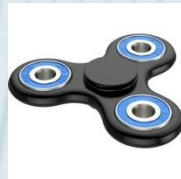


Kids and Fear:

What do they worry about?

How can we help?

SPINNERS:



CLICKERS:



STRESS BALLS:



IS THAT ENOUGH??? **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

IT'S NO LONGER THIS?



THIS...



THIS...



AND CERTAINLY NOT THIS...



INSTEAD IT IS NOW MORE LIKE THIS...



OR THIS...



OR EVEN THIS



SOME THINGS JUST LOOK DIFFERENT

TEXTING IN CLASS



STAFF HAPPY HOUR



Do worry, fear, anxiety have a purpose?

WORRY/ANXIETY/FEAR

Worry, anxiety and fear exist as part of our human response to threat, OR PERCEIVED THREAT.

It's part of the stress response, survival system that each of us has.

A well regulated stress response system is
necessary to keep us safe.











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SO, WHAT DO OUR KIDS REALLY WORRY ABOUT:

1. School- school grades, success;
2. Family- conflict, separation/divorce; if single parent household, “Will my other parent die or leave?”
3. Peer relationships: rejection or inclusion
4. **Social and economic conditions:** Bullying and what they see on TV or social media; Whether there is enough money to pay the bills.

NOT SCHOOL SHOOTINGS!

Parents and other adults (teachers/school staff) tend to worry more about school shootings or other school dangers **MORE** than the students.

Kids are experts, however, in picking up on the fears of the adults around them.

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The more you watch, the more the brain is tricked into thinking there is an increased probability of it happening here.

Some worry and anxiety is warranted. It is not always bad or wrong.

Having a reasonable conversation with children about danger, or school shootings, can even *reduce* fear and worry—IF the adult is calm.

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1. School shootings are actually very rare;
2. Practice drills serve to keep us safer.

Evacuation Drills/Lock downs/ Shelter in Place:

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We would never think to add fire and smoke to a fire drill to make it more realistic.

WE HAVE ACCOMMODATED OTHER FEAR

Movie theaters always, by law, tell us where the EXITs are. We are now comfortable with that.

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You insist that your children wear **seat belts** or are in child seats, without creating fear;

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Movie theaters always, by law, tell us where the **EXITs** are. We are now comfortable with that.

You insist that your children wear **seat belts** or are in child seats, without creating fear;

Your smoke detector at home is not a source of fear, but a level of comfort and safety

September 11, 2001

FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF 9-11

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1. Increase in anxiety medication prescriptions

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4. Steps taken to protect **self**: avoid public events, install security alarms, or purchase a gun.
5. For some, the fear of anthrax is still all too real

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When adults harbor fear, they cannot protect their children from it. Managing our own fears is critical to the well being of our children.

Not allowing your children out of your sight--bus stops, play grounds, neighborhoods—can instill and exaggerate their own fears about safety.

SAFETY FOR OUR CHILDREN MEANS

1. Creating safe homes, physically and emotionally
2. Nurturing attachments
3. Avoiding shame and embarrassment
4. Avoiding negative judgment and harsh language
5. Being predictable
6. Affirming the value of the children
7. Creating safe spaces for our children to be children
8. Understanding that adult fear and anger is a legacy given to our children.

PREREQUISITES FOR WELL BEING

1. Attachment/touch
2. Safety/physical and emotional
3. Soothing and calming adult behavior

All important and all necessary for healthy development

.. science now tells us that it is the *reliable presence of at least one supportive adult relationship* and *multiple opportunities for developing effective coping strategies* that are the essential building blocks for strengthening the capacity to do well in the face of adversity.

ENVIRONMENTS

Children who have been traumatized, or have lived in chaotic circumstances, **“need to be in environments that restore their sense of safety, control, and predictability...”**



WHERE DOES CHANGE OCCUR?

If we focus more on what the adults are doing in response, and less on what the students are doing to provoke, that's where the change can happen.

It is easier for us to influence the adults' reactions.

WHAT IS IT THAT OUR CHILDREN NEED?

Because they are HUMAN, all children need soothing and calming attention delivered by adults who are healthy and calm.

So, where does the solution to this fear begin?

Unless someone like
you cares a whole
awful lot, nothing's
going to get better.
It's NOT.

-Dr.Seuss

Nothing
CHANGES

IF

NOTHING
Changes

THIS IS A BEGINNING.

We must help the children find their way.

If not us...
WHO???

