



CCPS Mental Health Update

Cecil County Public Schools is committed to empowering our staff and families to meet the social and emotional needs of our students, with a focus on behavioral health and trauma-responsiveness, to assure that every student is ready to learn, achieve success, and experience positive relationships.

Did You Know:

Fear is inescapable. Oftentimes, these fears will lead to avoidance of certain tasks. A caretaker's natural instinct is more often to soothe and comfort, but cannot always be there to help calm a kid's fears.

Strategy of the Month: *Building Confidence and Independence in Children to Manage Their Fears*



Fear and Anxiety can be useful; it helps protect a child from harm.

Some children may be more fearful than others

- **Genetic susceptibility:** some children are more sensitive and emotional in temperament
- **At least one anxious parent or caregiver:** children learn from watching how others behave
- **Overprotective caregiving:** can create a more dependent child and lead to feelings of helplessness

How to Build Confidence and Independence to Manage Fears

Adapted from: "How to Help Children Manage Fears" Child Mind Institute

- **Self-Regulation-** the ability to process and manage our own emotions and behaviors in a healthy way. Allows us to talk ourselves down or to feel things without acting on them. This takes time for children; be comfortable with letting children be a little *uncomfortable* to figure things out.
- **Don't Fear Fears-** "Being afraid

- **Stressful events**

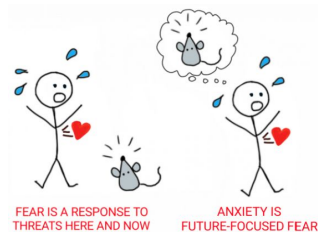
Common Fears for Toddlers

- Feel overwhelmed by powerful emotions
- Development of irrational fears (i.e. being sucked down the drain in a bathtub, falling down the toilet, monsters in the closet or under the bed)

Common Fears for Children of Primary School Age

- Fears tend to grow and develop because of a deeper understanding of the world around them
- Fears are often both real and imaginary
- Fear of the dark, burglary, war, death, separation or divorce of loved ones, supernatural beings such as ghosts and monsters

For more information for common fears of babies, please visit [Anxiety and Fear in Children- Better Health Channel](#).



sometimes is a normal, healthy part of growing up”- Elianna Platt. The minor fears (i.e. monsters in the closet) allow for a time for children to practice self-regulation. But parents must address their own anxiety first. Jumping in to fix things might help lessen the fear in the short term, but in the long term it can be more difficult for the child to learn how to calm him/herself down.

- **Talk about what is frightening him/her**- ask specific questions (i.e. What makes that scary?)
- **Validate the fear and move on**- let your child know you are taking the fear seriously. Once this reassurance is offered, move on (i.e. start talking about working together to feel braver).
- **Make a plan**- set reasonable goals and talk through the steps to reach it.
- **Encourage and be patient**- change takes time and fear is a powerful feeling. Be consistent, praise your child.
- **Not all fears are the same**- understand that some fears won't interfere with a child's life and they don't need to get over those fears. Be aware if a child's fear is persistent, overly intense, or interfering with daily life.

If you have a child in need of support and/or resources click on the following link.
[Student Support Request Form](#)

The Maryland Coalition for Families is available to provide the following supports

- Parents and caregivers of children with mental health needs
- Anyone who cares for a loved one struggling with substance use disorder
- Anyone who cares for a loved one struggling with problem gambling

Families and others can reach MCF by:

- Calling our statewide intake line at 410-703-8267
- Emailing info@mdcoalition.org