


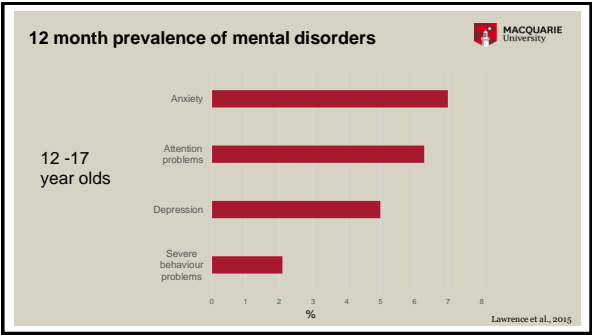
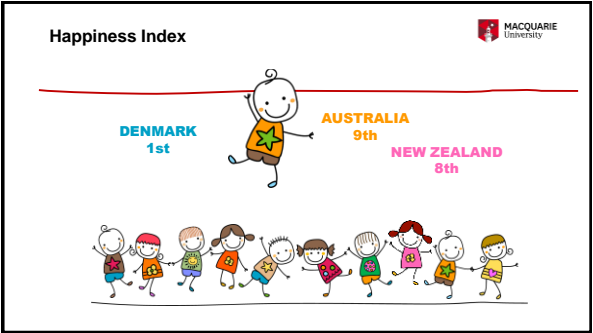
MACQUARIE
University

Understanding anxiety in young people

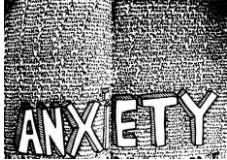
PROFESSOR JENNIE HUDSON

Centre for Emotional Health, Department of Psychology





Why Anxiety Disorders?



- Start early
- “Don’t kids grow out of it”
- Higher risk for depression
- Higher risk for suicide
- Higher risk for alcohol & drug problems
- Slower to move out of home
- Less likely to achieve potential

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What is Anxiety?



body

thoughts



actions



Types of anxiety

Broad based anxiety disorders



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comorbidity

- 9% no comorbidity
- 89% anxiety
- 19% behaviour
- 16% mood

Common types of anxiety



SOCIAL ANXIETY



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Common types of anxiety



GENERALISED ANXIETY



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Common types of anxiety



SEPARATION ANXIETY



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Common types of anxiety

SPECIFIC PHOBIA



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Understanding anxiety

How Does a Child Develop Anxiety?



GENETICS



REACTIONS FROM OTHERS



WATCHING OTHERS



ENVIRONMENT TRIGGERS

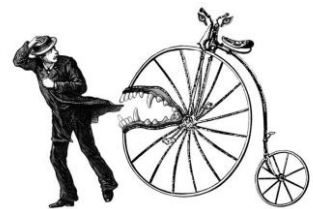


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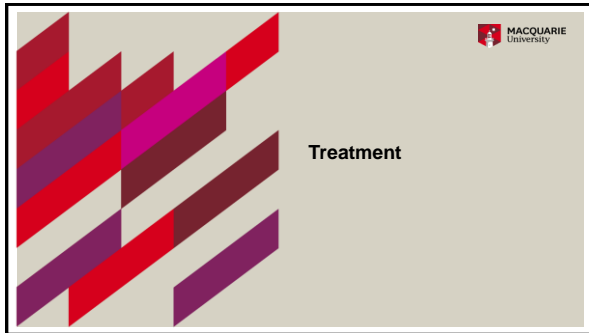
What keeps anxiety going?

AVOIDANCE



A VICIOUS CYCLE

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Treatment

- Cognitive Behavioural Treatment is the treatment of choice

Overcome Fear by Facing Fear

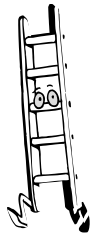
Fighting fear by faCing fear

- Encourage facing fears in small steps
- Allow fear to be experienced
- Allow learning of new information
- Repeat each "step" to enable learning
- Reward each step

Fear of lifts



1. Observing a large shopping centre lift
2. Observe a friend go in a lift up one floor.
3. Walk inside a lift and back out again
4. Stay inside a lift and press the one floor down.
5. Stay inside a lift and press two floors.
6. Practice 1-5 in a different lift
7. Stay inside for 2 minutes
8. Stay inside for 5 minutes.
9. Stay inside the lift for 10 minutes
10. Stay inside for 30 minutes
11. Stay inside and press the stop alarm
12. Practice 7-11 in a different lift



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Pay attention to
courageous behaviour



Take risks and make mistakes



Develop
solutions for
'approach'





What to do if you suspect anxiety?



- Raise it with others
- **Monitor** in different situations, with different people
- Encourage parent/youth to raise it with professionals
 - School counsellor
 - GP
 - Paediatrician
 - Psychologist

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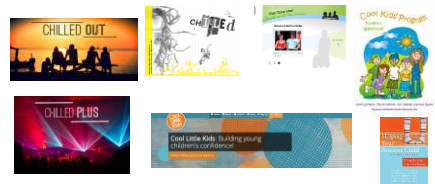
When to Intervene



- Earlier is easier
- At a minimum
 - when anxiety begins to interfere in an aspect of life
 - when parent or child show signs of distress or concern

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Resources



www.mq.edu.au/ceh

TAKE HOME POINTS



- Anxiety is the most common mental disorder in young people
- Take anxiety problems in young people seriously
- Avoidance leads to a vicious cycle
- Fight fear by gradually facing fear
- Pay attention to courageous behaviour
- Encourage children to take risks and make mistakes
- Develop solutions

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Thinking Points



- In what ways do you think you or your workplace may be enabling (or maintaining) anxiety in young people?
- Consider some strategies, policies or practices that you could put in place that may encourage 'approach' rather than 'avoidance.'



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Thank you

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