

## Recommendation for School/ Teachers

- Will do best in an organized & structured classroom. Chaotic classrooms are highly stressful for anxious kids
- Transitions and getting full direction/instructions can be difficult for anxious kids as their anxiety is distracting and they miss what has just been said (leads to confusion/more anxiety)
- Reinforce effort to face fear, not outcome
- Provide time-estimates for homework
- Involve him/her in activity where he/she can be successful
  - Writing about something of interest
  - Doing artwork for a project
- Allow “calm break” such as going to the washroom or going for water (with time limit). Anxious kids are typically quite honest and responsible and won’t misuse this privilege.
- Identify a safe person at school to talk to...someone that can check in briefly
- Allow crutches. Youth may bring a comfort thing to help ease anxiety (e.g., rock/toy in pocket)
- Provide discreet assistance (check-in)
- Practice deep breathing with whole class, especially before tests....it will help all
- Check with child preferred seating (back of class; front of class; end of row)....as they settle, you can push them out of their comfort zone a bit
- **Fight Fear by Facing Fear:** Graduated exposure (scaffolding) to stressful situations
  - Introduce elements of the fearful situation to the child gradually, always in a safe, supportive environment. Gently help the child move outside of his/her comfort zone to realize that he/she can do it!
    - Talking in class:
      - 1) Answer Y/N
      - 2) Opinion question (Do you like A or B?)
      - 3) Give the child a simple question the day before so she/he can practice his/her answer. Let him/her know that he/she will be the second person you call on.
        - Give child choices of how to approach working on this
    - Writing on board:
      - 1) Ask child to erase board or do something to help you at front of class
      - 2) Have them write date or information from piece of paper
      - 3) Have them circle right answer on board
      - 4) Have them solve a simple problem
    - Presentations:
      - Have podium or something they can hold on to (and hide behind!)
      - Allow visual aids (e.g., oral presentation with power point)....notes may shake in hands and power point gives them a chance to turn away from the audience

*Do not let child get out of doing the presentation it will reinforce their view that they CAN'T do it and that their anxiety is too overwhelming; and it conveys to them that we, adults, also believe this to be true*

**If you can, give options:**

      - 1) Ask the child if he/she wants to go first and get it out of way
      - 2) If refuses to do it in front of class, have them do it in front of teacher & parents
      - 3) Ideally, if they are not doing it in front of the class, after step 2 have them do the presentation again with one more teacher present (someone they like)

\* Talk to them about the process and options (1let them know they can do it once in front of class or twice as per above
  - **Facilitate social interactions**
    - Create ties between small groups of kids... creates shared experiences that can be drawn on later
    - Pair up anxious child with someone you see as good personality fit
      - send them together to drop something off at office
    - Allow him/her to sit where he/she is comfortable at assembly (e.g., at end of row)
    - Provide opportunity to work with a peer on assignments
    - Provide seating that is away from rambunctious children.
      - Unrealistic fear they will get in trouble
      - Anxiety is already consuming, don't have attention to spend on child next to them
      - Anxious children don't do well with the unpredictable behaviours of rambunctious children
    - PLACE CHILD IN CLASSROOM WITH AT LEAST ONE FRIEND