



A Family's Guide to Managing OCD & Reducing Symptoms

OCD (a fear-based anxiety) will diminish with time. Nothing else will work to quash your child's fear except time.

Parents: manage your own anxieties about OCD; it is a problem that can be solved not an impossible mountain to climb.

Speak to your child in a calm and nurturing tone free from blame, frustration and your own anxiety.

These initial steps are vital to helping your child overcome OCD, instilling the confidence they need.

During fear moments, ask your child these questions:

How afraid are you?
(Use a 0-5 or 0-10 scale or low, medium, high)

Do you have any
"what if" thoughts? What are they?

Sit with your child during these moments and be fully attune to them:

Tell your child that their worry/fear/OCD will lessen if they can sit with it. Take deep breaths with your child, tighten and loosen muscle groups, and have them repeat confident statements until their feelings are back to baseline. You'll initially need 30 minutes or more for this process, but it is time well spent: You are teaching your child how to cope with OCD fear.

Stay away from using these phrases:

"Don't worry,"

"I'll protect you,"

"You have nothing to be afraid of."

These statements reinforce your child's fear, helps them avoid or escape what scares them, and can exacerbate their fears and symptoms long term.