Materials for cutting, colouring, and gluing

- Play-doh
- Simple construction toys
- Dress-up clothes
- Simple board and card games with counting, sorting, classifying, or pattern, letter, and word recognition
- Dolls and doll accessories
- Puppets and a theatre (you could easily make your own)
- Pretend play toys for cooking and tea parties
- Sports equipment such as balls, golf clubs, t-ball sets, and basketball goals
- Rhythm band instruments, keyboards and ukuleles

Friendships

The five-year old's social world is expanding in a major way with the beginning of school. If he has attended preschool or a playgroup, you have an idea of where he is in his skills of playing with other children.

He needs to learn several social skills quickly - both school and OSCAR are the ideal settings for this.

For successful peer relationships the child needs to learn these basic social skills.

- The control of aggressive impulses and elimination of hitting, biting, kicking, and verbal aggression
- Ability to approach one or more children to engage them in play
- Ask for what she wants and say "please" and "thank you"
- Take turns and share toys and attention with others
- Engage peers in conversation and pay compliments
- Show kindness to other children, inviting them to play and being helpful

Daily Routines

Daily structure and routines are important throughout childhood; but this is a transition year, so structure is crucial to the child's security and well-being. As much as possible, her life should revolve around familiar people, places, and routines. Use terms of endearment with your girls - "sweetie pie", "honey child" - they love both the language and the warmth.

The five-year old loves afternoon tea - not so much for the food, but for the fellowship of the group. In fact, she'd rather talk than finish her food. She likes plain foods and must be encouraged to try new foods.

Fives need lots of sleep and many will still take a nap. Encourage parents to serve tea early and begin a bedtime routine that has them in bed by 8 during the school year. He needs to be reminded to brush his teeth in the morning before going to school.

Wetting, even soiling her pants may be an occasional problem.

Discipline

The five-year old lives in the here and now, and doesn't comprehend the idea of long-term consequences. She has difficulty seeing a point of view that is different from her own and this can make her seem stubborn and argumentative. But, she is generally cooperative and helpful, wanting to please and be good. She may come to OSCAR talking about a child who is bad. This is a good time to help her recognize what happens when someone behaves badly and to praise her for good behaviour.

Because of five's here and now mindset, consequences for misbehaviour and non-compliance should be immediate and brief. Don't expect that he'll learn his lesson the first, or even the tenth, time he receives consequence. He hasn't yet learned self-control; and so, discipline this year involves baby steps, not giant leaps. Don't give up and don't get frustrated; just keep on giving consequences for misbehaviour consistently with the attitude that he has the desire to be good, but is still learning.

When behaviour problems occur, make sure that the child is getting plenty of rest and regular meals; cut back on outside activities to focus on familiar daily routines; catch him being good and praise him; and give immediate instruction or consequences for misbehaviour.

Five has a good imagination and that can manifest as lying. It's best to treat lying with a light touch this year. Let her know that you know she is 'pretending' or not telling the truth. If she lies to avoid punishment, talk to her about the importance of telling the truth and add a small consequence for not doing so.

As a general rule, five-year-olds are cheerful, energetic, and enthusiastic. As they move into being five, they will enjoy planning, and will spend a great deal of time discussing

who will do what. They will especially enjoy dramatic play, usually with other children. They will be more sensitive to the needs and feelings of others around them and, it will become less difficult for them to wait for a turn or to share toys and material. "Best friends" will become very important.

Staff will need to be sensitive to the needs of a five-year-old coming from school. She may want to rest, play by herself, be free for a while from adult-directed activity, or catch up with the group happenings. Pace, with a combination of rest and activities. After attending school and then OSCAR, children need to be given every consideration as they may be tired, talkative, hungry, or wanting to share the day's happenings.

"But now I am six, I'm clever as clever. So I think I'll be six for ever and ever."

"Now We Are Six" A.A. Milne

Changes as Children Move towards Six

Physical

- Visual and auditory confusion
- Reversals common
- Physically restless
- Awkward fine motor skills
- Variable pencil grasp
- Tilts head to non-dominant side
- Hand "gets tired" from firm grip
- Often stands up to do work
- Tires quickly

Language

- Equivocates - sometimes yes, sometimes no
- Elaborates and differentiates in answer to questions
- Verbal answers may not equal cognitive understanding; more words than ideas
- Auditory reversals (answers first what was heard last)

Social

- Oppositional, not sure whether to be good or naughty
- Insecure with feelings
- Testing authority, limits
- Tentative
- Complains
- Temper tantrums, striking out
- Wonderful at home, terrible at school; or vice-versa

Cognitive

- Begins to try new activities more easily
- Makes lots of mistakes; recognizes some
- Learns well from direct experience

BONDING AND ATTACHMENT IN MALTREATED CHILDREN: HOW YOU CAN HELP



BY BRUCE D. PERRY, M.D., PH.D.

The most important property of humankind is the capacity to form and maintain relationships. These relationships are absolutely necessary for any of us to survive, learn, work, love, and procreate. Human relationships take many forms but the most intense, most pleasurable and most painful are those relationships with family, friends and loved ones. Within this inner circle of intimate relationships, we are bonded to each other with “emotional glue” — bonded with love.

Each individual’s ability to form and maintain relationships using this “emotional glue” is different. Some people seem “naturally” capable of loving. They form numerous intimate and caring relationships and, in doing so, get pleasure. Others are not so lucky. They feel no “pull” to form intimate relationships, find little pleasure in being with or close to others. They have few, if any, friends, and more distant, less emotional glue with family. In extreme cases an individual may have no intact emotional bond to any other person. They are self-absorbed, aloof, or may even present with

classic neuropsychiatric signs of being schizoid or autistic.

The capacity and desire to form emotional relationships is related to the organization and functioning of specific parts of the human brain. Just as the brain allows us to see, smell, taste, think, talk, and move, it is the organ that allows us to love — or not. The systems in the human brain that allow us to form and maintain emotional relationships develop during infancy and the first years of life. Experiences during this early vulnerable period of life are critical to shaping the capacity to form intimate and emotionally healthy relationships. Empathy, caring, sharing, inhibition of aggression, capacity to love, and a host of other characteristics of a healthy, happy, and productive person are related to the core attachment capabilities which are formed in infancy and early childhood.

What Can I Do To Help Maltreated Children?

Responsive adults, such as parents, teachers, and other caregivers make all the difference

in the lives of maltreated children. This section suggests a few different ways to help. Nurture these children. They need to be held, rocked, and cuddled. Be physical, caring, and loving to children with attachment problems. Be aware that for many of these children, touch in the past has been associated with pain, torture, or sexual abuse. In these cases, make sure you carefully monitor how they respond — be “attuned” to their responses to your nurturing and act accordingly. In many ways, you are providing replacement experiences that should have taken place during their infancy — but you are doing this when their brains are harder to modify and change. Therefore, they will need even more bonding experiences to help them to develop attachments.

Try to understand the behaviours before punishment or consequences. The more you can learn about attachment problems, bonding, normal development, and abnormal development, the more you will be able to develop useful behavioural and social interventions. Information about

these problems can prevent you from misunderstanding the child's behaviours. When these children hoard food, for example, it should not be viewed as "stealing" but as a common and predictable result of being deprived of food during early childhood. A punitive approach to this problem (and many others) will not help the child mature. Instead, punishment may actually increase the child's sense of insecurity, distress, and need to hoard food. So many of these children's behaviours are confusing and disturbing to adults. You can get help from professionals if you find yourself struggling to create or implement a practical and useful approach to these problems.

Interact with these children based on emotional age. Abused and neglected children will often be emotionally and socially delayed. And whenever they are frustrated or fearful, they will regress. This means that, at any given moment, a ten-year old child may emotionally be a two-year old. Despite our wishes that they would "act their age" and our insistence to do so, they are not capable of that. These are the times that we must interact with them at their emotional level. If they are tearful, frustrated, or overwhelmed (emotionally age two), treat them as if they were that age. Use soothing non-verbal interactions. Hold them. Rock them. Sing quietly. This is not the time to use complex verbal arguments about the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

Be consistent, predictable and repetitive. Maltreated children with attachment problems are very sensitive to changes in schedule, transitions, surprises, chaotic social situations, and, in general, any new situation. Busy and unique social situations will overwhelm them, even if they are pleasant, they can be disorganizing for these children. Because of this, any efforts that can be made to be consistent, predictable, and repetitive will be very important in making maltreated children feel safe and secure. When they feel safe, they can benefit from the nurturing and enriching emotional and social experiences you provide them. If they are anxious and fearful, they cannot benefit from your nurturing in the same ways.

Model and teach appropriate social behaviours. Many abused and neglected children do not know how to interact with other people. One of the best ways to teach them is to model this in your own

behaviours, and then narrate for the child what you are doing and why. Become a play-by-play announcer: "I am going to the sink to wash my hands before dinner because..." or "I take the soap and put it on my hands like this..." Children see, hear, and imitate. In addition to modelling, you can "coach" maltreated children as they play with other children. Use a similar play-by-play approach: "Well, when you take that from someone, they probably feel pretty upset; so if you want them to have fun when you play this game, then you should try..." By more effectively playing with other children, they will develop some improved self-esteem and confidence. Over time, success with other children will make the child less socially awkward and aggressive. Maltreated children are often "a mess" because of their delayed socialization. If the child is teased because of their clothes or grooming, it would be helpful to have "cool" clothes and improved hygiene.

Maltreated children have problems with modulating appropriate physical contact. They don't know when to hug, how close to stand, when to establish or break eye contact, what are appropriate contexts to wipe their nose, touch their genitals, or do other grooming behaviours.

Ironically, children with attachment problems will often initiate physical contact (hugs, holding hands, crawling into laps) with strangers. Adults misinterpret this as affectionate behaviour. It is not. It is best understood as "supplication" behaviour, and it is socially inappropriate. How adults handle this inappropriate physical contact is very important. We should not refuse to hug the child and lecture them about "appropriate behaviour." We can gently guide the child on how to interact differently with grownups and other children ("Why don't you sit over here?"). It is important to make these lessons clear using as few words as possible. They do not have to be directive — rely on nonverbal cues. It is equally important to explain in a way that does not make the child feel bad or guilty.

Listen to and talk with these children. One of the most helpful things to do is just stop, sit, listen, and play with these children. When you are quiet and interactive with them, you will often find that they will begin to show you and tell you about what is really inside them. Yet as simple as this sounds,

one of the most difficult things for adults to do is to stop, quit worrying about the time or your next task, and really relax into the moment with a child. Practice this. You will be amazed at the results. These children will sense that you are there just for them, and they will feel how you care for them.

It is during these moments that you can best reach and teach these children. This is a great time to begin teaching children about their different "feelings." Regardless of the activity, the following principles are important to include: (1) All feelings are okay to feel — sad, glad, or mad (more emotions for older children); (2) Teach the child healthy ways to act when sad, glad, or mad; (3) Begin to explore how other people may feel and how they show their feelings — "How do you think Bobby feels when you push him?" (4) When you sense that the child is clearly happy, sad, or mad, ask them how they are feeling. Help them begin to put words and labels to these feelings.

Have realistic expectations of these children. Abused and neglected children have so much to overcome. And, for some, they will not overcome all of their problems. For a Romanian orphan adopted at age five after spending her early years without any emotional nurturing, the expectations should be limited. She was robbed of some, but not all, of her potential. We do not know how to predict potential in a vacuum, but we do know how to measure the emotional, behavioural, social, and physical strengths and weaknesses of a child. A comprehensive evaluation by skilled clinicians can be very helpful in beginning to define the skill areas of a child, as well as the areas where progress will be slower.

Be patient with the child's progress and with yourself. Progress will be slow. The slow progress can be frustrating, and many adults, especially adoptive parents, will feel inadequate because all of the love, time, and effort they spend with their child may not seem to be having any effect. But it does. Don't be hard on yourself. Many loving, skilled, and competent parents and teachers have been swamped by the needs of a neglected and abused child.

9 THINGS EVERY PARENT WITH AN ANXIOUS CHILD SHOULD TRY

BY RENEE JAIN, MAPP

As all the kids line up to go to school, your son, Timmy, turns to you and says, “I don’t want to take the bus. My stomach hurts. Please don’t make me go.” You cringe and think, Here we go again. What should be a simple morning routine explodes into a daunting challenge.

You look at Timmy and see genuine terror. You want to comfort him. You want to ease the excessive worry that’s become part and parcel of his everyday life. First, you try logic. “Timmy, we walk an extra four blocks to catch this bus because this driver has an accident-free driving record!” He doesn’t budge.

You provide reassurance. “I promise you’ll be OK. Timmy, look at me... you trust me, right?” Timmy nods. A few seconds later he whispers, “Please don’t make me go.”

You resort to anger: “Timothy Christopher, you will get on this bus RIGHT NOW, or there will be serious consequences. No iPad for one week!” He looks at you as if you’re making him walk the plank. He climbs onto the bus, defeated. You feel terrible.

If any of this sounds familiar, know you are not alone. Most parents would move mountains to ease their child’s pain. Parents of kids with anxiety would move planets and stars as well. It hurts to watch your child worry over situations that, frankly, don’t seem that scary. Here’s the thing: To your child’s mind, these situations are genuinely threatening. And even perceived threats can create a real nervous system response. We call this response anxiety and I know it well. I’d spent the better part of my childhood covering up a persistent, overwhelming feeling of worry until, finally, in my early

twenties, I decided to seek out a solution. What I’ve learned over the last two decades is that many people suffer from debilitating worry. In fact, 40 million American adults, as well as 1 in 8 children, suffer from anxiety. Many kids miss school, social activities and a good night’s rest just from the worried thoughts in their head. Many parents suffer from frustration and a feeling of helplessness when they witness their child in this state day in, day out.

What I also learned is that while there is no one-size-fits-all solution for anxiety, there are a plethora of great research-based techniques that can help manage it — many of which are simple to learn. WAIT! Why didn’t my parents know about this? Why didn’t I know about it? Why don’t they teach these skills in school?

I wish I could go back in time and teach the younger version of myself how to cope, but of course, that’s not possible. What is possible is to try to reach as many kids and parents as possible with these coping skills. What is possible is to teach kids how to go beyond just surviving to really finding meaning, purpose and happiness in their lives. To this end, I created an anxiety relief program for kids called GoZen. Here are 9 ideas straight from GoZen that parents of anxious children can try right away:

1. STOP REASSURING YOUR CHILD

Your child worries. You know there is nothing to worry about, so you say, “Trust me. There’s nothing to worry about.” Done and done, right? We all wish it were that simple. Why does your reassurance fall on deaf ears? It’s actually not the ears causing the issue. Your anxious child desperately

wants to listen to you, but the brain won’t let it happen. During periods of anxiety, there is a rapid dump of chemicals and mental transitions executed in your body for survival. One by-product is that the prefrontal cortex - or more logical part of the brain - gets put on hold while the more automated emotional brain takes over. In other words, it is really hard for your child to think clearly, use logic or even remember how to complete basic tasks. What should you do instead of trying to rationalize the worry away? Try something I call the FEEL method:

- **Freeze** — pause and take some deep breaths with your child. Deep breathing can help reverse the nervous system response.
- **Empathize** — anxiety is scary. Your child wants to know that you get it.
- **Evaluate** — once your child is calm, it’s time to figure out possible solutions.
- **Let Go** — Let go of your guilt; you are an amazing parent giving your child the tools to manage their worry.

2. HIGHLIGHT WHY WORRYING IS GOOD

Remember, anxiety is tough enough without a child believing that Something is wrong with me. Many kids even develop anxiety about having anxiety. Teach your kids that worrying does, in fact, have a purpose.

When our ancestors were hunting and gathering food there was danger in the environment, and being worried helped them avoid attacks from the sabre-toothed cat lurking in the bush. In modern times, we don’t have a need to run from predators, but we are left with an evolutionary imprint that protects us: worry.

Worry is a protection mechanism. Worry rings an alarm in our system and helps us survive danger. Teach your kids that worry is perfectly normal, it can help protect us, and everyone experiences it from time to time. Sometimes our system sets off false alarms, but this type of worry (anxiety) can be put in check with some simple techniques.

3. BRING YOUR CHILD'S WORRY TO LIFE

As you probably know, ignoring anxiety doesn't help. But bringing worry to life and talking about it like a real person can. Create a worry character for your child. In GoZen we created Widdle the Worrier. Widdle personifies anxiety. Widdle lives in the old brain that is responsible for protecting us when we're in danger. Of course, sometimes Widdle gets a little out of control and when that happens, we have to talk some sense into Widdle. You can use this same idea with a stuffed animal or even role-playing at home.

Personifying worry or creating a character has multiple benefits. It can help demystify this scary physical response children experience when they worry. It can reactivate the logical brain, and it's a tool your children can use on their own at any time.

4. TEACH YOUR CHILD TO BE A THOUGHT DETECTIVE

Remember; worry is the brain's way of protecting us from danger. To make sure we're really paying attention, the mind often exaggerates the object of the worry (e.g., mistaking a stick for a snake). You may have heard that teaching your children to think more positively could calm their worries. But the best remedy for distorted thinking is not positive thinking; it's accurate thinking. Try a method we call the 3Cs:

- Catch your thoughts: Imagine every thought you have floats above your head in a bubble (like what you see in comic strips). Now, catch one of the worried thoughts like "No one at school likes me."
- Collect evidence: Next, collect evidence to support or negate this thought. Teach your child not to make judgments about what to worry about based only on feelings. Feelings are not facts. (Supporting evidence: "I had a hard time finding someone to sit with at lunch yesterday." Negating evidence: "Sherry and I do homework together—she's a friend of mine.")

- Challenge your thoughts: The best (and most entertaining) way to do this is to teach your children to have a debate within themselves.

5. ALLOW THEM TO WORRY

As you know, telling your children not to worry won't prevent them from doing so. If your children could simply shove their feelings away, they would. But allowing your children to worry openly, in limited doses, can be helpful. Create a daily ritual called "Worry Time" that lasts 10 to 15 minutes. During this ritual encourage your children to release all their worries in writing. You can make the activity fun by decorating a worry box. During worry time there are no rules on what constitutes a valid worry — anything goes. When the time is up, close the box and say good-bye to the worries for the day.

6. HELP THEM GO FROM WHAT IF TO WHAT IS

You may not know this, but humans are capable of time travel. In fact, mentally we spend a lot of time in the future. For someone experiencing anxiety, this type of mental time travel can exacerbate the worry. A typical time traveller asks what-if questions: "What if I can't open my locker and I miss class?" "What if Suzy doesn't talk to me today?"

Research shows that coming back to the present can help alleviate this tendency. One effective method of doing this is to practice mindfulness exercises. Mindfulness brings a child from what if to what is. To do this, help your child simply focus on their breath for a few minutes.

7. AVOID AVOIDING EVERYTHING THAT CAUSES ANXIETY

Do your children want to avoid social events, dogs, school, planes or basically any situation that causes anxiety? As a parent, do you help them do so? Of course! This is natural. The flight part of the flight-fight-freeze response urges your children to escape the threatening situation. Unfortunately, in the long run, avoidance makes anxiety worse.

So what's the alternative? Try a method we call laddering. Kids who are able to manage their worry break it down into manageable chunks. Laddering uses this chunking concept and gradual exposure to reach a goal.

Let's say your child is afraid of sitting on the swings in the park. Instead of avoiding this activity, create mini-goals to get closer to the bigger goal (e.g., go to the edge of the park, then walk into the park, go to the swings, and, finally, get on a swing). You can use each step until the exposure becomes too easy; that's when you know it's time to move to the next rung on the ladder.

8. HELP THEM WORK THROUGH A CHECKLIST

What do trained pilots do when they face an emergency? They don't wing it (no pun intended!); they refer to their emergency checklists. Even with years of training, every pilot works through a checklist because, when in danger, sometimes it's hard to think clearly.

When kids face anxiety they feel the same way. Why not create a checklist so they have a step-by-step method to calm down? What do you want them to do when they first feel anxiety coming on?

If breathing helps them, then the first step is to pause and breathe. Next, they can evaluate the situation. In the end, you can create a hard copy checklist for your child to refer to when they feel anxious.

9. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

Watching your child suffer from anxiety can be painful, frustrating, and confusing. There is not one parent that hasn't wondered at one time or another if they are the cause of their child's anxiety. Here's the thing, research shows that anxiety is often the result of multiple factors (i.e., genes, brain physiology, temperament, environmental factors, past traumatic events, etc.). Please keep in mind, you did not cause your child's anxiety, but you can help them overcome it.

Toward the goal of a healthier life for the whole family, practice self-compassion. Remember, you're not alone, and you're not to blame. It's time to let go of debilitating self-criticism and forgive yourself. Love yourself. You are your child's champion.

Simple tools can help alleviate your child's anxiety. Start teaching your child coping skills with two animated lessons from:

WWW.GOZEN.COM

TOLERANCE

THE FIFTH CORE STRENGTH

The ability to tolerate differences is the fifth of six core strengths that are an essential part of healthy emotional development.

“At first no one would play with him because he was scary. But now we know he’s nice. His face just got burned.” - A 5-year-old boy telling his mother about a classmate with severe facial burns.

In this ever-changing world, our children will face more change, see more places, learn more things, and be exposed to more people and cultures than any other generation in history. Advances in communication, transportation, technology, and economics will provide more opportunities, and more challenges, for our children. To succeed in this complex and diverse world, they will need to develop the fifth core strength - tolerance.

Tolerance is the capacity to accept differences in others. Tolerance emerges when a child has the security arising from the healthy development of the four previous strengths (attachment, self-regulation, affiliation, and awareness). The attached child can form and maintain healthy intimate relationships and feels secure in them. Self-regulating children can better control their reactivity, anxiety, and fear when exposed to new people and situations. The affiliated child feels connected and secure in her peer groups. The aware child can see the strengths, needs, and interests of others. When these four strengths emerge, the child feels safe, special, and secure. Tolerance can follow.

SECURITY: THE ROOT OF TOLERANCE

There are two components to this unique

kind of safety. The first is the powerful and empowering feeling that comes when a young child feels special, valued, and accepted. This belief and feeling grows in a child when the important adults in his life tell him, and show him repeatedly, how important and loved he is. When the child feels this unqualified acceptance, it is so much easier for him to accept others.

The second key element of this security is related to how easily a child feels threatened by someone or something new. Our brain has dozens of neural systems involved in reading and responding to potential threats and will categorize new experiences as negative and potentially threatening until proven otherwise. New situations or novel stimuli, good or bad, activate the stress-regulating neural systems in the brain.

A child who feels safe and is introduced to a new culture and new ideas will be stimulated and excited. But a child who feels anxious will perceive these new experiences as threatening.

ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN

The development of tolerance requires active learning. We have a neurobiological tendency to form small groups with people who are similar to us and a tendency to be wary of, and even hostile to, people who are different.

Becoming tolerant is not a passive product of development: It requires active modelling by adults and repeated exposure of children to different ways of living in our world.

Fortunately, children can learn to accept and understand different views, cultures, and

values. Once a child learns that differences make other people interesting, stimulating, and capable, she becomes more comfortable with the world. If a child is fearful of new things, including the diversity of people, she will be left behind. The more tolerant our children become, the easier it will be for them to enjoy all that the world has to offer.

STRUGGLING WITH TOLERANCE

An intolerant child will be judgmental of others. She may tease, berate, and attack others who are different. Sometimes this can be overtly hostile and aggressive. Children who struggle with this strength help create an atmosphere of exclusion and intimidation for those people and groups they fear. This atmosphere promotes and facilitates violence and can be the first step in bullying. The intolerant child is, essentially, insecure-insecure about her status, skills, beliefs, and values.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Make children feel special and safe through words of praise and encouragement. Valued children learn to value others.
- Model tolerance. Children will learn to reach out and be sensitive to others by watching how comfortable you are as you discuss and relate to other people.
- Create opportunities for children to learn about new places, people, and cultures. Children feel safe with you, so explore new ideas and cultures together.
- Introduce new cultures and “different ways” by cooking ethnic dishes together.
- Have class celebrations for Cinco de Mayo, Chinese New Year, Carnivale, and other days and events that honour the traditions of different cultures.
- Invite children’s families (and others from the community) to come to class and share the dress, language, traditions, and customs of their ancestors. Children can talk with your guest about how different things were “in the old days” and how different families still keep certain traditions.
- Intervene immediately when you hear or see intolerant behaviours or words in children. Don’t be punitive. Try to understand and help children learn healthier ways of interacting with others.

By Bruce D. Perry MD, PhD

It's thanks to Dad that girls are more cautious than boys

Part of the reason boys tear around recklessly having more accidents while girls are more cautious is no doubt due to their biological differences. But it could also have to do with parents treating young boys and girls differently.

Now Lisa Hagan and Janet Kuebli have found tentative evidence that it is principally fathers, as opposed to mothers, who are responsible for treating girls and boys differently.

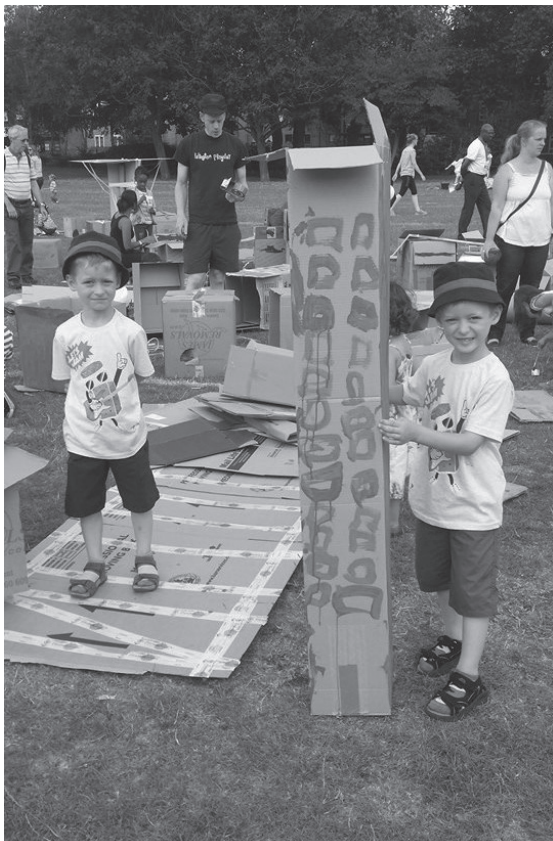
The researchers filmed 80 young children (average age 4 years) completing a mini obstacle course. The children were accompanied by one of their parents: there were 27 mothers and sons; 22 mothers and daughters; 13 fathers and sons; and 18 fathers and daughters. The researchers focused on how the parents behaved during their children's completion of two key obstacles: a five foot long beam suspended 1 and ½ feet off the ground; and a bridge (with safety railings) linking two ladders. The parents were told the study was investigating motor development in children.

In terms of how close they stayed to the children, and whether they shadowed their actions, the mothers' behaviour appeared

similar whether they were with a son or daughter. By contrast, fathers with daughters tended to stand closer and shadowed their daughters' actions more closely, than did fathers with sons.

The researchers said: "The results from this study support the role of fathers as important gender socialising agents, in that it was fathers, not mothers, who differentially monitored their sons and daughters during risky situations". In other words, Dads mollycoddle their daughters.

Hagan, L.K. & Kuebli, J. (2007). Mothers' and fathers' socialisation of preschoolers' physical risk taking. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 28, 2-14.



Favourite Childhood Activities (HUI)

- ***Playing huts in the hedge***
- ***Milking the cows***
- ***Rolling down a grass hill***
- ***Having cart races around the crescent***
- ***Playing cricket with the family after tea***
- ***Climbing trees***
- ***Family holiday at the beach***
- ***Lighting fires at the beach and BBQ pipis***
- ***Catching my first fish***
- ***Making and flying kites***
- ***Taking my dolls for a walk around the neighbourhood***
- ***Coming to NZ from England by cruise ship***
- ***Going to Hamer Springs with family***
- ***Holding our puppy***
- ***Making dry ice bombs with my Dad***
- ***Growing up in Hamner with the high energy of nature, mountains and forest***

IMAGINING EMPATHY

I've noticed that many people at the start of their playwork training get mixed up between the words "reflective" and "reflexive" practice. Interesting, because their meanings are complete opposites. To let our emotions sweep us up, to act without forethought, is easy. It is as smooth as a leg's upwards flight, when the doctor strikes with his little hammer. But to pause first, to hold all those lizard-brain impulses in check while we actually think is far harder. But it's a prerequisite for empathy, our first step outside ourselves.

A colleague was telling me a heart-breaking story, with seasoned anguish and resolve mixing in her face. Easy, polite, meaningless words came up my throat.

"I can't imagine."

What do those words even mean – I can't imagine how hard that was for you? Can't imagine how you coped? The phrase is cold, no less cruel for its cliché. It erects a wall that is pretending to be polite, because what these words really mean I refuse to think about that happening to me. Resting in the privilege of it not having happened to them, the listener rejects to considering how easily positions might be reversed.

So I tried to imagine what she had felt, what I might feel in her place, knowing that it was impossible. In that small pause, the emotions showed small indications of her fear, her bravery. They were signposts for

how we might sustain a real conversation about an experience that defies explanation, how I might respond to what she was sharing in a way that, if it couldn't be useful, might at least be respectful, human, and authentic. Pretty soon we were both in tears.

"I can't imagine" shuts the other person down, makes it all about the listener. It's a reflex of self-protection.

The skills developed through reflection include pausing in discomfort, listening, imagining, empathizing – these help us learn how to be present with others, in their pain and their survival.

It might, over time, allow us to do the same in our own.

<http://playeverything.wordpress.com/2014/12/01/imagining-empathy/>

SCHOOL DITCHES RULES AND LOSES BULLIES

Ripping up the playground rulebook is having incredible effects on children at an Auckland school.

Chaos may reign at Swanson Primary School with children climbing trees, riding skateboards and playing bull-rush during playtime, but surprisingly the students don't cause bedlam, the principal says.

The school is actually seeing a drop in bullying, serious injuries and vandalism, while concentration levels in class are increasing. Principal Bruce McLachlan rid the school of playtime rules as part of a successful university experiment. "We want kids to be safe and to look after them, but we end up wrapping them in cotton wool when in fact they should be able to fall over."

Letting children test themselves on a scooter during playtime could make them more aware of the dangers when getting behind the wheel of a car in high school, he said. "When you look at our playground it looks chaotic. From an adult's perspective, it looks like kids might get hurt, but they don't."

Swanson School signed up to the study by

AUT and Otago University just over two years ago, with the aim of encouraging active play. However, the school took the experiment a step further by abandoning the rules completely, much to the horror of some teachers at the time, he said.

When the university study wrapped up at the end of last year the school and researchers were amazed by the results. Mudslides, skateboarding, bull-rush and tree climbing kept the children so occupied the school no longer needed a timeout area or as many teachers on patrol. Instead of a playground, children used their imagination to play in a "loose parts pit" which contained junk such as wood, tyres and an old fire hose. "The kids were motivated, busy and engaged. In my experience, the time children get into trouble is when they are not busy, motivated and engaged. It's during that time they bully other kids, graffiti or wreck things around the school."

Parents were happy too because their children were happy, he said. But this wasn't a playtime revolution, it was just a return to the days before health and safety policies came to rule. AUT professor of public health Grant Schofield, who worked on the research project, said there are too many rules in modern playgrounds.

"The great paradox of cotton-woolling children is it's more dangerous in the long-

run." Society's obsession with protecting children ignores the benefits of risk-taking, he said. Children develop the frontal lobe of their brain when taking risks, meaning they work out consequences. "You can't teach them that. They have to learn risk on their own terms. It doesn't develop by watching TV, they have to get out there."

The research project morphed into something bigger when plans to upgrade playgrounds were stopped due to over-zealous safety regulations and costly play equipment. "There was so many ridiculous health and safety regulations and the kids thought the static structures of playgrounds were boring." When researchers - inspired by their own risk-taking childhoods - decided to give children the freedom to create their own play, principals shook their heads but eventually four Dunedin schools and four West Auckland schools agreed to take on the challenge, including Swanson Primary School.

It was expected the children would be more active, but researchers were amazed by all the behavioural pay-offs. The final results of the study will be collated this year.

Schofield urged other schools to embrace risk-taking. "It's a no brainer. As far as implementation, it's a zero-cost game in most cases. All you are doing is abandoning rules," he said.

THE PROBLEM WITH RESERVES

In a recent item on TV1's 'Seven Sharp', attention was drawn to the fact that some very large charities have accumulated reserves beyond what appears to be reasonable. These funds are invested in property or other investments to generate some return. This issue is almost exclusive to charities that conduct large public fundraising campaigns at least once a year, which gives them a large source of no-strings-attached funds.

In CCA workshops about financial management I usually recommend to organisations to calculate their Reserves Ratio, which is all their current and investment assets divided by their annual expenditure. This gives the number of years or months an organisation could survive with no income. While the ideal level varies a lot depending on the nature of the organisation, I recommend a ratio of between 9 months and 1.5 years. The bottom end is enough to keep an organisation reasonably safe from cash flow problems when income is not even during the year, while at the top end the organisation has sufficient time to respond to a major funding shortfall without becoming insolvent. Some of the organisations mentioned in the TV item have Reserves Ratios in excess of 10 years.

The problems with low reserves are obvious: community groups generally cannot take

out bank loans against future grants or donations in the way that businesses can borrow against future income. If they have regular outgoings such as wages or rent, they have to have some reserves to protect themselves from insolvency every time a grant application or fundraising event falls short of expectations. But why are high reserves a problem?

The core of the issue is ethics. The advertising around large fundraising campaigns suggests that donations will go to the advertised cause, not towards buying investment assets. On the other hand it could be argued that buying investments makes the donation dollar go further, because it will create income in the future. Once investments reach a level where the return from them funds all the activities of the organisation, no further fundraising from the public would be needed; however, the organisation can then operate in perpetuity even if its cause has become obsolete, the public no longer supports it, or it is all spent on 'management' and 'administration'. Such high reserves remove the key accountability mechanism for large charities: the choice of donors to no longer support them.

Some countries, such as Canada, have special accountability legislation for organisations undertaking public fundraising that aim

to prevent such a situation and require such organisations to inform donors about where the money goes. In New Zealand, unfortunately, protection of private donors is poor. The Fair Trading and Consumer Guarantees Acts have pretty much removed the old approach of 'buyer beware', but we still have a legal environment of 'donor beware'. The new financial reporting rules do not change this: the charities in question are large and have long been required to comply with detailed financial reporting standards; understanding these financial reports, however, requires more knowledge than the average donor would have. Ironically, for now, large charities even remain exempt from the kind of output and outcome reporting required of smaller charities in future.

Some organisations have high reserves, because funds were given to them for the express purpose of investing them and generating future income. This is not uncommon for large bequests, and such amounts often appear on the Balance Sheet as Liabilities (although, technically, they are not). This is obviously a different situation.

PEOPLE SHARE WHAT ADHD REALLY FEELS LIKE

By **MARGARITA TARTAKOVSKY, M.S.**

Many people misunderstand what it means to have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. “ADHD is not like pregnancy,” said Roberto Olivardia, Ph.D, a clinical psychologist and clinical instructor in the department of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. “It is not an either you have it or you don’t phenomenon.” Each of us has some ADHD traits some of the time, he said.

“When diagnoses exist on a spectrum like that, it can lead people who have a trait, but not ADHD, to think that they know what the latter part of the spectrum feels like, when they don’t.”

We asked people who have ADHD to share what ADHD feels like. You might notice both similarities and differences in their descriptions, because as writer Kelly Babcock said, “ADHD is never exactly the same for any two people.”

Dan Perdue

According to Dan Perdue, an ADHD coach, blogger and parent with ADHD: “For me, ADHD often feels like living in a room with a dozen TVs all at about half volume and each playing a different station. In that room are also another dozen people having six different conversations at the same time. There are probably several small children running around in circles laughing and squealing, and on the far side of that room is someone trying to get my attention and tell me something important and probably upset with me because I am many times unable to filter out that person from all of the other noise and commotion in that room called my brain.”

Zoë Kessler

Zoë Kessler, author of *ADHD According to Zoë: The Real Deal on Relationships, Finding Your Focus & Finding Your Keys*, compared ADHD to being an immigrant. “We have our own language, our own

culture. When I speak with others with ADHD, our conversations are completely different than when I talk to non-ADHD people. We ‘get’ each other.”

Kelly Babcock

According to Babcock, who pens the Psych Central blog “ADHD Man of DistrAction”: “I’m living with a brain that races past everything but secretly hopes that, in some warped holistic way the important things will be noticed. But while that’s going on, this brain is also rocketing through thousands of random thoughts. It’s kind of like doing your taxes while watching a TV that someone else has the remote for and they can’t seem to make up their mind about what to watch.”

Terry Matlen

Terry Matlen, MSW, ACSW, an ADHD coach and author of *The Queen of Distraction: How Women with ADHD Can Conquer Chaos, Find Focus and Get More Done*, has the inattentive type of ADHD. While her body is sluggish, her brain never slows down, she said.

“I am juggling hundreds of ideas, sensations, thoughts constantly, which often means I cannot concentrate on other things, especially conversations. Or movies. Or TV shows. Or boring lectures.” It’s exhausting. “[I]t feels like you’re ‘on’ all the time just to keep up with the world,” Matlen said.

Years ago, before her diagnosis, her self-esteem plummeted, particularly when it came to being a mom. “I felt like a horrible mother for not being able to sit and play board games with [my kids]. Or feeling claustrophobic when they’d hang all over me. And guilty that I couldn’t seem to get those school papers signed and sent back on time. Heck, I couldn’t even find them half the time.”

But, in addition to the challenges, there are

positives. ADHD has given her empathy for others who are struggling. It also might be connected to her creativity.

“I have sensory intensity, for lack of a better term, and tend to see, hear, smell and notice things others don’t. This gives me a creative edge because my senses are so sharp and so out of the box. I have utilized this my entire life by making art, music and more recently, through writing.”

Roberto Olivardia

Olivardia described ADHD as a maze: “I am always seeking out what is stimulating, pleasurable, and/or emotionally decompressing. In this maze there are obstacles, which can be boring, routine, and requires an attentional capacity that I don’t naturally have. I might want to avoid them, not out of laziness, but because I know it requires a level of strength that feels out of my capacity.”

He likened it to being asked to bench-press 400 pounds when you’ve never done any weight training. “But I know I have to bench press that 400 pounds, so I am always strategizing ways to do it that are effortful.” For him ADHD also is a physical experience. He feels an intense level of energy and passion for who and what he loves, including his family, work, music and food. “When you are someone who gets bored easily, the things you love are experienced in such a heightened way.”

Olivardia stressed that ADHD manifests in different ways, depending on the person’s strengths and challenges. Even context counts.

Olivardia is successful in his profession as a psychologist and professor, because he picked a career that’s stimulating and important to him. “Put me in a cubicle-type job and I would be rendered dysfunctional.” He also noted that not everyone with

ADHD struggles in school. In fact, Olivardia found it easier to get his doctorate than to graduate high school.

“Getting a Ph.D is not easy, but I loved what I was studying so much that the effort felt natural and fluid. High school, on the other hand, felt like a chore that I couldn’t wait to get through. I didn’t have the energy to care about getting A’s. I had to just get through it.”

Stephanie Sarkis

Psychotherapist and author Stephanie Sarkis, Ph.D, NCC, described having ADHD as “being in many places at once. It’s like having constant committee meetings in your head. ‘Look at this!’ ‘No, look at that instead.’ ‘What about this?’ ‘What about that?’”

Douglas Cootey

For Douglas Cootey, who pens the award-winning blog “A Splintered Mind,” symptoms vary. “When I’m overwhelmed, too much information has demanded my attention, as if I was in a noisy bus station trying to listen to somebody whisper while juggling circus clowns dropped sparkling bowling pins in my peripheral vision.”

Sometimes, when he needs to decide between different items, all of which trigger an intense emotional response, he feels paralyzed. “During those times there is a cacophony of thoughts in my head vying for dominance.”

“Other times ADHD is the eye in the storm as I serenely focus on something that has captured my attention, blissfully unaware that the world is falling apart around me. For me ADHD is an attention dysfunction disorder.”

If you don’t have ADHD, Babcock stressed the importance of not being patronizing. “Don’t try to tell us we aren’t right because you know better. You don’t.”

If you do have ADHD, he said, take it easy on yourself. “Don’t let others’ judgments bring you down; what other people think of us is none of our business. Remember you have a wicked fast brain, revel in that joy of speed, but remember, we’re gonna miss a few stop signs and corners. It’s all good, we can still make the finish line.”



I AM ONLY 5



OSCAR NETWORK TRAINING AND EVENT CALENDAR TERM 1 2015

EVENT/TRAINING	DATE	TIME & PLACE	COST (GST INCLUDED)
Child Protection	Thursday 12 February	10am – 12 noon OR 6.00 – 8.00pm St Marks Cnr Vincent Place & Opawa Rd	\$35 members \$90 non-members Light refreshment provided for pm session
Management EMPLOYMENT matters	Tuesday 17 February	10am - 12 noon OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street, Addington	\$35 members \$90 non-members
Health & Safety	Wednesday 25 February	10am - 12.30pm St Marks Cnr Vincent Place & Opawa Rd	\$35 members \$90 non-members
Full & Refresher First Aid MediTrain CYF approved	Saturday 28 February	Full: 8.30am - 4.30pm Refresher 8.30am - 12.30pm St Columbus Parish Centre 452 Main South Rd, Hornby	Full: \$175 Refresher: \$98
New to OSCAR	Wednesday 11 March	10am – 12 noon OR 6.00 – 8.00pm OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street, Addington	\$35 members \$90 non-members Light refreshment provided for pm session
Networking Meeting	Wednesday 25 March	10am - 12 noon St Marks Cnr Vincent Place & Opawa Rd	FREE

TERM 2 2015

EVENT/TRAINING	DATE	TIME & PLACE	COST (GST INCLUDED)
Networking Meeting	Wednesday 6 May	10am - 12 noon St Marks Cnr Vincent Place & Opawa Rd	FREE
Child Protection	Thursday 14 May	10am – 12 noon OR 6.00 – 8.00pm St Marks Cnr Vincent Place & Opawa Rd	\$35 members \$90 non-members Light refreshment provided for pm session
Full & Refresher First Aid MediTrain CYF approved	Saturday 16 May	Full: 8.30am - 4.30pm Refresher 8.30am - 12.30pm St Columbus Parish Centre 452 Main South Rd, Hornby	Full: \$175 Refresher: \$98
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety • Child Development • Governance • Programme Planning • Wonderful World • Trapped in Trauma 	Saturday 23 May	Morning: 9.30am - 11.30am Afternoon 12pm - 2pm St Marks Cnr Vincent Place & Opawa Rd	Full day: \$60 members \$120 non-members One session: \$35 members \$90 non-members Lunch Provided
Full & Refresher First Aid MediTrain CYF approved	Saturday 15 August 7 Nov	Full: 8.30am - 4.30pm Refresher 8.30am - 12.30pm St Columbus Parish Centre 452 Main South Rd, Hornby	Full: \$175 Refresher: \$98

