

Preschool Intervention Program

General Principles

- Program was conducted with parents only. Both parents were encouraged to attend.
- Program was run in small groups of around six families. One therapist per group was used, with clinical psychology qualifications and extensive experience with treating anxiety children using cognitive-behavioral strategies.
- Each session ran for around 90 minutes.
- There were six sessions: first four were weekly, then a 2-week break, then a 4-week break.

Program Content

- Education and group introduction. This session focused on psychoeducation about the causes and nature of anxiety and provided information about the role of temperament as a predictor of later difficulties. Their child's behaviors were normalized and the group discussed commonalities and differences between their children.
- 2. Child Management. This session provided detail about ways of managing their child effectively. Some general management information was provided including use of rewards and punishment, attentional focus, praise, etc. However, the majority of the session focused on the nature and role of parental protective behaviors. Parents were encouraged and the group discussed ways of reducing parental protective behaviors and encouraging greater child independence.
- 3. Graded exposure. Parents were taught the principles of graded exposure, and the group discussed and developed graded hierarchies for their children to practice.
- 4. Troubleshooting exposure and introduction to parental cognitive restructuring. Most of this session focused on discussing the first attempts at exposure steps and any difficulties that arose. The group brainstormed ways to overcome any difficulties and then made sure that further steps were developed. The remainder of the session introduced parents to cognitive restructuring for any of their own worries or stress.
- 5. Review of exposure and cognitive restructuring. Exposure and cognitive restructuring practice from the previous 2 weeks were discussed and any difficulties brainstormed.

- 6. Review of exposure and cognitive restructuring and future development. The previous month's practice and difficulties were discussed. The group then discussed future issues including major likely "risk points," such as starting school, school camps, friendship difficulties, etc. The importance of continuing exposure and building independence were stressed. The value of teaching cognitive restructuring principles to children as they matured was also discussed.

Supplementary Tables

Table S1. Percent of each group meeting DSM criteria for specific diagnoses at each assessment point

Diagnosis and Group	Baseline	12 months	24 months	36 months
Social phobia				
Intervention	87.7	38.5	24.4	25.0
Monitor	75.0	48.1	47.4	54.5
Generalized anxiety				
Intervention	20.3	7.7	11.1	7.7
Monitor	16.1	5.8	15.8	18.2
Separation anxiety				
Intervention	41.5	4.6	0.0	5.0
Monitor	33.9	9.6	5.3	3.0
Specific phobia				
Intervention	53.8	26.2	24.4	15.0
Monitor	53.6	34.6	21.1	18.2
Any anxiety disorder				
Intervention	93.8	50.8	37.8	39.5
Monitor	91.1	63.5	68.4	68.8

Table S2. Scores on the maternal measures of childhood anxiety symptoms^a

Group	Baseline		12 months		24 months		36 months	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Intervention	31.97	13.1	23.94	13.4	23.56	11.4	16.1	10.5
Monitor	31.84	13.1	23.90	12.3	25.75	14.6	20.7	9.9

^a Anxiety symptoms were assessed at the first three assessment points using the preschool version of the Spence Children's Anxiety Scale; symptoms at 36 months were assessed using the regular version of the instrument.