



▶▶ **Understanding Anxiety and Building Resilience.**

United Mental Health Promoters | Promotores de Salud Mental



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
**DEPARTMENT OF  
MENTAL HEALTH**  
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

# ▶▶ Agenda

- **What is Anxiety?**
- **When to Seek Professional Help?**
- **Types of Anxiety**
- **The Power of Resilience**
- **How you can Help/Prevention**
- **Resources**

# Reflection

How would you describe anxiety?



# ▶▶ Fear vs Anxiety



*Anxiety and fear are words often used interchangeably, but they are not the same.*

- **Fear:** an emotional response to a known or definite threat.
- **Anxiety:** a diffused, unpleasant, vague sense of apprehension.



# Stress vs Anxiety

## STRESS

- Generally is a response to an *external* cause, such as taking a big test or arguing with a friend.
- Goes away once the situation is resolved.
- Can be positive or negative. For example, it may inspire you to meet a deadline, or it may cause you to lose sleep.

**Both stress and anxiety can affect your mind and body. You may experience symptoms such as:**

- Excessive worry
- Uneasiness
- Tension
- Headaches or body pain
- High blood pressure
- Loss of sleep

## ANXIETY

- Generally is *internal*, meaning it's your reaction to stress.
- Usually involves a persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that doesn't go away, and that interferes with how you live your life.
- Is constant, even if there is no immediate threat.



# The Nature of Anxiety

**PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS**

**BEHAVIORAL  
REACTIONS:  
AVOIDANCE**

**ANXIETY**

**FUTURE ORIENTED  
THINKING &  
PERCEPTION OF  
THREAT**

# ▶▶ Statistics-IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND

**Percent of adults aged 18 and over with regular feelings of worry, nervousness, or anxiety:**

**11.7%**

**Estimate of diagnosis of anxiety among children aged 3-17 years in 2016-2019:**

**9.4%**

(approximately 5.8 million)

**The LGBTQ community are more likely to develop mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety:**

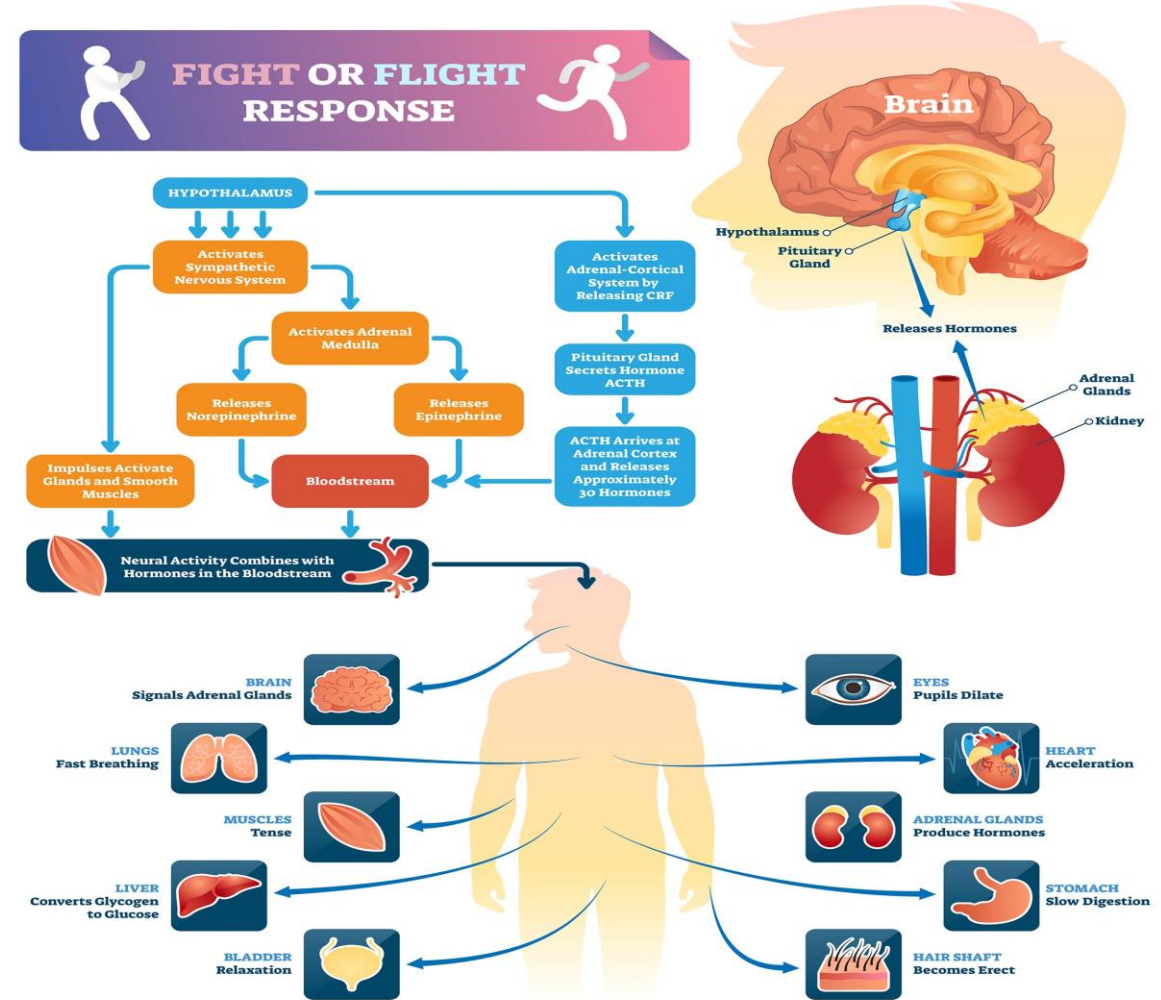
Up to **60%**

**Exposure to community level violence also has been documented to increase rates of depression and anxiety and can lead to developmental problems among youths**

**There seem to be lower rates of anxiety disorders among foreign-born versus US-born adults across most racial-ethnic backgrounds**

# ▶▶ Fight, Flight, Freeze or Fawn Response

- **These physical sensations alert our bodies and prepare us for “action”**
- **Fight:** facing any perceived threat aggressively.
- **Flight:** running away from the danger.
- **Freeze:** unable to move or act against a threat.
- **Fawn:** immediately acting to try to please







When anxiety becomes a concern

**TALK TO SOMEONE**



# ▶▶ When is it an Anxiety Disorder?

***When it interferes with our daily life***



# Types of Anxiety

- **Generalized Anxiety DO (GAD)**
- **Panic Disorder**
- **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD)**
- **Other Disorders**
  - **Specific phobias**
  - **Obsessive compulsive Disorder (OCD)**
  - **Social Anxiety**
  - **Separation Anxiety**

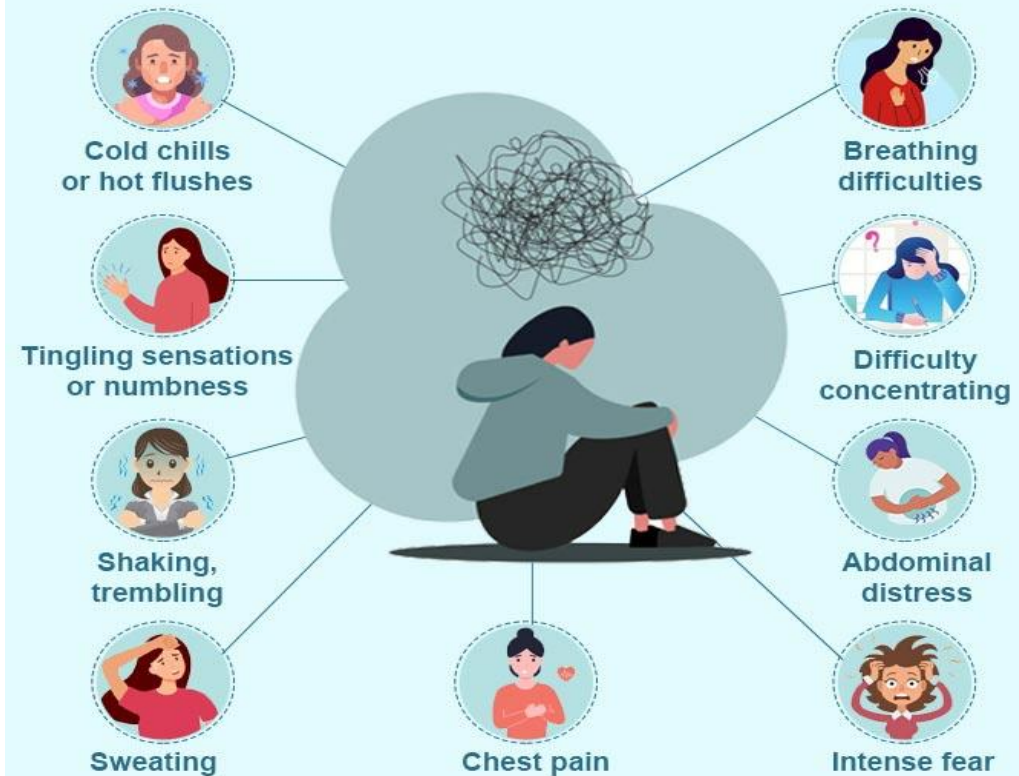




# Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- Most common disorder among adults.
- It consists of long-term periods in which a person suffers from constant and excessive worry.
- The concern is not focused on a particular object or situation, but it's generalized.
- GAD causes a child to worry about things that parents might not expect would cause them worry because they are “just kids” (i.e. school, recess, the future, the weather, getting hurt, the world, etc..)

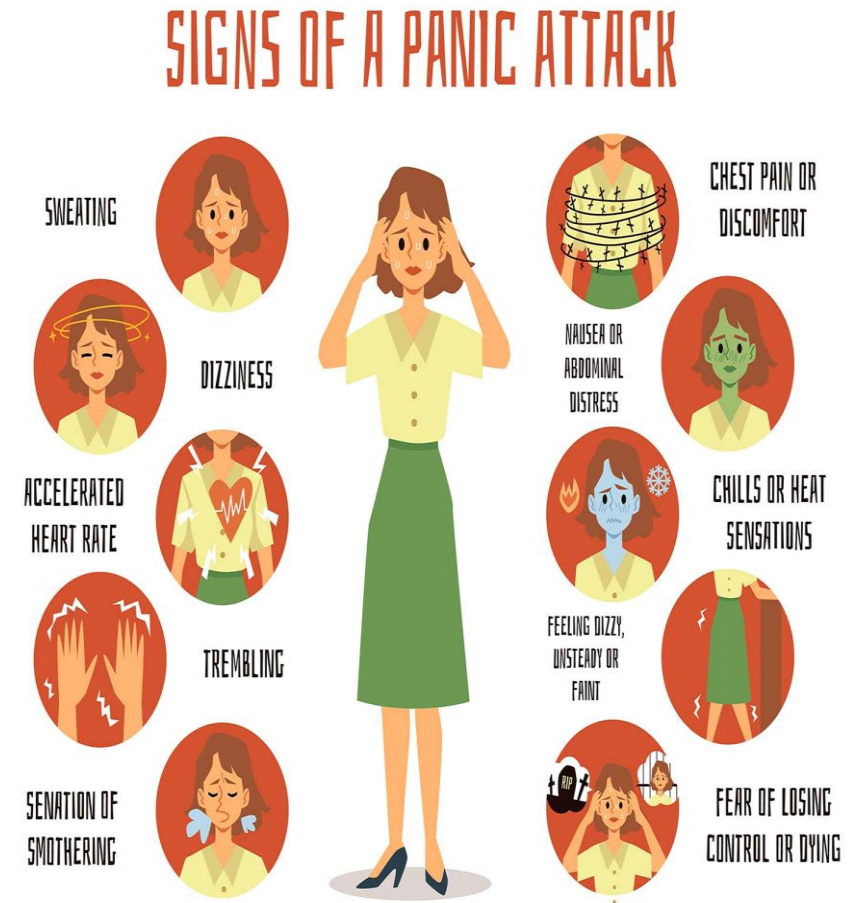
## SYMPTOMS OF GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD)



# ▶▶ Panic Disorder (Panic Attacks)

Panic attacks can be very frightening. When panic attacks occur, you might think you're losing control, having a heart attack or even dying.

- The person has brief episodes (less than 10 minutes).
- Intense periods of terror and agitation, usually accompanied by physical symptoms:
- Nausea, dizziness, vomiting, etc.
- They recur and seriously interfere with the person's daily life.
- Common to happen in children and teens (symptoms are similar to those in adults)



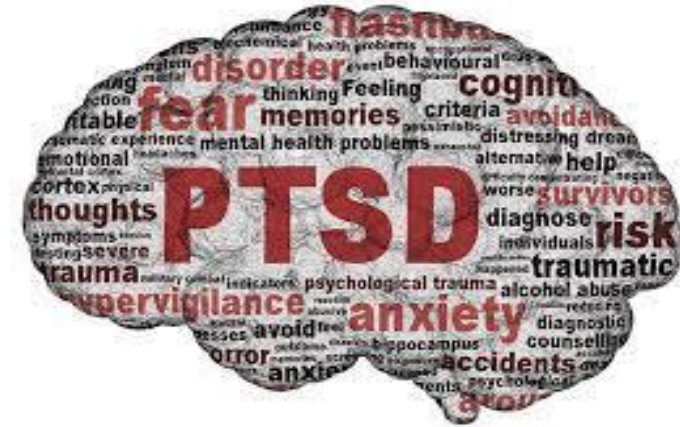


# Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

- In the case of post-traumatic stress, anxiety is caused by a previous traumatic event (i.e. an accident, abuse, a loss, exposure to violence, natural disaster, shootings, other).
- This type of event can have a strong emotional impact on the person that interferes with their ability to function in daily life.
- They are usually extreme situations for the person
- A child or teen may be diagnosed with PTSD if they have gone through a trauma, and if their stress symptoms are severe and last long after the trauma is over.

## PTSD Symptoms

- Flashbacks
- Nightmares
- intrusive thoughts
- Anxiety
- Avoidance and changes in mood and thinking
- re-experiencing the traumatic event
- avoiding reminders of the trauma
- startling easily
- having negative thoughts and beliefs.



**Important to note:** Going through trauma does **not** always cause PTSD.

# Other Disorders



## Phobias, fears and aversions

- Fear of something specific
- Symptoms come from being exposed to what causes fear
- Children with a phobia try to avoid the thing they fear, they feel terrified when exposed with it and are hard to comfort.

## Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

- Excessive or persistent thoughts that lead to repetitive behavior



# Other Disorders

## Social Anxiety Disorder

- Excessive fear of situations where the person feels evaluated by others. May include meetings, conversations with strangers, being watched while giving a speech or presentation
- Social phobia may cause children to avoid school or friends.

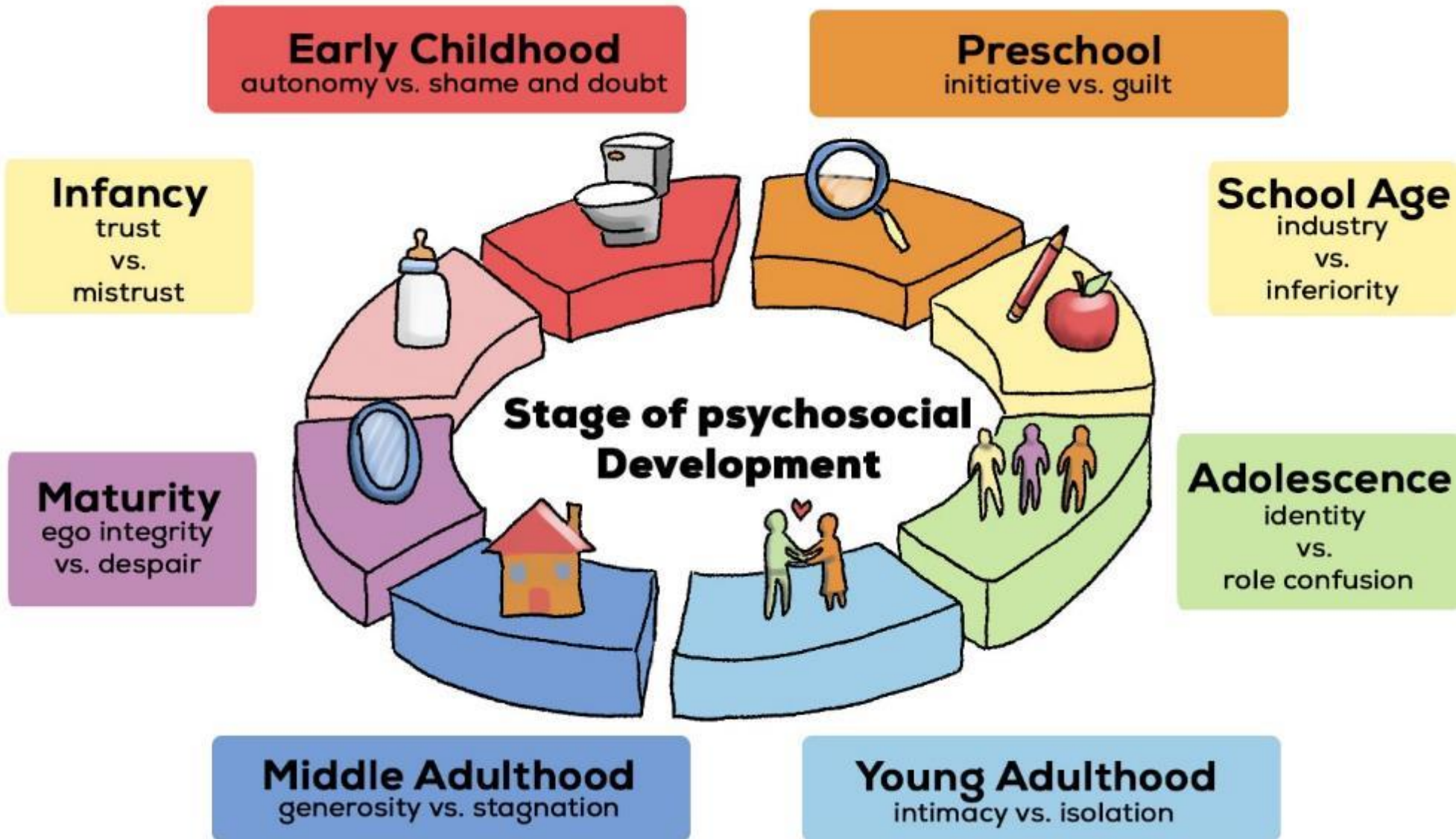
## Separation Anxiety Disorder

- Separation anxiety creates fear or stress when separating from an attachment or meaningful figure in young children.
- Normal for babies and very young children when they first separate from their parents/main caregiver.
- ***It is a disorder when kids do not “outgrow” the fear of being apart.***

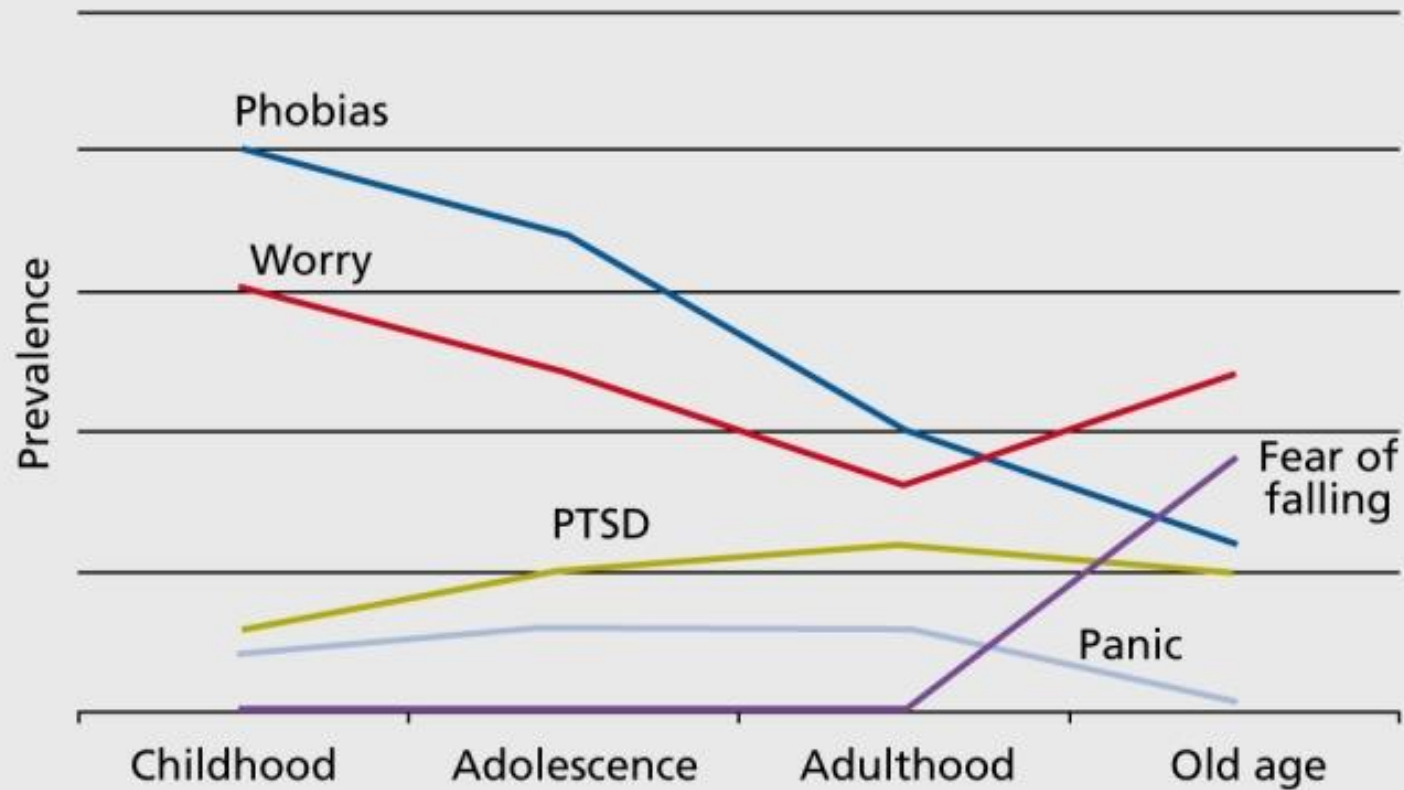




# Stages of Development



# ▶▶ Changes in Anxiety Disorder Presentation Across the Lifespan





# Knowledge is Power



- Trauma
- Stress due to an illness
- Stress buildup
- Personality
- Other mental health disorders
- Having blood relatives with an anxiety disorder
- Drugs or alcohol

# ADOPT PROTECTIVE FACTORS TO FACE CHALLENGES

BEHAVIOURAL  
CHALLENGES



Behavioural  
problems



Conflicts with  
friends or family



Turning to drugs  
and alcohol



Physical  
activity



Emotional  
support



Social  
activities



Skill  
development



Proper  
nutrition



Adequate  
sleep

LIFE  
CHALLENGES



Covid-19:  
uncertainty  
and adaptation



Stress of  
studies



Anxiety and  
depression



**RESILIENCE**

For protective factors at the family and  
community levels, visit [nbhc.ca/resilience](https://nbhc.ca/resilience)



New Brunswick  
Health Council

Conseil de la santé  
du Nouveau-Brunswick

# ▶▶ What to Do (and Not Do) When Children Are Anxious

- ✓ The goal isn't to eliminate anxiety, but to help a child manage it.
- ✓ Don't avoid things just because they make a child anxious.
- ✓ Express positive — but realistic — expectations.
- ✓ Respect their feelings, but don't empower them.
- ✓ Don't ask leading questions.
- ✓ Don't reinforce the child's fears
- ✓ Encourage the child to tolerate their anxiety
- ✓ Try to keep the anticipatory period short.
- ✓ Think things through with the child
- ✓ Try to model healthy ways of handling anxiety.



# Prevention

Although we cannot predict what will cause someone to develop an anxiety disorder, there are some steps we can take to reduce the impact of symptoms if you're anxious:

- **Get help early.**
- **Stay active.**
- **Avoid alcohol or drug use.**



# Take action: Practice “Brain Care”

**Nourishing  
Your Body**

**Moving  
Daily**

**The 5  
Braincare  
Behaviors**

**Resting  
Regularly**

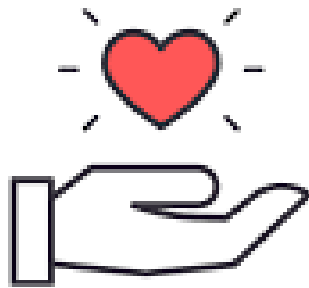
**Staying  
Curious**

**Finding Time  
to Pause**



# Other Tips to Manage Anxiety:

- **DO NOT** hide your own anxiety
- **Manage** your stress
- **Know** what triggers you
- **Role** model
- **Have** a plan
- **Step** away if needed
- **Find** support



**Stronger Together:**  
*Facing Challenges as a Community*



# Seek Professional Treatment

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The most common treatment for Anxiety Disorders are **Psychotherapy** and **Medication** support. Depending on the severity of the situation, your doctor may recommend one, or both in combination.

- **CBT-Cognitive behavioral Therapy and Exposure therapy**

- \*\*\*If applicable, the child's school may be included in the treatment plan if needed and appropriate
- \*\*\*For very young children, involving parent(s) in treatment is crucial and key.



**For mental health resources, services, and support, please call our 24/7 Help Line at (800) 854-7771 or visit <https://dmh.lacounty.gov/get-help-now>**

**You may also connect with us at @LACDMH on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube**

**Need to be connected to mental health services?**

**Call 800-854-7771**  
(ext. 1) for mental health referrals and crisis services.



**Your emotional wellbeing is our top priority.**

**Call 800-854-7771**



**Need resources for veterans and their families?**

**Call 800-854-7771**  
(ext. 3)



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# ▶▶ Questions?





# Stigma and Discrimination Reduction (SDR) Survey



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
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LONG BEACH  
CALIFORNIA

## SDR Program Questionnaire (English)

Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Program Participant Questionnaire



<https://tinyurl.com/SDR-Eng>

To help us improve, please tell us what you think!

- SDR is anonymous and voluntary
- Please click on the link in the chat box and fill in:

Program:

“Understanding Anxiety...”

Presenters:

My name is ...

Date:

Today is ...

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