

Guide to Support a Young Person Displaying Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of worry or dread which is a normal response to a threat, where the threat can be real or imagined. Sometimes it can get out of control and become a mental health problem.

Support by Caregiver

As a caregiver there are some steps you can take to support a young anxious person who you care for. Below is a list of symptoms associated with anxiety:

- Sweating and a fast heartbeat.
- Panic attacks.
- Shortness of breath.
- Nausea or digestive issues.
- Dizziness.
- A fear of losing control or going crazy.
- Social withdrawal.
- Restlessness and irritability.
- Feeling tense or jumpy.

Here are the main causes of anxiety in young people:

- Bullying, discrimination or exclusion (including the internet).
- Not wanting to go to school or college.
- Ongoing family conflict.
- Suffering a close bereavement.
- Stress caused by exams.
- Experiencing a traumatic event (an assault or accident).
- Using recreational drugs and alcohol.
- Ongoing health problems.

Help them to achieve a more positive view of themselves by using the following strategies:

- It is helpful for adolescents to write down when they feel anxious to you can discuss the triggers with them.
- Let them know you value effort rather than perfection at anything they do.
- Encourage them to try new challenges, give praise for their successes.
- Help them set goals and make plans for things they would like to accomplish.
- Help them to discover and develop their talents, through clubs, groups, and activities.
- Encourage them to express themselves creatively, through art, drama, or music.
- Get them involved with voluntary projects that make a difference to someone else.

By joining in the above pursuits, it should help to build confidence, keep the problem in perspective and offer the chance to make new friends.

Other online resources

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mental-health/parents-and-young-people/young-people/anxiety-for-young-people>

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