



Parent Emotion Socialization Toolkit

Dr. Montreuil’s presentation will shed light on common misconceptions surrounding child/adolescent mental health issues. Furthermore, the presentation will cover important topics such as the importance of identifying family values and parental emotion socialization to promote children's emotional expression and improved management of anxiety-related difficulties in their children. The aim of the presentation is to provide parents with greater knowledge and strategies that will ultimately help them move away from “worry” toward “mastery” in helping their children overcome their battle with anxiety.



Figure 1. Parental Emotion Socialization Roadmap

Essential Tools – Emotion Socialization



- 1 Take a Step Back
- 2 Name “Anxiety” as the emotion felt
- 3 Remind your child that anxiety doesn’t define him/her but it an emotional state that will pass
- 4 Validate the emotions and offer support, warmth and empathy
- 5 Try to have your child identify the thoughts and categorize them into “useful” or “unuseful” category

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Figure 2. Essential Tools to Positively Socialize/Model Emotion Regulation in Children

Parent reactions to children’s emotions can directly influence their developing emotion management styles, such that **supportive responses** tend to lead to appropriate emotional expression, communication and ER, and **non-supportive responses** to children’s to greater use of emotional inhibition and dysregulated affect – which are associated with a greater incidence of mental health issues.




Problem Solving

- Step 1: Empathize with your child
- Step 2: Do not offer reassurance or encourage avoidance
- Step 3: Relabel the fear
- Step 4: Reevaluate the size of the fear
- Step 5: Identify how the body reacted to the feared situation
- Step 6: Plan a way out / come up with options
- Step 7: Refocus on goal and choose an alternative
- Step 8: Reinforce your child

Figure 3. Technique to Positively Respond to Child’s Negative Emotional Expression

REMEMBER:

- Your reaction matters in socializing emotion regulation in your child. 
- Your personal emotional “self-care” and well-being is critical is achieving mastery with your child.
- The importance of setting “Empathic Limits” – Warmth/Connectedness + Structure and Clear Expectations.
- There are concrete strategies and skills that can be taught to your children in order to help them, and you achieve mastery.

