

Dear Counselling Corner:

My child has really been struggling with anxiety ever since Spring Break and it seems to be getting worse. Help! What can I do? I don't remember feeling this way when I was young, and I do not know how to handle this. Thanks.

Worried Parent

Dear Parent:

There are a lot of uncertainties going on at the moment and many of us are feeling some anxiety. Our children are often very good at picking up on their parents' feelings and this could be contributing to their anxiety. Or perhaps they are feeling worried for other reasons. Feeling worried or anxious is a common human emotion which is important as it helps to prevent us from doing something potentially dangerous. It can also motivate us to stay safe. When our children are anxious, our immediate instinct is often to intervene. But how can we decide when to protect and when to empower? When should we take anxiety more seriously? [Mary K. Alvord, PhD](#), director of Alvord, Baker & Associates, a psychotherapy practice that specializes in the treatment of anxiety says: 'What differentiates normal from problematic anxiety is the degree to which the anxiety interferes with functioning that you would expect for a child of [a particular age] or developmental stage'.

Below are some great resources I found for parents to use to support children with anxiety related behaviour challenges. Please feel free to also reach out to me for more support.

- <https://childmind.org/article/what-to-do-and-not-do-when-children-are-anxious/>
- <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/helping-your-anxious-child-what-it-looks-like-and-what-parents-can-do/>
- <https://www.psycom.net/help-kids-with-anxiety>

The Counselling Corner is intended to offer some helpful advice, encouragement and insight on a variety of topics to support your child's social and emotional learning. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at hchang@sd43.bc.ca.

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