

Halton Y.O.D.A & Y.A.C.

**Understanding Anxiety and Depression
Parent Support Workshop**

Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services

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Why Are We Talking About It?

- 1 in every 5 children will experience a Mental Health issue

Anxiety

Normal Fears and Worries

- Infants

- fear of loud noises, being dropped or startled, loss of support, separation from mother
- Fear of strangers

- Toddlers

- fear of imaginary creatures (monsters), small animals
- Fear of darkness
- Separation anxiety

- Elementary school-aged
 - Fear of physical injury
 - Fear of natural events (storms)
 - Fears about school
- Teenagers
 - fear of social evaluation and school performance
- **Fears are adaptive** and develop in response to perceived dangers, but become problematic if they do not subside with normal development and if they impair functioning

Why do some kids get distressed?

There are a variety of factors that can explain anxiety and depressive disorders:

- Biology
- Conditioned experiences
- Cognitive Styles

Common Stressors for School -Aged Children

- Birth of new sibling
- Divorce
- Family move
- Close relative or friend moves away
- Loss of pet
- Death of a relative
- School transitions, transition to middle school, high school, college/university
- Riding a school bus
- Problematic peer relationships

Traumas That May Cause Significant Stress and Anxiety

- Car accidents
- Fires
- Severe weather/natural disaster
- Repeated medical issues (self or other)
- Violent injury or witness to violence
- Domestic violence or verbal abuse
- Physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect
- War
- Media exposure and hype

Types of Anxiety Disorders

- Separation Anxiety
- Generalized Anxiety
- Panic Disorder
- Social Phobia
- Specific Phobia
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- PTSD
- Selective Mutism (related disorder)
- School Refusal (related disorder)

Signs and Symptoms

- Restlessness
- Irritability
- Recurrent fears/worries
- Unable to recover from stressors
- Quiet, sometimes too quiet
- Shy, withdrawn
- People pleaser
- “attention seeker”
- Disorganized
- Forgetful
- Cries easily
- Sleeplessness, or difficulty falling/staying asleep, nightmares
- Poor problem solving and/or coping
- Low self esteem
- Perfectionism

continued...

- Changing sleep cycles
- Increased/decreased appetite
- Gastro-intestinal impact
- Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Sweating
- Inexplicable rashes
- Increase in fighting with friends and family
- Change in grades
- Poor attendance
- “what if...?”
- “I can’t”
- avoidant
- tantrums

Signs and Symptoms

- If you looked at my friend Heather, she's always curled up in a ball with her hair in her face. But I am not.
- Signs and Symptoms vary from person to person. Not everyone is the exact same
- They can also look much like a 'normal' teenager, but there are subtle hints that they are not.
- Early signs were that I couldn't do sports because there were too many people.
- There were subtle changes as well in what I was able to do from one age to the next.

Signs and Symptoms

- Differences through the grades
 - feeling sick and missing a few days of school here and there
 - Being out of school for a couple of months at a time
 - sleeping lots
 - not being able to go to restaurants, the mall, the movies...

What is Depression?

- Depression is the experience of a low mood or very low mood that lasts for a period of at least two weeks or more AND is accompanied by other symptoms.

Types of Depression

- The two most common types of depression are Mild Depression and Major Depression
- The difference between the two is the intensity of feelings of sadness

Such as...

- Noticeable changes in weight or appetite
- Not being able to sleep or over sleeping
- Feelings of restlessness or slowed down
- Feelings of worthlessness and/or guilt
- Feeling numb or empty
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Thinking about death or suicide

- It's hard living with a double whammy like anxiety and depression
- When a child is experiencing depression, be there for them. Don't let them try to deal with it on their own

- People get depression and angry confused. If they're angry, that's one thing. Let them be angry.
- But if you think someone is depressed, that IS something different and it is going to look different.

What causes depression?

- Research indicates that there are 5 major areas of our lives that can cause depression or keep it going:
 - Thoughts: negative thinking, unfair self-criticism
 - Emotions: anxiety, sadness, despair, emptiness
 - Physical State: poor sleep, low energy, appetite or nervous system changes
 - Actions: reduced activity, withdrawal from others
 - Situations: loss of relationship, loneliness, arguing and conflict

Circle of Depression

- These five areas of our lives all influence each other. We can think of these five areas as the Circle of Depression
- Intervention for depression therefore, must address these five main influential areas

Impact

- Anxiety and Depression interferes with, family function and relationships, school performance, school attendance, friendships, connectedness to community and can have significant long term effects if untreated such as; school drop out, addiction, unemployment, suicide, work absenteeism, adult interpersonal problems and financial problems.

The Many Dimensions of My Life

Social

Physical

Academic

Me

Family

Emotional

Spiritual

Impact

- On my parents:
 - My mom feels pretty helpless sometimes
- On myself
 - I'm tired all the time and I can get obsessed with it. Sometimes I don't even know what I'm worrying about
- On my school life
 - Even though I'm a pretty good student it's still hard to go sometimes or get things done

Development and Partnerships of Y.O.D.A.

Development

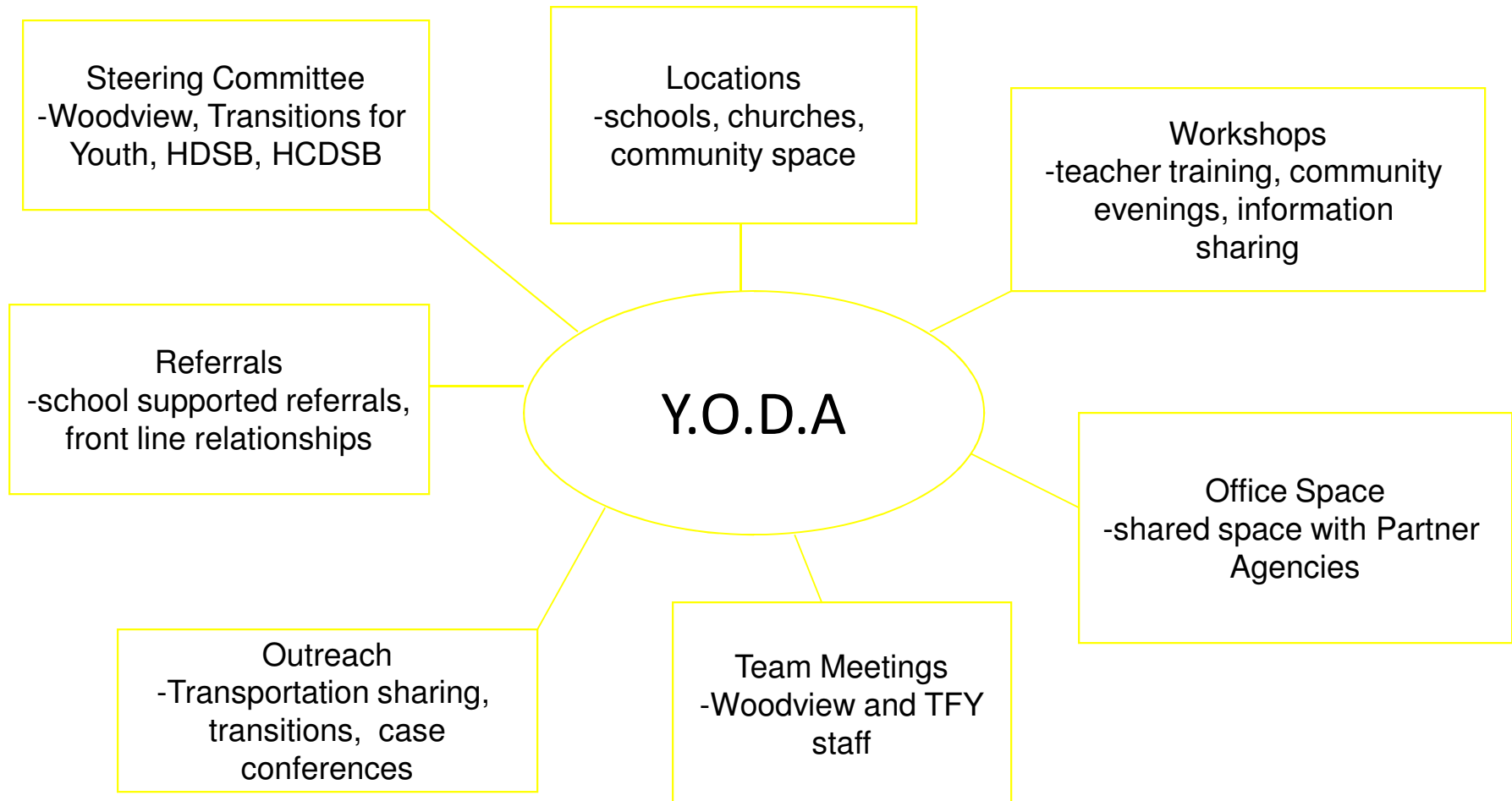
- Halton Planning Table
- Mental Health Fund, Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Woodview Children's Centre and Transitions For Youth
- Steering Committee
- Staff Hiring

Development

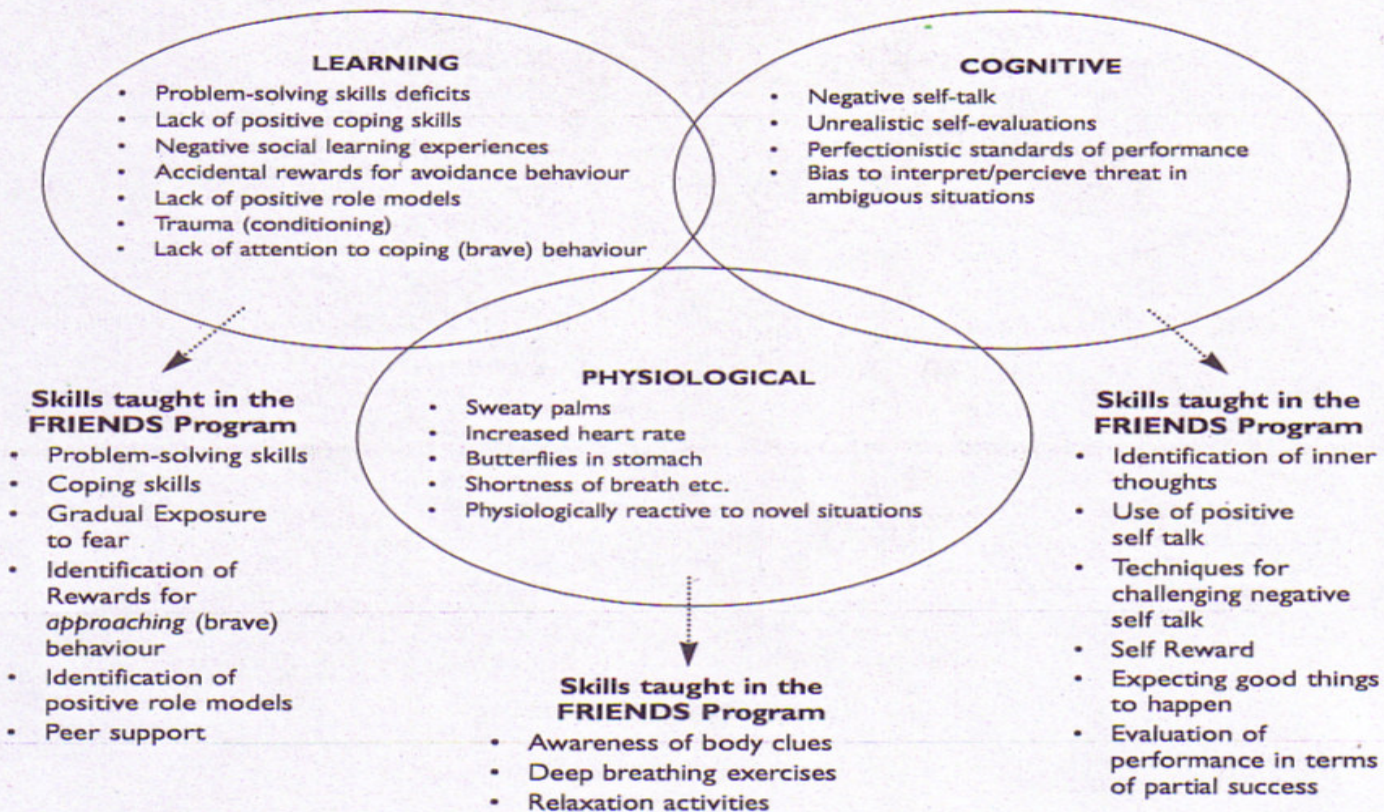
Description of Youth Overcoming Depression and Anxiety

- Program for Grades 6, 7, and 8 students in Halton experiencing symptoms of anxiety and / or depression
- Group Treatment
- Parent Education
- In Home Support
- 1:1 Counselling
- School Advocacy and Support
- Community Service Coordination
- Ongoing Data Collection and Feedback
- Program Evaluation

Partnerships



The Development, Maintenance and Experience of Anxiety



Support and Treatment

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Relationships

FRIENDS for Life Plan

Modeling

Types of Interventions for Anxiety & Depression

- Medication
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Interpersonal Talk Therapy
- Self-monitoring
- Relapse prevention
- Diet and Exercise

Intervention Planning

Age, severity, impairment, and cooccurring conditions

- **Mild severity:** CBT
- **Mod-severe:** CBT; meds for acute relief of anxiety, partial response from other treatment, co-occurring disorders that may benefit from meds & multimodal help
- **Severe:** CBT and medications may be necessary

Designing Interventions (cont'd)

- Older youth - depression, social withdrawal, substance abuse often need intensive focus, too
- Include family in planning interventions whenever possible

CBT Model of Anxiety: Anxiety's Three Components

- Cognitive:



- Physiological:



- Behavioral:



CBT for Young Anxious Children

- Consider age and developmental stage of child
- Use Feelings Thermometer to self-monitor
- For younger children using positive reinforcement chart and frequent rewards for efforts is very important
- Exposures increase anxiety and children need motivation to try.
- For young children using pictures, cartoons, puppets, and toys to supplement CBT is helpful.

Relationships

- Before we get into the acronym FRIENDS we spend a few weeks building our relationships within the group
- In our families this isn't always something we do at a conscious level on a day to day basis. So, what are the things we can do to nurture our family relationships?
 - Dinner, movie night, car time, play time, walks, chores, membership
- As great as our need is to be loved, so too is our need to belong...Jean Vanier
- How do we create this sense of belonging in our families?

The Many Dimensions of My Life

Social

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Academic

Me

Family

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Spiritual

“F” ... stands for Feelings

- Develop feeling language, intensity and an understanding of body cues
- You can continue the dialogue using direct language and model by sharing age appropriately



“R” ... stands for Relaxation

- Deep Breath, progressive muscle relaxation, free flow writing, yoga, visualization
- You can create ‘nothing’ time or ‘pajama day’ , take a deep breath

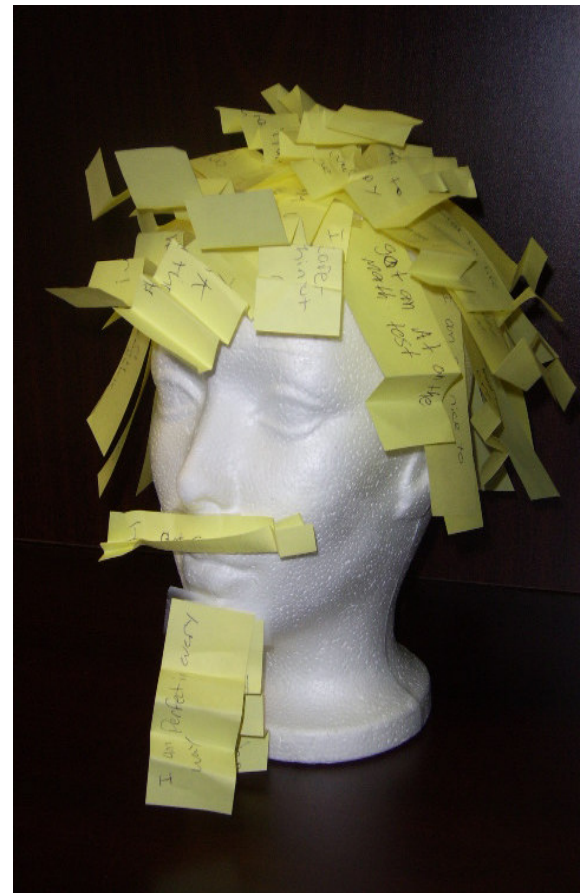


“R” ... stands for Relaxation

- Relaxation is one of the most valuable tools that we can easily access in managing our stressful lives. It is important that we are intentional with this time. As tempting as it is to ‘veg’ out in front of a screen of some kind, we often continue to be bombarded with stressors in front of these screens. ‘Reality’ tv, anxiety and tension provoking video games, Info seeking on the net to ‘improve’ our life...

“I” ...stands for Inner Helpful Thoughts

- Self-talk
- Unhelpful and Helpful inner dialogue
- Thought Changers
- You can challenge your own and your child’s negative self-talk for accuracy



“E” ...stands for Exploring Plans

- Developing a repertoire of problem solving and coping strategies is a life long tool. The sooner you have these kinds of skills, the easier it becomes to reach for them when you need them.
- You can model these skills, you can let your children practice, as compelled as you might be to rescue them from time to time

“E” ...stands for Explore Plans

- Coping Step Plans help a person overcome obstacles, be they fear, feeling overwhelmed, or disorganized.
- The 6 Stage Problem Solving Model is similar to a scientific model and allows for lots of brainstorming.



Coping Step Plan

- Identify my goal
- Break down each step for accomplishing my goal into manageable and achievable steps
- Insert some positive helpful thoughts I can use to get me through the step
- Build in rewards for each milestone along the way, depending on how big the event is

Con't...

- The Coping Step Plan can easily be used for something like overcoming the fear of heights. The thing to remember however, is that you will need to have a desire to accomplish the goal. So, if my parent's goal is not the same as my goal for practicing the Coping Step Plan, then it is more likely that their goal will NOT be reached, but perhaps my goal will. Acknowledging this success is as equally important.

“N” ...stands for Nice Job, Now Reward Yourself

“D” ...stands for Don't Forget to Practice

“S” ...stands for Smile and Stay Calm

- These steps are reminders about the need for maintaining the skills and self care. These steps were mostly reviewed during the Booster Sessions with a “Jeopardy” style game based on the F.R.I.E.N.D.S. skills.



“N”...Now Reward Yourself

- We really want to be clear here!
- It is important to acknowledge your accomplishments and to have your accomplishments acknowledged by others. Sometimes it is extra hard for someone experiencing anxiety or depression to pat themselves on the back first. It does feel good to be noticed

“D” and “S”

- Don't forget to practice
 - Daily maintenance and wellness
- Smile and Stay Calm
 - You have the tools

- FRIENDS isn't going to be 'cookie cutter' for everyone. It's about finding the most helpful tools and putting them into your everyday life as best as you can.
- CBT is really good because...
 - I'm not afraid of malls anymore
 - I'm learning how to take healthy risks
 - I'm really mature

Youth Engagement

- Engagement
- Developmental assets
- Leadership
- Community involvement
- Mentoring

Accomplishments

- CMHO Conference 2008
- Children's Mental Health Day 2010
- Danielle's Camp 2010
- Transition to High School Workshop
- CASA Conference 2010
- Woodview AGM
- Gathering Ground Ontario Centre of Excellence
- Children's Mental Health Day 2011

Thank You

WOODVIEW

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