

coffee with the counselor

anxiety workshop

breaking the anxiety cycle:

empowering caregivers to help



giving caregivers
crucial information
about anxiety and
providing them
helpful ways to
respond

- **Unhealthy Responses Anxious Children Have**

- Avoidance
- Freeze
- Somatic Complaints
- Aggression
- Reassurance Seeking
- Defiance
- Perfectionism

- **Cycle Of Anxiety**

- **How We Respond**

- Helpful vs. Unhelpful Approaches

- **Strategies That Work**

- Coping Tools
- Positive Self-Talk
- Coaching

- **Q&A**

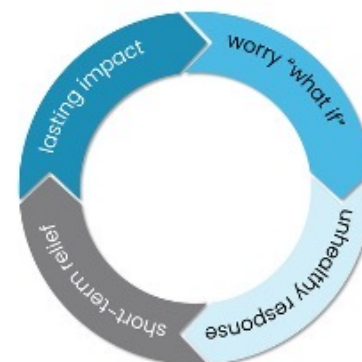
presentation outline

unhealthy responses

anxiety response	what it might look like in a worried child
avoidance	refusing to go to a birthday party, saying "I'm tired," or hiding in their room when it's time to leave
freeze	becoming silent, expressionless, or unresponsive when asked a question or confronted with a new situation
somatic complaints	complaining of a stomachache, headache, or feeling sick before school, practice, or sleepovers
aggression	yelling, hitting, or throwing objects when asked to do something anxiety-provoking
reassurance seeking	asking the same question over and over: "Are you sure I'll be okay?" or "Are you picking me up from school?"
defiance	saying, "I'm not doing it!" or purposefully stalling, arguing, or "acting out" when asked to do something that feels scary to them
perfectionism	erasing homework repeatedly, starting projects over, or crying when something isn't "just right"

anxiety cycle

The four stages of the anxiety cycle



example

worry: "what if my mom dies like my mom's friend?"

unhealthy response (avoidance): child refuses to be separated from mom

short-term relief: child feels immediate emotional safety by staying physically close to mom

lasting impact: child never learns how to feel emotionally safe with mom's absence

the way we respond

helpful approaches

- allowing exposure to fear
- setting boundaries
- fostering autonomy
- modeling healthy coping strategies
- providing empathy and validation
- identifying emotions
- staying calm when child is anxious

unhelpful approaches

- giving the child reassurance
- minimizing how the child feels
- having poor stress management
- punishing the child for how they feel
- encouraging avoidance
- accommodating the anxiety

strategies that work

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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coping skills



draw it out

Draw how you feel or the situation that made you feel that way (sad, mad, scared, frustrated, worried).

3 things

Pick your favorite color, then look around and find three items nearby that have that color.

safe place

Imagine a place where you would feel safe and comfortable and happy. Maybe it's a real place you've been to or maybe it's a place from your imagination! What do you see there? What do you hear there? Pretend you are there right now!

Penny

It is a Friday morning. Penny wakes up with an upset stomach and tells her mom that her head hurts. When her mom asks what's wrong, Penny says, "I don't want to go to school today. I don't feel good." Sensing more is going on, Mom gently asks why. Penny replies tearfully, "What if you can't pick me up from school? What if you get stuck at work or get into a car accident?"

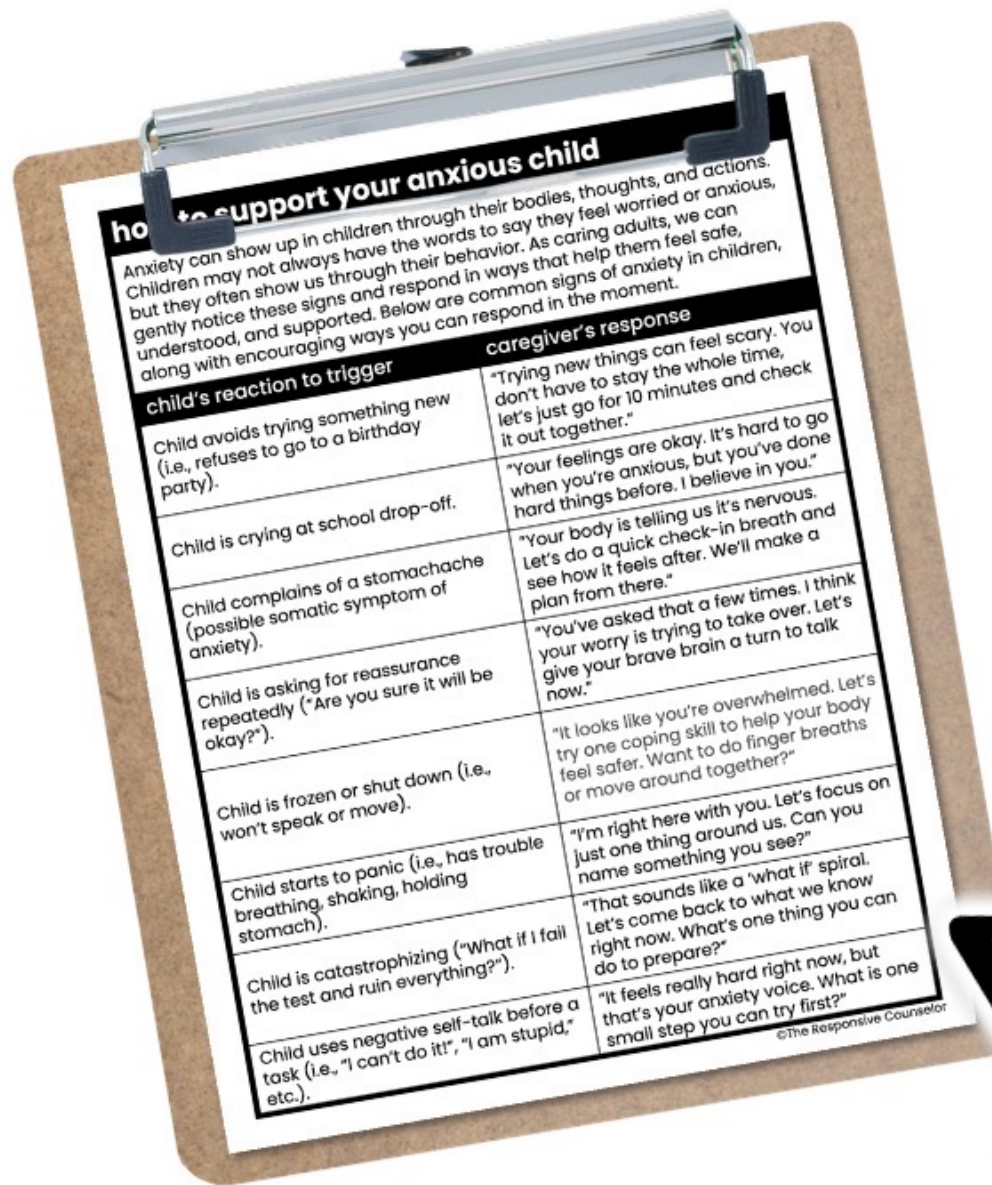
She begins crying uncontrollably. Mom feels a pang of guilt; she has been working long hours and hasn't spent much time with Penny lately. In an effort to comfort her, she responds, "Oh honey, nothing is going to happen to me. How about we both stay home today and watch movies?"



coaching script



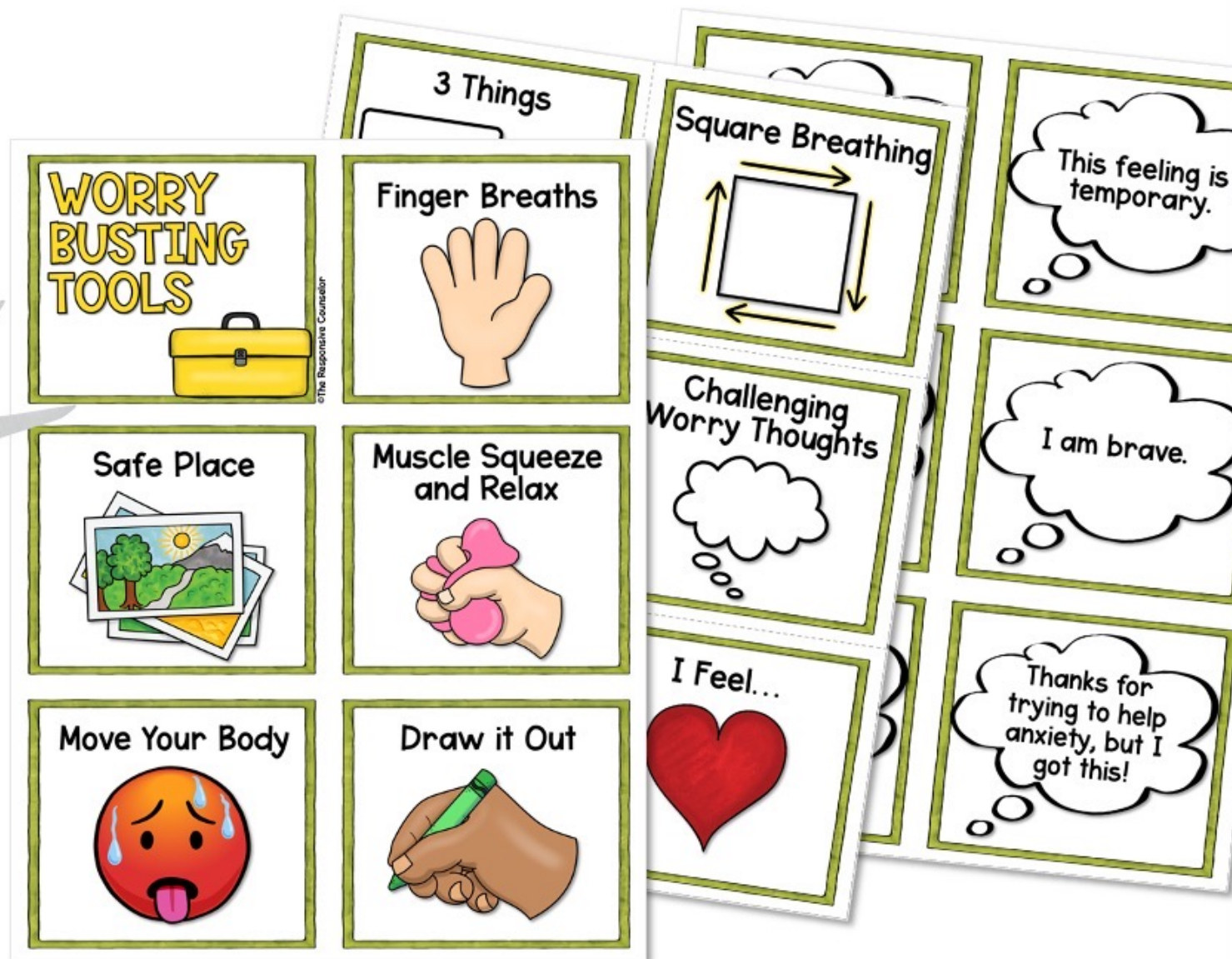
child's reaction to trigger	caregiver's response
Child avoids trying something new (i.e., refuses to go to a birthday party).	"Trying new things can feel scary. You don't have to stay the whole time, let's just go for 10 minutes and check it out together."
Child is crying at school drop-off.	"Your feelings are okay. It's hard to go when you're anxious, but you've done hard things before. I believe in you."
Child complains of a stomachache (possible somatic symptom of anxiety).	"Your body is telling us it's nervous. Let's do a quick check-in breath and see how it feels after. We'll make a plan from there."
Child is asking for reassurance repeatedly ("Are you sure it will be okay?").	"You've asked that a few times. I think your worry is trying to take over. Let's give your brave brain a turn to talk now."



Includes an easy to use reference guide for caregivers to feel confident in their response to their child's triggers!

take home handout

Coping skill cards for caregivers to make during the workshop and take home to use when supporting their child!



make and take

Slideshow text is fully editable to fit the presentation to your unique needs, with suggested scripting for each slide.

AutoSave

Anxiety Workshop — Saved to my Mac

Search (Cmd + Ctrl + U)

Home Insert Draw Design Transitions Animations Slide Show Record Review **View** Flat Pack Power Pack

Normal Outline Slide Notes Reading View Slide Master Handout Master Notes Ruler Gridlines Guides Notes Zoom Fit to Window Macros

1 To HIDE a slide -> right click the slide, then select "Hide Slide"
To COPY a slide -> right click the slide, then select "Duplicate Slide"
All text boxes are editable. You can change what they say, change the font, increase or decrease text size, change the paragraph spacing, etc.
The fonts should all appear correctly no matter the device, but in case something seems off - the font used is Poppins

2 **breaking the anxiety cycle:**
empowering caregivers to help

3 **agenda**
unhealthy responses anxious children have
cycle of anxiety
how we respond
strategies that work
q&a

4 **unhealthy responses**

anxiety / response	what it might look like in a worried child
avoidance	refusing to go to a community party, saying "I'm tired," or hiding in their room when it's time to leave
needs	becoming silent, expressiveness, or unresponsive when asked a question or confronted with a new situation
verbal complaints	complaining of a stomachache, headache, or feeling sick before school, practice, or sleepovers
aggression	yelling, hitting, or throwing objects when asked to do something anxiety provoking
reassurance seeking	asking the same question over and over: "May you have the bag?" or "Are you picking me up from school?"
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What's the worst? Remember, this is a common issue, so please, be gentle.

Welcome everyone! My name is (your name) and I am the School Counselor here at (schools' name). You are probably hearing about anxiety and specifically anxiety in children all the time. It's mentioned on social media, podcasts, and even parenting books. And for good reason! The CDC estimates that 11% of children three to seventeen are diagnosed with anxiety. It is a real problem. So, we're talking today about anxiety in children, both the low-level kind that any kiddo can experience, and the more intense kind that can significantly impact their day-to-day life.

Slide 2 of 33 English (United States) Accessibility: Investigate Notes Comments 90%



editable

Advertise your workshop with the included flyer!

- Print and send home with students
- Save as an image and post on the school's website/social media
- Attach as a PDF to email for newsletters



promotional flyer

What grade levels is this workshop designed for?

This workshop is designed with elementary-level families in mind. However, counselors can edit the scenarios and examples to make it geared towards middle school.

How do I use the Google Slides version?

PowerPoint can be uploaded into your Google Drive and edited/used in Google Slides if needed.

How long was the workshop designed for?

- 30 minutes for the slideshow
- 5–15 minutes for the q&a
- 10–15 minutes for the make and take caregiver activity

Who can lead this workshop?

School Counselors, School Social Workers, School Psychologists, and Child Mental Health Therapists.

Hi, I'm Sara! At The Responsive Counselor, we create resources for school counselors, child therapists, and teachers that improve social emotional learning and help students be their best selves. Our focus is creating resources that are effective (using research-based best practices) and engaging (through collaborative learning and relevant scenarios) for students.

B.A. from Michigan State University

Psychology and Anthropology

M.S. from Vanderbilt University

Community, Research, and Action

M.Ed. From Vanderbilt University

Human Development Counseling:
School Counseling & Mental
Health

experience

I'm a former school counselor from a large southeastern school district with a wonderfully diverse group of students. I created and implemented a data-based comprehensive school counseling program while helping classroom teachers and administrators implement schoolwide SEL and restorative practices. Now, I share my ideas and resources to reach students and help educators across the world!



the
responsive
counselor

let's connect:

