

HSE Lunch 'n Learn

How to Manage Your Child's Worry/Anxiety Without Going Crazy Yourself



Sally Groff, MA, LMFT, RPT
Groff & Associates, LLC

Let's Talk about Worry/ Anxiety...

- What is the difference between Worry and Anxiety?
- How is Worry/Anxiety tied to School Refusal?
- Where does Anxiety Reside in the Brain?
- What are the Different Types of Anxiety?
- What Can I Do to Help my Child?



Worry vs. Anxiety

Duration: Worry is usually tied to a specific event and ends when that event is resolved. Anxiety can continue even when there's no obvious cause.

Intensity: Worry is usually less intense than anxiety. Anxiety can be difficult to manage without professional help.

Focus: Worry is more focused on thoughts, while anxiety is felt throughout the body.

Impact: Worry doesn't usually impact daily functioning, but anxiety can.

Physical symptoms: Anxiety can cause physical symptoms like a racing heart, nausea, trembling, or weakness.

Cognitive component: Anxiety involves negative thoughts and worries about the future.

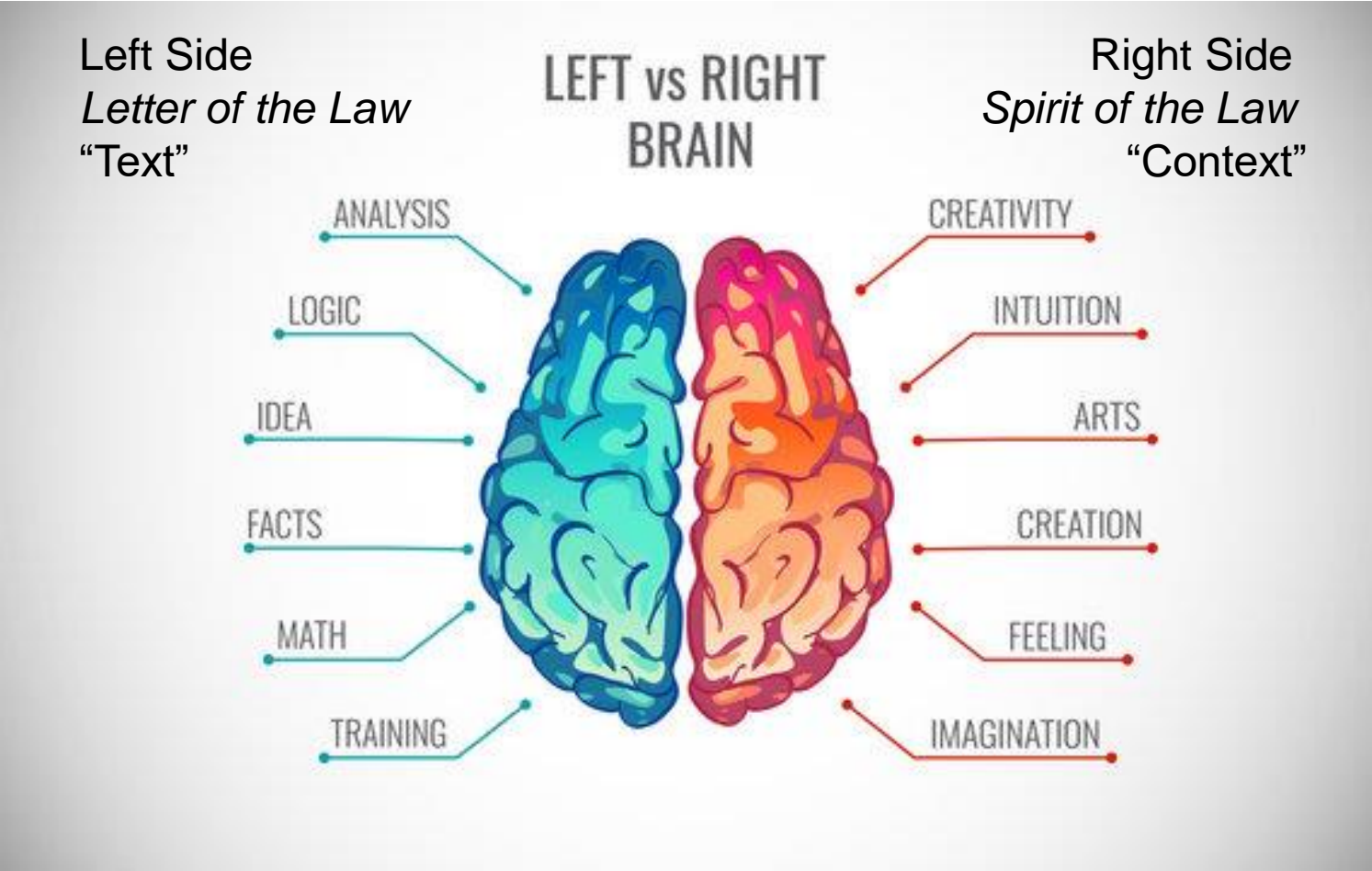


Worry/Anxiety is Tied to School Refusal

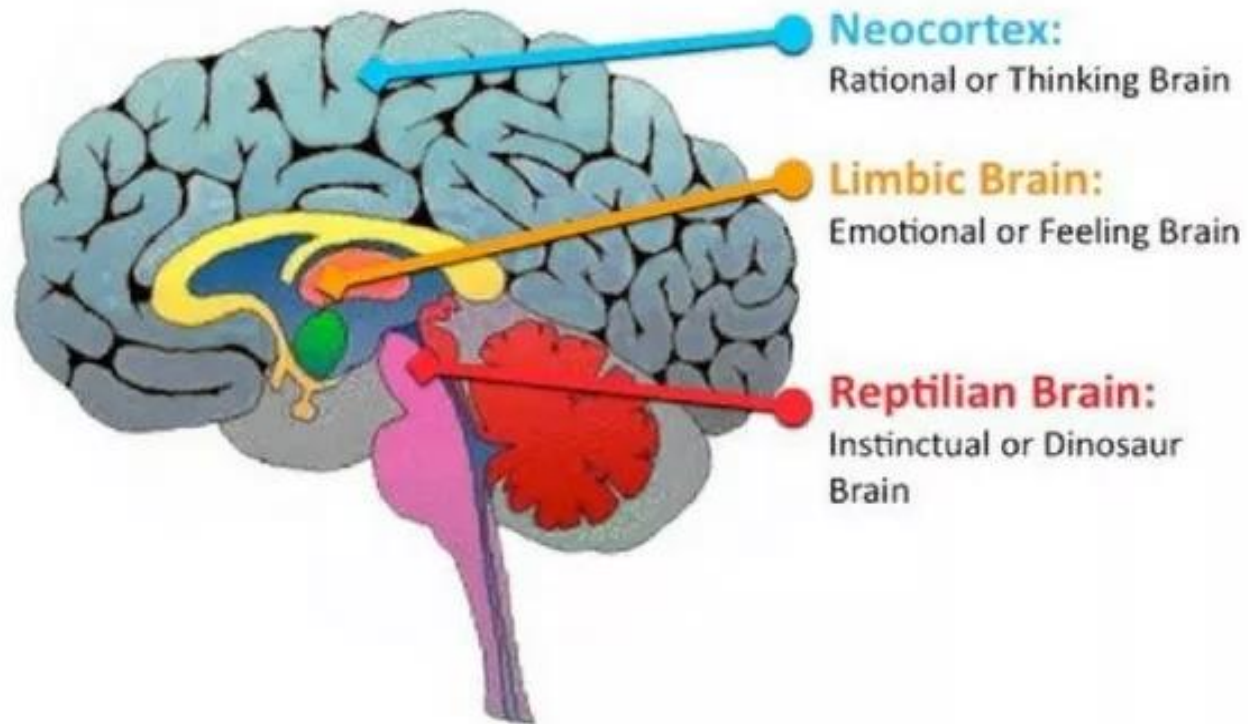
1. Fear of Negative Evaluation
2. Separation Anxiety
3. Overwhelm
4. Physical Symptoms
5. Avoidance Behavior
6. Support Systems



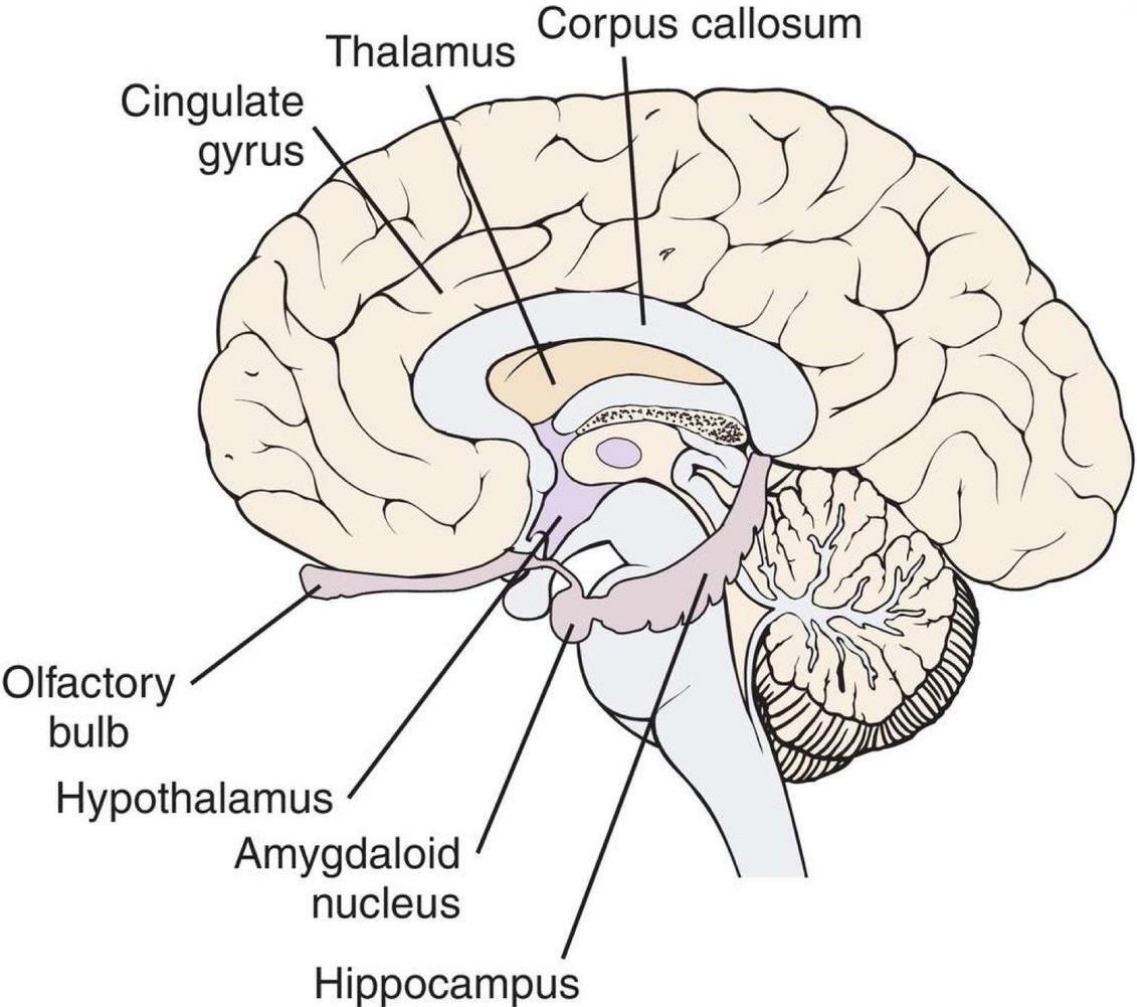
Upstairs Brain



Where Does Anxiety Reside in the Brain?



Downstairs Brain



Stinkin' Thinkin' Sides of the Brain

Left Side

Labeling

Gotta Be Right

Small Deal
Thinking

Always-ing

Mindreading

Black or White

Shoulds

Right Side

Future Telling

Remembering the Bad

Big Deal Thinking

Feelings Are Facts

Forgetting the Good

My Fault

Your Fault



Different Anxiety Types

- ▶ Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- ▶ Obsessive/Compulsive Disorder
- ▶ Panic Disorders/Panic Attacks
- ▶ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- ▶ Separation Anxiety
- ▶ Social Anxiety Disorder
- ▶ Specific Phobias

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

- Future events (“What’s going to happen to me when Mom and Dad die?”)
- Past behaviors and incidents (“I still feel sick when I remember tripping in front of the whole class last year and how everyone laughed at me”)
- Social acceptance (“What if my friends are only pretending to like me?”)
- Family matters (“Now that Kathy’s parents are getting divorced, what if mine do too?”)
- Personal abilities (“Why can’t I climb the rope swing in gym class like everyone else?”)
- Perceived personal shortcomings (“I’m so dumb”)
- School performance (“I’m feeling kind of confused in math class this semester. What if I fail?”)



Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Obsessions

Unwanted thoughts, images, or impulses that cause anxiety or distress. These can include obsessions with dirt or germs, violence, or forbidden behaviors.

Compulsions

Repetitive behaviors that a child feels are necessary to prevent bad things from happening.

These can include:

- Excessive hand washing, showering, or cleaning
- Placing things in a specific order
- Checking things repeatedly, like if a door is locked
- Repeating words or prayers
- Rituals, like moving or touching body parts in a certain way



Separation Anxiety

- ▶ Difficulty being away from parents or other loved ones.
- ▶ Excessive worry about harm to loved ones.
- ▶ Excessive worry about danger to self.
- ▶ Difficulty leaving the house, even to go to school.
- ▶ Difficulty sleeping.
- ▶ Feeling physically ill when away from loved ones.



Social Anxiety Disorder

- Fear of situations in which you may be judged negatively
- Worry about embarrassing or humiliating yourself
- Intense fear of interacting or talking with strangers
- Fear that others will notice that you look anxious
- Fear of physical symptoms that may cause you embarrassment, such as blushing, sweating, trembling or having a shaky voice
- Avoidance of doing things or speaking to people out of fear of embarrassment
- Avoidance of situations where you might be the center of attention
- Anxiety in anticipation of a feared activity or event
- Intense fear or anxiety during social situations
- Analysis of your performance and identification of flaws in your interactions after a social situation
- Expectation of the worst possible consequences from a negative experience during a social situation



How do I help my child?

- ▶ Help your child learn how to relax, manage stress, and face their fears.
- ▶ You can teach them breathing exercises, meditation, and positive self-talk.
- ▶ You can also try having them practice imagining themselves in a safe place or calming down in a difficult situation.
- ▶ Let your child make decisions and contribute to the family.
- ▶ Praise their efforts and focus on their skills, not just the results.



How do I help my child?

- ▶ Establish a regular bedtime and routine, and make sure your child's bedroom is a comfortable place.
- ▶ You can also try to avoid scary media, and limit screen time.
- ▶ Make sure your child gets enough sleep, eats well, and is active.
- ▶ You can also try to model healthy habits for your child.
- ▶ If your child is anxious about a change or distressing event, help them understand their feelings and that it's okay to feel that way.
- ▶ Don't minimize your child's feelings or tell them to "just do it". Instead, try to meet them with kindness and empathy.
- ▶ If you need help, you can get your child to a licensed counselor.

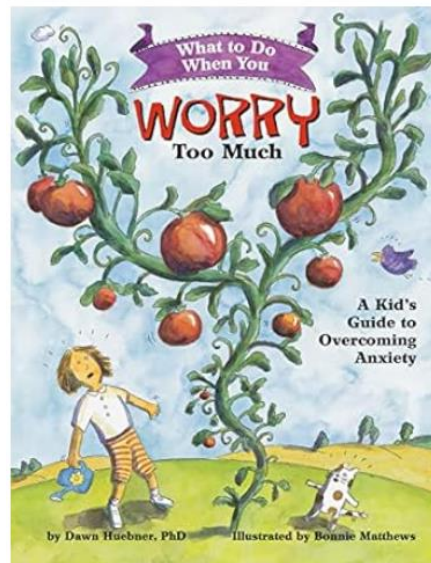
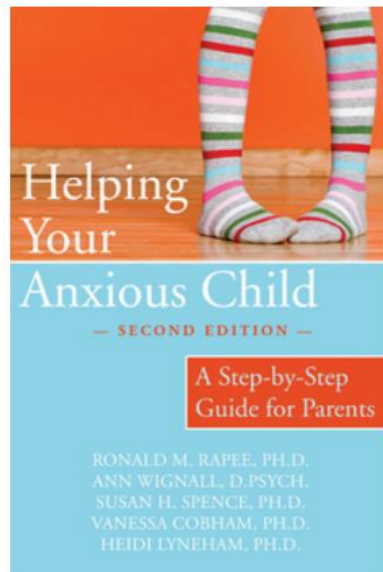
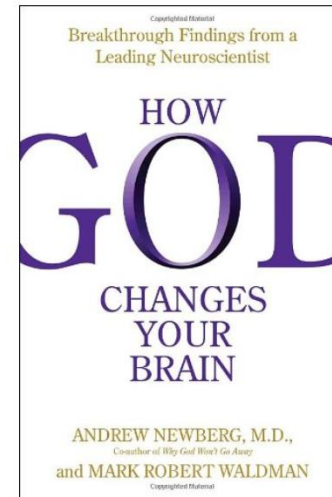
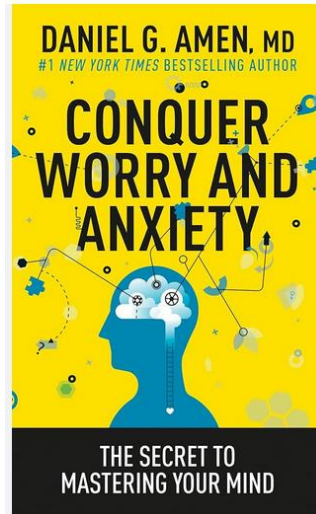
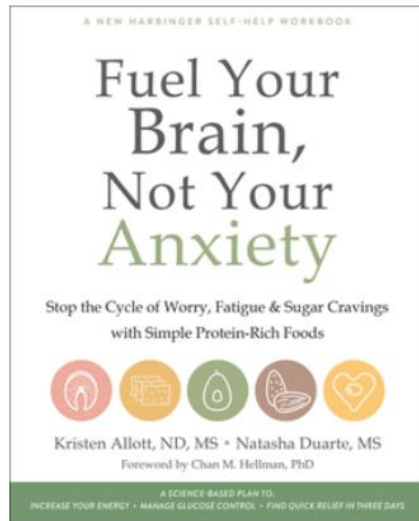
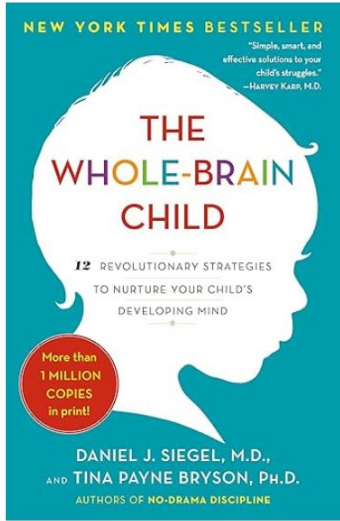


Moving Towards a Resolution

1. Open Communication
2. Gradual Exposure
3. Set Realistic Goals
4. Consistent Routines
5. Positive Reinforcement
6. Teach Coping Strategies
7. Collaborate with School
8. Avoid Power Struggles
9. Model Healthy Coping
10. Seek Professional Help



Books - HOOPLA



What's ahead...



Rob Evans, Executive Director
605 Sheridan Rd, Suite 1108
Noblesville, IN 46074
(317) 399-5332
info@parentingsolutionsnow.com

Preparing Our Kids For Success class

Learn to how improve your child's school attendance and performance! Missing just 10% of a school year can drastically affect a student's academic performance. Failing to attend school can shatter dreams and have life-long consequences for a child's future.

This 2.5-hour program is "Trauma Informed" and specifically designed to help parents intervene in absenteeism, truancy, and school performance. When parents engage in getting their children to school and support learning, attendance and grades go up.

Contact me

Sally Groff, MA, LMFT, RPT
Clinical Director, Groff & Associates
AAMFT Approved Supervisor

Phone: (317) 474-6448 x101

Email: Sally@GroffandAssociates.com

Website: www.GroffandAssociates.com

