

ABILITIESUNLIMITED, LLC

FEAR FACTOR



Fighting Fears, Phobias, Frustrations, & Frights



At some point in life all children have, or will, experience the feeling of fear. For instance, almost all children have reported seeing a monster in the closet or a ghost under the bed. These fears are common and usually disappear with age. However, for some children the feeling of fear is intense and persistent. This feeling of fear, associated with a specified object or situation, may be overwhelming and often unrealistic. Consequently, these children may begin to experience anxiety.

Anxiety symptoms include sweating, vomiting, stomach aches and shortness of breath. Children may react to anxious situations by crying, yelling, screaming, kicking and/or biting. Persistent anxiety often leads to phobias. A phobia is an extreme fear that causes major difficulties in everyday functioning. Unfortunately, children do not magically outgrow phobias. Therefore, professional intervention may be required.

What Can Parents Do?

Children's intense fears and phobias should be taken seriously. You can talk to your child's pediatrician or contact a board certified behavior analyst in your area. A behavior analyst uses a variety of techniques such as exposure therapy to help children to deal with the feared object/situation. Children can be taught coping skills and their parents can learn how to respond to their child's reactions. Being respectful of the child's feelings, exposure therapy is individualized and based on the child's current ability to handle the situation.



Some of the most common fears that children experience include fear of darkness, fear of monsters, fear of strangers, fear of animals, fear of bugs, fear of water, fear of textures, fear of sensations, fear of automobiles, fear of noises and fear of sounds.

“It's like Butterflies in My Tummy”

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