

## September 2020 - Managing Worries & Stress

### Managing School Worries



#### K-1st graders

We read the book "Don't Feed The Worry Bug" and introduced the first worrywoo monster "Wince" who is the monster of worry. We processed what Wince's constant worrying stopped him from achieving.

We processed how giving our worries a name can make it easier to talk to our worries and contradict what our worries are telling us.

We discussed how he managed his worries by calling in the "worrywoo staff" and asked the students who is someone they can talk to about their worries.

K-1st Graders: Read "Don't Feed the WorryBug" Video  
[https://youtu.be/vRAu-3s\\_vT4](https://youtu.be/vRAu-3s_vT4)

#### 2nd-4th Graders

We read the book "Worry Says, What" and processed what the main character's worries were telling her.

We processed how giving our worries a name and an image in our head can make it easier to talk to our worries and help us contradict what our constant worries are telling us.

We discussed what a positive affirmation is and how telling ourselves positive things like "I am brave" or "I do have friends" can help us challenge our worries.

2nd-4th Graders: Read "Worry Says What" Video  
[https://youtu.be/rG\\_G0m3KBeU](https://youtu.be/rG_G0m3KBeU)

### How to Help Your Middle or High School Student:

- Assist them with development of time management skills
- Encourage sleep, exercise, and healthy eating
- Monitor parental pressure, encouraging independence
- Encourage them to go outdoors for at least 15 minutes a day
- Assist in identifying stressors your middle / high school student may be experiencing by asking questions and beginning a conversation. Even if he or she says nothing, plant the seed, which may spark a dialogue at a future time.
- Limit screen time or, depending on his or her age, encourage them to oversee and limit their own screen time.

# DISCOVERY SCHOOL COUNSELING CONNECTION

## Anxiety presents itself in many different ways...

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The desire to control people and events



Difficulty getting to sleep



Feeling agitated or angry



Defiance and other challenging behaviors



Having high expectations for self, including school work & sports



Avoiding activities or events (including school)

Pain like stomachaches and headaches



Struggling to pay attention and focus



Intolerance of uncertainty



Crying and difficulty managing emotions



Over-planning for situations and events



Feeling worried about situations or events

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According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, many students who are feeling overwhelmed and stressed may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Frequent stomach aches and/or headaches
- Changes in appetite
- Chronic worrying
- Nail biting
- Changes in mood/mood swings
- Fatigue and increased desire to sleep
- Sadness/depression
- Retreating to bedroom/withdrawn
- Self-harm
- "Checking out" from responsibilities
- Frequent absences
- Physical aggression
- Quick temper
- Frequent crying
- Difficulty sleeping
- Lying to teachers/parents
- Failing grades
- Substance abuse

### Want to build on this skill at home?

Children respond to their fears in different ways. Some kids are very open and others show their anxieties and fears in their behavior.

#### How to Help Your Child

James J. Crist, Ph.D.

**Give lots of encouragement** when your child chooses to use some of the exercises we discuss in the presentations like naming the worry, talking to someone they trust, and using positive affirmations. If he or she is having trouble, reassure your child that time and practice will help them overcome their fears.

**Set an example for handling situations without anxiety** and dealing with your own worries or fears will help your child greatly and will model coping skills.

**Make exercise a family activity.** Physical activity can be very helpful for an anxious child, but many children don't want to do it alone

**Let your child know it's okay to express feelings.** Children are sensitive to how adults react when they share their feelings so it's important to show acceptance of their feelings.

**Be a coach.** Help your child think of ways to overcome the fears instead of telling him or her what to do.

**Consider Reward Systems for children up to about 12 years old to reward the behaviors you want to encourage-** Some children respond well to extra incentives to do hard work while other children reward systems can seem like an opportunity to fail. Ask your child if he or she would like to try a reward system. Reassure your child that if it does not work it just means they need to try something different.

#### Discovery Counseling Team

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