

Anxiety Disorders Resource Center

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Anxiety Disorders

about

All children experience anxiety. Anxiety in children is expected and normal at specific times in development. For example, from approximately age 8 months through the preschool years, healthy youngsters may show intense distress (anxiety) at times of separation from their parents or other caregivers with whom they are close. Young children may have short-lived fears, (such as fear of the dark, storms, animals, or strangers). Anxious children are often overly tense or uptight. Some may seek a lot of reassurance, and their worries may interfere with activities. Parents should not discount a child's fears. Because anxious children may also be quiet, compliant and eager to please, their difficulties may be missed. Parents should be alert to the signs of severe anxiety so they can intervene early to prevent complications.



For additional information see:

AACAP Book *Your Adolescent [Anxiety and Avoidant Disorders](#)*

Glossary of Symptoms and Mental Illnesses

- [Obsessive Compulsive Disorder \(OCD\)](#)
- [Anxiety](#)
- [Posttraumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#)

frequently asked questions

1. [How much anxiety is "normal" for a child?](#)
2. [What are the signs and symptoms of anxiety?](#)
3. [What causes anxiety disorders?](#)
4. [How are anxiety disorders treated?](#)

facts for families

AACAP's *Facts for Families* provide concise up-to-date information on issues that affect children, teenagers, and their families.

[The Anxious Child](#)

[Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder in Children and Adolescents](#)

[Panic Disorder in Children and Adolescents](#)

[Posttraumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#)

[Children Who Won't Go to School \(Separation Anxiety\)](#)

[Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part I: How Medications are Used](#)

[Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part II: Types of Medications](#)

[When to Seek Help](#)

[Where to Find Help](#)

[Understanding Your Mental Health Insurance](#)

video clips

Anxiety Disorders and Medication

Moira Rynn, M.D.

Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry
Department of Psychiatry
Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Columbia University
(Jan 2008)

[Disclosures](#)

duration: 00:39

clinical resources

AACAP Practice Parameters

Considered resources for experts, mental health professional and physicians, AACAP's practice parameters were developed to guide clinical decision making. They show the best treatments and the range of treatment options available to families living with childhood and adolescent mental illness. Considered resources for experts, mental health professional and physicians, AACAP's Practice Parameters were developed to guide clinical decision making. They show the best treatments and the range of treatment options available to families living with childhood and adolescent mental illness.

- [Practice Parameter for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents with Anxiety Disorders](#)
- [Practice Parameter for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents with Obsessive-compulsive Disorder](#)
- [Practice Parameters for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder](#)

Additional Clinical Resources

- [Advances in Child and Adolescent Anxiety Disorder Research](#)
- [New Advances in the Psychopharmacological Treatment of OCD](#)
- [Facts for Families: Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part I: How Medications are Used](#)
- [Facts for Families: What is Psychotherapy for Children and Adolescents?](#)
- [Facts for Families: Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents Part II: Types of Medications](#)

research and training

[Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents: A Review of the Past 10 Years](#)

Journal of Amer Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: Special Articles: PD onlh.

[Cognitive-Behavioral Psychotherapy for Anxiety and Depressive Disorders in Children and Adolescents: An Evidence-Based Medicine Review](#)

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry:

August 2004 - Volume 43 - Issue 8 - pp 930-959

A review of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy in anxiety and depression:

[Cognitive-Behavioral Psychotherapy for Anxiety and Depressive Disorders in Children and Adolescents: An Evidence-Based Medicine Review](#)

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry:

August 2004 - Volume 43 - Issue 8 - pp 930-959

A recent important study comparing medication and CBT in treating anxiety:

[Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Sertraline, or a Combination in Childhood Anxiety](#)

New England Journal of Medicine, Volume 359:2753-2766 December 25, 2008 Number 26

[Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder in Children](#)

John Piacentini, R. Lindsey Bergman

Psychiatric Clinics of North America - 1 September 2000 (Vol. 23, Issue 3, Pages 519-533)

[March JS \(1995\). Cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy for children and adolescents with OCD: a review and recommendations for treatment.](#)

Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 34:7-18

[The use of imaging Technology and Physiological Measurements to Investigate Changes in Biological Stress Systems and Brain Development in Maltreated Children with PTSD](#)

2008 Annual Meeting Sessions

[Click here to search the Annual Meeting Sessions.](#)

books

AACAP's book:

Your Adolescent offers easy-to-understand and comprehensive information on the emotional development and behavior of the teen years.

Your Adolescent - an excerpt

[Anxiety and Avoidant Disorders](#)

getting help

Not all children who have experienced anxiety will need treatment. However, treatment can help minimize anxiety. To obtain help, parents should try to find a mental health professional who has advanced training and experience with evaluating and treating children, adolescents, and families. It is important to find a comfortable match between your child, your family, and the mental health professional.

A child and adolescent psychiatrist is a physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of thinking, feeling and behavior that affect children, adolescents, and their families. Child and adolescent psychiatrists have completed four years of medical school, at least three years of residency training in medicine, neurology, or general psychiatry with adults, and two years of additional training in psychiatric work with children, adolescents, and their families.

[Click here to find a child and adolescent psychiatrist in your area.](#)

Facts for Families:

Providing up-to-date information on issues that affect children, teenagers, and their families. These fact sheets are relevant to anxiety disorders.

- [When to Seek Help](#)
- [Where to Find Help](#)
- [Understanding Your Mental Health Insurance](#)

Related Support Group Web Sites

- [National Institutes of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#)
- [Anxiety Disorders Association of America](#)
- [Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress](#)
- [Gateway to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Information](#)
- [Obsessive Compulsive Foundation](#)

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