

# Worry Less

## *Managing Anxiety in Children and Adolescents with ADHD and Learning Differences*

sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

meet today's expert speakers:

## Eileen Costello, M.D., and Perri Klass, M.D.



[Eileen Costello, M.D.](#), is a Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at [Boston University School of Medicine](#) and the Chief of Ambulatory Pediatrics at [Boston Medical Center](#). She maintains a primary care practice with a focus on children with developmental differences and mental health disorders. She and Dr. Klass are the co-authors of [\*Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping Your Child who Doesn't Fit It\*](#) (Ballantine, 2003). They are working on a new edition with an expected publication in 2020.



[Perri Klass, M.D.](#), M.D., is Professor of Pediatrics and Journalism at [New York University](#). She writes regularly on topics of relevance to children and families, including the weekly column, "The Checkup," in [The New York Times](#). She teaches pediatric residents in the primary care program at [Bellevue Hospital](#) in New York. She is the National Medical Director of [Reach Out and Read](#). She and Dr. Costello are co-authors of [\*Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping your Child Who Doesn't Fit In\*](#).

**the sponsor of this week's webinar is...**



**NEBA® Health** offers the first FDA-cleared brainwave test to help clinicians determine if a child's symptoms are due to ADHD or some other condition. NEBA is only available by prescription. It is a non-invasive test and only takes minutes. [Find a NEBA provider in your area: nebahealth.com](https://nebahealth.com)

MRK0150/2018.10.05

*ADDitude webinar sponsors have no role in the selection of expert, the expert's presentation, or any other aspect of the webinar production. The experts are not endorsing the webinar sponsor product.*

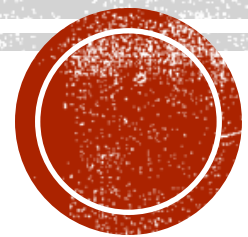
# **ANXIETY IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH ADD/ADHD AND LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

Eileen Costello, MD and Perri Klass, MD

Professors of Pediatrics

Boston University (EC) and New York University (PK) Schools of  
Medicine

Co-Authors, Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping Your Child  
Who Doesn't Fit In



# WHAT IS ANXIETY IN CHILDHOOD?

- Anxiety is developmentally normal in children
  - Stranger anxiety in infants
  - Fear of monsters and the dark in preschoolers
  - Injury or natural disasters in school aged children
  - Social ability, school performance in adolescents
- Clinical anxiety occurs when fear or worry is severe, not appropriate for stage of development, and causes behavioral difficulties or difficulties in functioning
- Anxiety is more common in children with developmental differences ( like ASD) and in children with ADD, ADHD, and Learning Differences.
- There are different types of anxiety disorders and a child may experience more than one type at the same time and over time



# WHAT ARE THE MAJOR TYPES OF CHILDHOOD ANXIETY?

- *Generalized Anxiety Disorder*: chronic severe worry that a child is not able to control (school, social, family, injury or safety, illness, world events)
- *Social Anxiety Disorder* (social phobia): discomfort or fear in social or performance situations, usually because of fear of embarrassment or humiliation
- *Separation Anxiety Disorder* (SAD): fear of separation from attachment figures that is not developmentally appropriate
- *Phobias*: fear or anxiety about a particular experience, situation, or object in the environment that is out of proportion to the risk involved
- *Panic Disorder* (PD): unexpected and recurrent episodes of intense fear associated with physical symptoms such as shortness of breath or hyperventilation, nausea, light-headedness, feeling of doom, sweating, palpitations



# TYPES OF CHILDHOOD ANXIETY DISORDERS

- *Selective Mutism*: the inability to speak in situations where speaking is usually required, while able to speak freely at other times
- *Obsessive-compulsive Disorder (OCD)*: Recurrent intrusive thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive physical or mental acts (compulsions) to minimize these thoughts, both of which can cause great distress (nb: no longer listed in the DSM as a type of anxiety disorder but rather in a category of OCD disorders)
- *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)*: fear or anxiety that is triggered by an event or experience similar to a prior traumatic event
- *Agoraphobia*: marked fear in specific environments, such as open spaces (bridges, lots), closed spaces (airplanes, elevators), crowded places (malls, events) causing physical symptoms of panic leading to avoidance



# HOW COMMON ARE ANXIETY DISORDERS IN CHILDREN

- The most common childhood-onset mental health conditions
- Lifetime prevalence 25-32% and adults report that symptoms typically started in childhood
- Girls > Boys 2:1 – 3:1
- May begin at any age and tend to endure over time
- One child may experience different types of anxiety over time
- The “Pediatric Anxiety Triad” includes generalized anxiety, social anxiety, and separation anxiety
- *Higher likelihood of ADHD, learning disorders, language disorders, mood disorders, oppositional disorders, somatoform disorders, substance use disorders*



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](http://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude



# HOW COMMON?

- Generalized anxiety disorder: 1-2.2 %
- Separation anxiety disorder: as high as 7.6% (most likely to remit, but is a risk factor of other anxiety types)
- Social phobia: 9.1 %
- Specific phobia: 7-9%, about 5% in younger children, and 16% in teens; more common in girls, usually more than one phobia
- Selective mutism: 0.3-1 % usually in first 5 years
- Panic disorder: 2-3% of adolescents, more common in girls
- OCD: 1-4 %, more common in boys 3:2, may be associated with tic disorders



# WHAT CAUSES ANXIETY

- No genes are identified that cause anxiety but runs in families and is considered “heritable” rather than genetic
- If a child has a first degree relative (parent or sib) with anxiety, she is more likely to have anxiety herself
- Parents or other adults with anxious behaviors will model that behavior for children, and inadvertently contribute to anxiety
- Important to instill confidence that the child can cope
- Highly critical or controlling parents or guardians may increase anxiety in children
- Anxiety in a child may indicate a traumatic event, such as a death or move



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

# HOW DOES A CHILD LET US KNOW THAT HE IS ANXIOUS?

- Can be difficult if child doesn't realize his worry is extreme
- Hard for parents to understand that a child may be anxious
- Physical complaints are common: abdominal pain, headaches, etc
- Behaviors that may represent anxiety include: anger, irritability, crying, oppositionality, school refusal, sleep disturbance, over or undereating
- Anxiety interferes with a child's ability to manage at home, in their social world, and in school
- A child with ADHD or learning differences already feels different, and this is associated with increased rates of anxiety.



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

# WHAT IS THE ASSOCIATION OF ADHD AND LD WITH ANXIETY DISORDERS?

- Which comes first? A common concern of parents
- Can be difficult to tease out because symptoms overlap and the conditions often occur together as “co-morbidities”
- When a child is diagnosed with ADD, ADHD, or LD, important to have an assessment for anxiety symptoms as well
- Anxiety may be a presenting manifestation of a physical illness, which can occur in any child
  - Hyperthyroidism
  - Migraines
  - Low blood sugar



# ASSOCIATIONS WITH ADD/ADHD

- Symptoms of ADD must be present early in life for a proper diagnosis, usually in early childhood
- Low self-esteem related to poor social skills and academic underachievement due to difficulties with attention and impulsiveness
- Associated conditions include
  - Learning disorders: 30-75% \*written expression most common
  - Oppositional defiant disorder: > 45%
  - **Anxiety disorders: 25-35%**
  - Delays in language, motor, or social development: 20-60%
  - Mood disorder (depression, bipolar): 10%
  - Tic disorders: 20%
  - PTSD: 10%



# HOW TO HELP?

- Management depends on degree of severity and on whether there is impairment in typical daily activities
- Treatment for children with ADHD/LD uses same modalities as for those without
- Parent involvement is critical for success
- Starts with parent and child education about anxiety
- Parents/caregivers can help develop a language around symptoms and strategies
- Parents may inadvertently promote anxiety with excessive reassurance or avoidance of situation that provoke anxiety
- Understanding of the treatment modalities, keeping an open mind



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

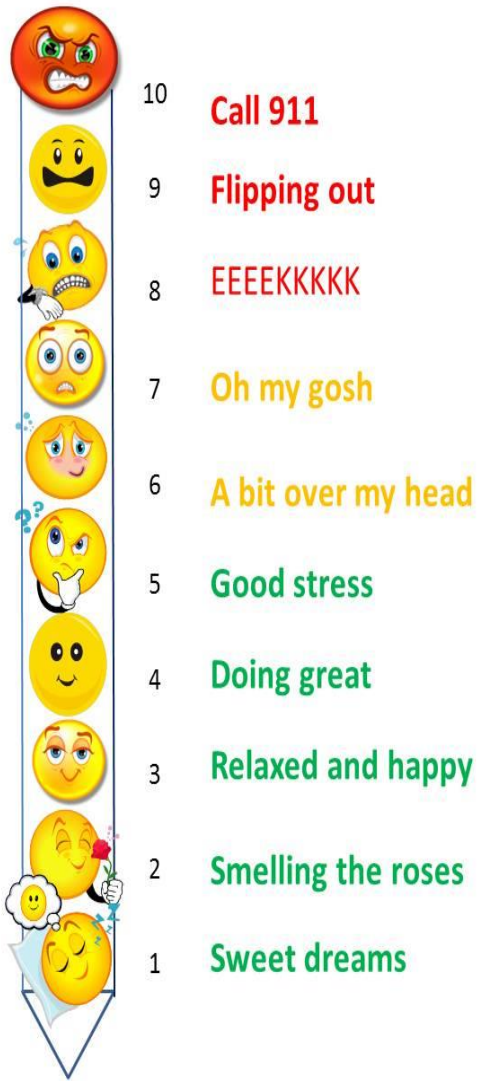
[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](http://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

# HELPING THE CHILD WHO WORRIES

- Mild symptoms
  - Supportive counselling, education about anxiety symptoms and strategies
  - Encourage “brave behaviors”
  - Help child develop coping strategies rather than reinforcing anxiety/avoidance
  - Journals or dairies to keep track of symptoms
  - Charts such as Faces Scale or Feelings Thermometer
  - Scripting out of situations that create social anxiety, like Social Stories, in advance
  - Dream Catcher or worry box to help contain worries
- Moderate Symptoms: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is first line
- Severe Symptoms: Multi pronged approach including Family Therapy, Individual therapy or treatment (such as CBT) and medication often required





## Anxiety Thermometer



## THE FEAR THERMOMETER



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](http://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude



# TYPES OF THERAPY

- CBT
  - Strong evidence base means it works
  - In person and web-based available
  - Time limited and goal-directed
  - Kids are trained to react differently and manage their symptoms, restructure their thinking about anxiety provoking environments
  - Face fears using “exposure response” and desensitization
  - Coping Cat is an example: 14-18 sessions over 3-4 months
  - Parent involvement has been shown to improve outcomes
- Play therapy for younger children or children with delays
- Group therapy: most effective for kids with social anxiety or phobia



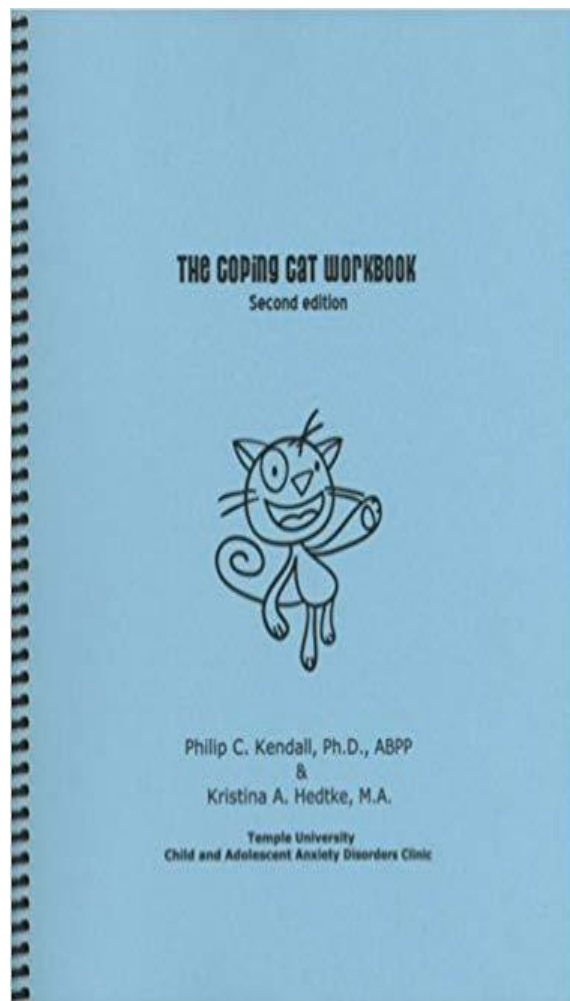
sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude



sponsored by...



adhd expert webinars

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude



# WHAT ABOUT MEDICATIONS?

- SSRI's like Prozac, Zoloft, Luvox are considered first line medications
- May take 1-2 months to show an impact: be patient
- Initial dose may not be the final dose
- If effective and stable, a trial off meds after one year is indicated (over summer, for example)
- What is the “black box warning?”
  - 2004 FDA warning
  - Small increased risk of suicidal ideation/behavior in children with depression
  - Unknown if this effect is present in children with anxiety
  - Monitor closely in first 4 weeks of treatment
  - “start low and go slow”



# WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE SHOW?

- CBT and medications are equally effective in reducing symptoms
- Combination of CBT and medications superior to either alone
- Medications can “turn down the volume” of symptoms to allow the child to access therapies more easily



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

# FOR CHILDREN ON MEDS FOR ADHD?

- Children on medication for ADHD may also require medications for anxiety
- Some medications and target both symptoms
- **MUST** be discussed with a prescriber who is knowledgeable about prescribing for children
- All children with ADHD/LD and anxiety need to have a specialist involved in their care, so decisions about treatment can be individualized
  - Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrician
  - Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
  - Child Neurologist



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

# WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL?

- 504 plan can help to develop accommodations
- Careful attention to plan that it does not promote avoidance but rather helps child to develop coping strategies
- IEP may be required for children with more severe symptoms of anxiety
  - Under category of emotional disturbance
  - Intensive behavioral supports
  - Teacher, parent, and staff education about anxiety symptoms
  - No punitive responses!



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](https://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude

# SUMMARY

- Anxiety is common and can be useful in certain situations
- Clinical anxiety depends on impairment in behavior or functioning and is developmentally inappropriate
- Be aware that may present differently in children than adults
- Different types of anxiety may evolve in the same person over time
- Higher likelihood of mood disorders and substance use later, especially if untreated
- New symptoms or worsening of existing symptoms may indicate traumatic experience
- Parent/family training improves outcomes!



# REFERENCES

- Beidas, Rinad S et al. "Flexible Applications of the Coping Cat Program for Anxious Youth." *Cognitive and behavioral practice* vol. 17,2 (2010): 142-153.  
doi:10.1016/j.cbpra.2009.11.002
- Ledesma, M, Weitzman, C, Bridgemohan: Anxiety Disorders, Chapter 26 in the Zuckerman Parker Handbook of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Wolters Kulwer, edited by Marilyn Augustyn and Barry Zuckerman, 2019
- Books for parents:
- Dacey JS, Fiore LB. Your Anxious Child: How Parents and Teachers Can Relieve Anxiety in Children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Huebner, D. What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety. Washington DC: Magination Press, 2008.
- Manassis K. Keys to Parenting Your Anxious Child. New York: Barron's Educational Series Inc., 1996.
- Wagner, A. Worried No More: Help and Hope for Anxious Children, second edition. Rochester, New York: Lighthouse Press, Inc, 2005.



sponsored by...



**adhd expert webinars**

[ADDitudemag.com/webinar](http://ADDitudemag.com/webinar)

Copyright © 2019 by ADDitude



# Please enter your questions in the box to your left.



**Please note:** Live webinar attendance and all questions submitted via GoToWebcast are confidential. None of today's webinar attendees can see the names of other attendees, nor can they see the questions submitted via GoToWebcast. Usernames are associated with questions posted in the *ADDitude* forums.

*ADDitude* does not provide medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The material in this webinar is provided for educational purposes only. Copyright © 2019 by New Hope Media. All rights reserved.

# Upcoming Webinars

- **Tuesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1pm ET**  
[How to Optimize Stimulant Treatment for Children and Adults: Better Symptom Management Without Side Effects](#) with Thomas Brown, Ph.D.
- **Tuesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at 1pm ET**  
[Build Life-Long Executive Function Skills in Your Child with ADHD](#) with Sharon Saline, Psy.D.

Visit <http://additu.de/webinars> to view the webinar replay library.

## Thank You!

If you missed any part of today's webinar, a recording is available for replay at <http://additu.de/webinars>.

To continue the conversation, we invite you to join us on

### ***ADDitude* Forums**

*ADDitude's* online community for attention deficit support and solutions where you can join our ongoing ADHD discussion groups: <https://www.additudemag.com/forums/>