Anxiety: Teach the Skill of Having a Plan

Avoid... Not telling your child of anxiety-provoking events in advance. You are denying the child the opportunity to practice coping skills (like tolerating distress, coming up with a plan for success, etc.)

Instead...

- a) Help the child develop a plan for success ahead of time (focus on what TO DO, rather than on what NOT to do).
- b) It doesn't matter how scared the child was, reward them for following the plan.
- c) The plan can be quite simple....1-2 items!

DEVELOPING AND USING COGNITIVE COPING CARDS

An important tool in your child's anxiety toolbox is the ability to change anxious thoughts to more relaxed and balanced thinking. With practice, your child can learn to use coping thoughts on his or her own. Cognitive coping cards are small index cards with short sentences of some of the coping skills your child can use when experiencing anxiety. The cards are portable reminders to boss back anxiety!

HOW TO DO IT

Step 1: Make sure your child is involved

In order for coping cards to be useful, your child needs to feel that the coping statements will actually be <u>personally</u> helpful!

Step 2: Make it a game!

Have fun trying to come up with good statements that your child will find helpful in managing his or her anxiety. Here are some ways you can make this tool a fun task:

- Get the family involved!
- Make it an art project!

Step 3: Remember to praise your child

As always, it is very important that you give lots of praise whenever your child is successful at managing anxiety, or when he or she tried to manage anxiety (but was not quite able to do it).

Sample Card What will happen? First, I will line up with my class and we will walk to the cafeteria. First, I will line up with my class and we will help me if I con't nomember rirst, L will line up with my class and we will walk to the cateteria Then, I will find my seat. Ms. - will help me if I can't remember where the eit Recorder Concert: June -, 2012 where to sit. Next, Mrs. -- will signal to the class when to begin playing. I have not also the manufacturation to the state of the class of the cla What will happen? should not play the recorder in all an environment of the signal. inouia not play the recorder until 1 see this signal. Finally, when the concert is over I can say "hi" to my family. How I might feel: I may feel happy and excited because I am going to play in the concent and will have my family watch me where to sit. concert and will have my family watch me. If I am excited I can quietly squeeze my fidget. The hould not talk on valid uning the concent It I am excited I can quietly squeeze my the concert. I should not talk or yell during the concert.