

Chapter 1 : Help your child beat exam stress - NHS

As a parent, you can't protect your kids from stress " but you can help them develop healthy ways to cope with stress and solve everyday problems. Kids deal with stress in both healthy and unhealthy ways.

Fear is an emotion that can help kids be cautious. Things that are new, big, loud, or different can seem scary at first. Parents can help kids feel safe and learn to feel at ease. What Do Kids Feel Afraid of? What kids feel afraid of changes as they grow. Some fears are common and normal at certain ages. Infants feel stranger anxiety. When babies are about 8-9 months old, they can recognize the faces of people they know. They may cry or cling to a parent to feel safe. Toddlers feel separation anxiety. At some time between 10 months and 2 years, many toddlers start to fear being apart from a parent. They may cry, cling, and try to stay near their parent. Young kids fear "pretend" things. Kids ages 4 through 6 can imagine and pretend. To them, the scary monsters they imagine seem real. They fear what might be under their bed or in the closet. Many are afraid of the dark and at bedtime. Some are afraid of scary dreams. Young kids may also be afraid of loud noises, like thunder or fireworks. Older kids fear real-life dangers. At this age, some kids begin to fear things that could happen in real life. They may have a fear that a "bad guy" is in the house. They may feel afraid about natural disasters they hear about. They may fear getting hurt or that a loved one could die. Schoolage kids may also feel anxious about schoolwork, grades, or fitting in with friends. Preteens and teens may have social fears. They might feel anxious about how they look or whether they will fit in. They may feel anxious or afraid before they give a report in class, start a new school, take a big exam, or play in a big game. When your child is afraid, you can help by doing these things: Give hugs and soothing words to help your child feel safe. As your child grows, talk and listen. Be calm and soothing. Help your child put feelings into words. Help kids try new things. Help your baby get used to a new person while you hold him and let him feel safe. Let your toddler be apart from you for short times at first. Let your child learn that you always come back. Read or sing to your child. Let your child feel safe and loved. Help your child slowly face fears. For example, check together for under-bed monsters. Help her feel her courage. Limit the scary images, movies, or shows kids see. These can cause fears. Help kids and teens learn to prepare for challenges, like tests or class reports. Let them know you believe in them. Most kids cope with normal fears with gentle support from their parent. As they grow, they get over fears they had at a younger age. Some kids have a harder time, and need more help with fears. If fears are extreme or keep a child from doing normal things, it might be a sign of an anxiety disorder.

Chapter 2 : Helping Children to Cope with Change, Stress and Anxiety

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Following is an overview of her comments as they relate to anxiety and stress in our children and how you can help them cope. What is anxiety in children, and how can we spot it? For example somatic indicators such as difficulty sleeping, upset stomach, and headaches; changes in normal behaviour patterns such as eating more or less, reduced communication, social withdrawal, increased tearfulness, school refusal, increased opposition, defiance and aggression; and emotional signs such as prolonged low mood, increased irritability and anger. Of course these could all be indicators of issues besides anxiety, but either way they are indicators that something is going on. Make it clear you are available and try to offer unconditional support. The aim is to stay out of judgement and try not to leap in and fix the problem. We need to do lots of listening and validating. Be there to support but empower them to learn and take action – with assistance as needed. Arguably one of the most effective methods is acceptance of stress and stressful situations: To start noticing when stress arises, recognise its physical sensations and understand what is happening in the body. This is one example of using the skill of mindfulness. Knowledge about what is happening takes away this fear. The transient nature of Hong Kong does challenge our children to adapt to change. So, in terms of preparing our children for this changeable future, learning how to adjust to friends leaving, moving schools and moving countries is significant training in itself. Can we teach our children to be more resilient? Resilience is a teachable skill. According to Dr Martin Seligman and Dr. Acknowledging that this formula is only applicable in environments free from suffering, poverty, war and disease, there is still a significant message behind the happiness formula when it comes to taking on the challenges in life. The starting point when it comes to building resilience skills is emotional awareness. Talking about emotions with children, learning a broad emotional vocabulary, understanding that emotions are felt by degrees and that they have physical signals, is important stuff! To be truly recognised, understood and appreciated for who we already are is the best foundation for growth and resilience. Nurturing an attitude of optimism is also important. When we view the future with hope and optimism we believe more good things will occur than bad and that we have power over what happens to us. When bad things do occur, they are manageable and we can do something about them. When we view the future with hope and optimism, it is easier to take on new challenges and try harder. Conversely, pessimism results in fatalism, giving up and helplessness. One of the best ways parents and adults can encourage optimism, growth mindset and resilience is to model the concepts first hand. When things go wrong for us and we try to replace personalising, globalising, catastrophising comments with specific observations about a particular unhelpful behaviour or turn of events, we provide a great example. So rather than making fixed character trait comments about ourselves when talking about our deficits, we simply acknowledge we are still learning. What should we do if our children react negatively to change? Validate their sadness and worries and fears and concerns. Change is hard when we liked the way things were. However nobody wants to get stuck in these feelings forever. We need to find ways to come to terms with the change, reduce the impact of the loss and work towards doing things to help create the best possible life, given the loss. Asking what they miss most about the thing that they have lost and trying to find new ways to replicate that experience is a good approach. These are well-intentioned but rarely can they make a person feel immediately better when they are struggling with a loss of something that is important to them. What are some basics that we can do as a foundation to help our children feel secure and handle everyday ups and downs? Love your kids for who they are, take time to understand them and what makes their character unique and special. Encourage them to try out new things, to strive for mastery and learn from feedback. Accept failure as a learning opportunity; embrace difference over conformity, and above all give them and you permission to be human. They put our kids into an arena where they can be judged, which is scary but so necessary for progress. Validate all feelings, even if they are different from yours their feelings are theirs, yours are yours and there is no right or wrong, but help them to develop skills to reduce the impact of the challenging feelings and thoughts. Help your children to be secure in

the knowledge that they are special and valuable AND also part of something bigger – a larger community and a wider world To read the full article on Hong Kong Moms, [click here](#). She comes from a strengths-based approach and applies the science of Positive Psychology, coupled with other evidence-based techniques to her work in one-to-one coaching or counselling settings and groups that she delivers to empower youth to unlock their potential to flourish.

12 Tips for reducing your child's anxiety and stress. Coping Skills for Children with Anxiety. With this in mind we can take these steps and use them to help our kids become stress free.

The goal of treatment for anxiety is to help children learn to manage their emotional responses to their triggers. In fact, though avoidance might help children feel better in the short-term, it can amplify the fears over time. Children need to learn how to tolerate their feelings of anxiety and to develop coping strategies to manage it. All kids are different and what works well for one child might not work for another. Learning to manage symptoms of anxiety and cope with triggers takes time and practice. Parents can help their children by trying some of these strategies at home. Practice Relaxation Strategies Kids need to learn how to regulate both their emotional and physical responses they become intertwined when they go into fight-or-flight mode. Here are some techniques that may help: Practice this strategy when calm to increase effectiveness when anxious. Most kids tense their muscles when feeling anxious. Many even hold their breath. A simple two-step process helps kids learn to use their muscles to relieve the physical stress they experience when anxious. Work head-to-toe to better understand all of the muscles affected by anxiety. With practice, children can learn to do this at school. Create a relaxation kit: Fill a box with relaxing activities chosen by your child and create a relaxation center somewhere in your home. You might include music, coloring books, fidget toys, a mini sandbox, clay, books, and stuffed animals. Article continues below Concerned about anxiety? Take our 2-minute anxiety quiz to see if you or someone you care about may benefit from further diagnosis and treatment. Anxious kids have a tendency to internalize their anxious thoughts for long periods of time. Dedicating time to getting those feelings out for fifteen minutes each day helps children learn to work through their worries. Try to do one of these exercises at the same time each day an hour before bedtime is a great timeframe as anxiety tends to spike at night: Have your child write or draw her worries on a piece of paper, read them to you, and then tear them up and throw them away for the night. This helps kids say their worries out loud and let go of them. Keeping a worry journal helps children see how their anxious thoughts improve over time. Writing the worries of the day followed by one positive thought helps break the cycle of negative thinking that can exacerbate anxiety. This is a great tool to use before bed. Help them to write their worries of the day and place them in the box one-by-one, after they share them with you. Take the box to your room for the night and offer to hold them for them. Talk Back When children learn that they have the power to talk back to their worry brains, they feel empowered to cope with anxiety-producing stressors. Teach your child that anxious thoughts make us feel powerless, but talking back to anxious thoughts gives us control over the situation. I know I can handle this! When intrusive thoughts overwhelm kids, they go into fight-or-flight mode. One thing that helps young children is creating a character to represent the anxiety. Childhood anxiety can feel overwhelming for both the child and the parent, but it is treatable.

Chapter 4 : 5 Tips Help Children Cope with Stress - Stress Free Kids

This book explains how fears, anxiety, and stress develop in children, and how they can learn to successfully cope with these factors. It offers specific activities designed to assist in coping with a particular aspect of fear or stress.

Help children cope with stress by realizing you can empower your children. Young children do not yet have the ability to identify or express their own feelings of stress. They struggle with their own emotions and they pick up on their parents tension. The main thing to look for is a change in behavior. Tips to Reduce Stress: Help children put words to their feelings. Ask them if they feel nervous, scared, or worried. Ask them what is making them feel that way. Often children do not understand the outcome of an action or change. Instead of realizing their favorite teacher will be back tomorrow.. Create positive statements for the situation. My substitute teacher is fun. My teacher will be back soon. Parents and teachers can easily teach and use techniques like breathing, positive statements, and visualizing on a regular basis. Lesson Plans are available. Establish a bedtime routine that helps kids relax. Soothing music or relaxing stories. Kids Relaxation Music promotes sleep and relaxation. Spend reassuring quality time with children. A stress free kid today will be a happier, healthier adult tomorrow!

Chapter 5 : How to Help Children with Anxiety: 9 Strategies for Building Coping Skills

Mindquest counsellor Lucy Graham recently spoke to Hong Kong Moms about anxiety in children in Hong Kong and how we can help our children manage stress and lead healthy, happy lives. Following is an overview of her comments as they relate to anxiety and stress in our children and how you can help them cope.

Helping Children Cope with Trauma Parenting Kids and Teens After a Traumatic Event The intense, confusing, and frightening emotions that follow a traumatic event or natural disaster can be even more pronounced in children—whether they directly experienced the traumatic event or were repeatedly exposed to horrific media images after the fact. While children and adolescents are more vulnerable to being traumatized than adults, with the right support and reassurance they are also able to recover faster. Using these coping tips, you can help your child regain an emotional balance, restore their trust in the world, and move on from the trauma. What are the effects of trauma on children? Unexpectedly losing a loved one or being involved in a natural disaster, motor vehicle accident, plane crash, or violent attack can be overwhelmingly stressful for children. A traumatic event can undermine their sense of security, leaving them feeling helpless and vulnerable, especially if the event stemmed from an act of violence, such as a physical assault, mass shooting, or terrorist attack. Even kids or teens not directly affected by a disaster can become traumatized when repeatedly exposed to horrific images of the event on the news or social media.

Effects of Trauma on Kids and Teens

Children age 5 and under may:

- Show signs of fear
- Cling to parent or caregiver
- Cry, scream, or whimper
- Move aimlessly or become immobile
- Return to behaviors common to being younger, such as thumb sucking or bedwetting

Children age 6 to 11 may:

- Lose interest in friends, family, and fun activities
- Have nightmares or other sleep problems
- Become irritable, disruptive, or angry
- Struggle with school and homework
- Complain of physical problems
- Feel depressed, emotionally numb, or guilt over what happened

Adolescents age 12 to 17 may:

- Have flashbacks to the event, nightmares, or other sleep problems
- Avoid reminders of the event
- Abuse drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Be disruptive, disrespectful, or destructive
- Have physical complaints
- Feel isolated, guilty, or depressed
- Lose interest in hobbies and interests
- Have suicidal thoughts

Source: Kids and trauma recovery tip 1: Excessive exposure to images of a disturbing event—such as repeatedly viewing video clips on social media or news sites—can even create traumatic stress in children or teens who were not directly affected by the event. As much as you can, watch news reports of the traumatic event with your child. Avoid exposing your child to graphic images and videos. The traumatic event may bring up unrelated fears and issues in your child. It can be very difficult for some kids to talk about a traumatic experience. A young child may find it easier to draw a picture illustrating their feelings rather than talk about them. Encourage your child to seek out friends and pursue games, sports, and hobbies that they enjoyed before the traumatic event. Go on family outings to the park or beach, enjoy a games night, or watch a funny or uplifting movie together. Encourage physical activity Physical activity can burn off adrenaline, release mood-enhancing endorphins, and help your child to sleep better at night. Find a sport that your child enjoys. Offer to participate in sports, games, or physical activities with your child. If they seem resistant to get off the couch, play some of their favorite music and dance together. Encourage your child to go outside to play with friends or a pet and blow off steam. Schedule a family outing to a hiking trail, swimming pool, or park. Take younger children to a playground, activity center, or arrange play dates. Feed your child a healthy diet The food your child eats can have a profound impact on their mood and ability to cope with traumatic stress. Processed and convenience food, refined carbohydrates, and sugary drinks and snacks can create mood swings and worsen symptoms of traumatic stress. Conversely, eating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, high-quality protein, and healthy fats, especially omega-3 fatty acids, can help your child better cope with the ups and downs that follow disturbing experience. Focus on overall diet rather than specific foods. Kids should be eating whole, minimally processed food—food that is as close to its natural form as possible. Limit fried food, sweet desserts, sugary snacks and cereals, and refined flour. These can all exacerbate symptoms of traumatic stress in kids. Be a role model. Healthy Food for Kids: If you make large batches, cooking just a few times can be enough to feed your family for the whole week. Make mealtimes about more than just food. Gathering the family around a table for a meal

is an ideal opportunity to talk and listen to your child without the distraction of TV, phones, or computers. Rebuild trust and safety Trauma can alter the way a child sees the world, making it suddenly seem a much more dangerous and frightening place. Your child may find it more difficult to trust both their environment and other people. Try to maintain regular times for meals, homework, and family activities. Minimize stress at home. Manage your own stress. Speak of the future and make plans. This can help counteract the common feeling among traumatized children that the future is scary, bleak, and unpredictable. Remember that children often personalize situations. They may worry about their own safety even if the traumatic event occurred far away. Reassure your child and help place the situation in context. Please read Suicide Prevention or call a suicide helpline: In the UK, call 90 90 In Australia, call 13 11 Or visit IASP to find a helpline in your country. Recommended reading Anxiety and Stress Disorders:

Chapter 6 : Tips for Coping with Stress|Publications|Violence Prevention|Injury Center|CDC

Helping Children to Cope with Change, Stress and Anxiety provides practical activities and strategies for children who are experiencing mild to moderate levels of stress, have difficulty coping with changes in their life or are prone to mild to moderate.

But there are ways to ease the stress. Watch for signs of stress Children and young people who experience stress may: Support from a parent, tutor or study buddy can help young people share their worries and keep things in perspective. Encourage your child to talk to a member of school staff who they feel is supportive. Try to involve your child as much as possible. Some parents find that too many high-fat, high-sugar and high-caffeine foods and drinks such as cola, sweets, chocolate, burgers and chips make their children hyperactive, irritable and moody. Where possible involve your child in shopping for food and encourage them to choose some healthy snacks. See some healthy eating tips for teens. Help your child get enough sleep Good sleep will improve thinking and concentration. Cramming all night before an exam is usually a bad idea. Sleep will benefit your child far more than a few hours of panicky last-minute study. Be flexible during exams Be flexible around exam time. Staying calm yourself can help. Ask them how you can best support them with their revision. Help them to come up with practical ideas that will help them revise, such as drawing up a revision schedule or getting hold of past papers for practice. To help with motivation, encourage your child to think about their goals in life and see how their revision and exams are related to them. Talk about exam nerves Remind your child that feeling anxious is normal. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use. If anxiety seems to be getting in the way rather than helping, encourage your child to practise the sort of activities they will be doing on the day of the exam. This will help it feel less scary on the day. This may involve doing practice papers under exam conditions or seeing the exam hall beforehand. School staff should be able to help with this. Encourage them to think through what they do know and the time they have already put into studying to help them feel more confident. Encourage exercise during exams Exercise can help boost energy levels, clear the mind and relieve stress. Activities that involve other people can be particularly helpful. Read more about the benefits of physical activity. Try to listen to your child, give support and avoid criticism. Before they go in for a test or exam, be reassuring and positive. After each exam, encourage your child to talk it through with you. Talk about the parts that went well rather than focusing on the questions they had difficulties with. Make time for treats Think through with your child some rewards for doing revision and getting through each exam. They can include simple things like making their favourite meal or watching TV. When the exams are over, help your child celebrate by organising an end-of-exams treat. When should we get help? A visit to your GP is a good place to start. Read more about anxiety in children.

Chapter 7 : 7 Tips for Helping Your Child Manage Stress

Like adults, kids also struggle with stress. Too many commitments, conflict in their families and problems with peers are all stressors that overwhelm children. The key to helping kids manage.

Family doctor Member of your church or temple. Talking with someone can help you make sense out of your experience and figure out ways to feel better. If you are not sure where to turn, call your local crisis intervention center or a national hotline. Go for a walk, play sports, write a play or poem, play a musical instrument, or join an after-school program. Volunteer with a community group that promotes nonviolence or another school or community activity that you care about. These can be positive ways to handle your feelings and to see that things are going to get better. Take care of yourself. Try to get plenty of sleep, eat right, exercise, and keep a normal routine. By keeping yourself healthy, you will be better able to handle a tough time. Pictures and stories about a disaster can increase worry and other stressful feelings. Taking breaks from the news, Internet, and conversations about the disaster can help calm you down. Tips for School Personnel Kids and teens experiencing a stressful event, or see it on television, may react with shock, sadness, anger, fear, and confusion. They may be reluctant to be alone or fearful of leaving safe areas such as the house or classroom. School personnel can help their students restore their sense of safety by talking with the children about their fears. Other tips for school personnel include: Reach out and talk. Create opportunities to have students talk, but do not force them. Try asking questions like, what do you think about these events, or how do you think these things happen? You can be a model by sharing some of your own thoughts as well as correct misinformation. When children talk about their feelings, it can help them cope and to know that different feelings are normal. Be alert for any change in behavior. Are students talking more or less? Are they behaving in any way out of the ordinary? These changes may be early warning signs that a student is struggling and needs extra support from the school and family. A regular classroom and school schedule can provide reassurance and promote a sense of stability and safety. Encourage students to keep up with their schoolwork and extracurricular activities but do not push them if they seem overwhelmed. You are better able to support your students if you are healthy, coping and taking care of yourself first. Eat healthy, well-balanced meals Exercise on a regular basis Get plenty of sleep Give yourself a break if you feel stressed out Get Email Updates To receive email updates about this page, enter your email address:

Chapter 8 : Tips to Manage Anxiety and Stress | Anxiety and Depression Association of America, ADAA

This book is full of creative ideas for use with children who have difficulty in coping with change, stress and normal levels of anxiety. Supported by a comprehensive but accessible theory section, the practical exercises are a simple and fun way of helping children to learn healthy stress management strategies.

But kids still experience stress. Things like school and their social life can sometimes create pressures that can feel overwhelming for kids. Kids deal with stress in both healthy and unhealthy ways. Here are a few ideas: If you can, name the feeling you think your child is experiencing. Are you still mad about that? Be sympathetic and show you care and want to understand. Listen to your child. Listen attentively and calmly with interest, patience, openness, and caring. Avoid any urge to judge, blame, lecture, or say what you think your child should have done instead. Try to get the whole story by asking questions like "And then what happened? And let your child take his or her time, too. Comment briefly on the feelings you think your child was experiencing. Put a label on it. Many younger kids do not yet have words for their feelings. If your child seems angry or frustrated, use those words to help him or her learn to identify the emotions by name. Putting feelings into words helps kids communicate and develop emotional awareness—the ability to recognize their own emotional states. Help your child think of things to do. Encourage your child to think of a couple of ideas. Support the good ideas and add to them as needed. Ask, "How do you think this will work? Afterward, try changing the subject and moving on to something more positive and relaxing. Help your child think of something to do to feel better. Limit stress where possible. If certain situations are causing stress, see if there are ways to change things. For instance, if too many after-school activities consistently cause homework stress, it might be necessary to limit activities to leave time and energy for homework. You can help your child feel better just by being there—keeping him or her company, spending time together. Take a walk, watch a movie, shoot some hoops, or bake some cookies. As a parent, it hurts to see your child unhappy or stressed. But try to resist the urge to fix every problem.

Chapter 9 : Helping Kids Cope With Stress

Coping with School Stress. These 5 tips can help kids cope with school stress and homework pressure -- and ease school anxiety for kids of all ages.

Too many commitments, conflict in their families and problems with peers are all stressors that overwhelm children. The key to helping kids manage stress is teaching them to problem-solve, plan and know when to say yes and no to activities and commitments, she said. One of the biggest stressors for kids is being overscheduled, Lyons said. And yet, today, kids are expected to pay attention and perform in school for seven hours, excel at extracurricular activities, come home, finish homework, and go to bed just to do it all over again the next day. Their brains and bodies need to rest. And they might not realize this by themselves. So knowing when your child is overscheduled is important. Is everybody eating on the run, in the car, grabbing and going? Make time for play. Younger kids will do this naturally. But older kids may forget how to simply play. Combine play with physical activity, which is critical for well-being. Make sleep a priority. Sleep is vital for everything from minimizing stress to boosting mood to improving school performance, Lyons said. Again, reducing commitments helps. Also helpful is stressing the importance of sleep, and creating an environment that facilitates it. Teach your kids to listen to their bodies. For instance, sit in the car with your child, and press the gas and brake, and listen to the engine revving. Manage your own stress. A disorganized home is another stressful trigger for kids, and this is especially evident in the mornings. Prepare your kids to deal with mistakes. For kids a lot of stress comes from the fear of making mistakes, Lyons said. Help them figure out how to fix it, make amends, learn the lesson and move on, she said. Overall, Lyons suggested parents look at the bigger picture. She blogs regularly about body and self-image issues on her own blog, *Weightless* , and about creativity on her second blog *Make a Mess*. Retrieved on November 9, , from <https://>