

# TIPS FOR RESPONDING TO YOUR CHILD'S ANXIETY

A primary developmental task throughout childhood and adolescence is to learn how to address and manage feelings of worry and fear.

20% of children who have increased anxiety, or develop an anxiety disorder struggle to cope with their worries and fears. This anxiety can overwhelm them and interfere with home, school, and other areas of life.



## COMMON SYMPTOMS

- Panic
- Fear
- Obsessive thoughts
- Nightmares or difficulty sleeping
- Physical illness (muscle tension, headaches, stomach aches)
- Difficulty focusing or being effective at school
- Irritable
- Avoiding social activities

These red flags can at times be hard to see

## WHAT CAN WE DO AS PARENTS?

- Provide opportunity for our children to talk to us
- Be an example
- Be mindful of stress inducers
- Teach and/or help your children use coping skills
  - Deep breathing
  - Mindfulness
  - Listening to music, going for a walk, playing a game they love
- Help them to know their educational environment and what to expect
- Use something they love to give them a sense of comfort
- Protein breakfast to wake up the frontal lobe of the brain to increase information processing
- Encourage sleep hygiene
  - Consistent bed time
  - Turn off screens 1 hour before bed
  - Create a bedtime routine to prepare/calm the body and brain for sleep
- Take care of you!

COVID has changed our daily lives and the normal routines our children know

Parents can help – provide structure, encourage coping skills, be an example!