

## **Preventing Childhood Anxiety and Depression**

*How to Expand Our Paradigm*

LYNN LYONS

Given the increasing rates of child and adolescent anxiety and depression, it's clear our current treatment paradigm isn't working to proactively reach the young people who need help. It's time we put an end to misinformed accommodations that only strengthen patterns of anxiety. Discover cutting-edge programs that get upstream of the problem, targeting parents and other important adults as key to mitigating and preventing childhood anxiety. Also, explore family systems approaches that teach both adults and children concrete skills to interrupt generational patterns of anxiety, depression, and emotional (mis)management. This workshop will demonstrate how to:

- Apply parental coaching and collaboration as an integral component of intervention
- Identify family patterns that support generational anxiety and address them using skill-based interventions
- Challenge the most common "elimination strategies," such as distraction and reassurance, that actually increase anxiety and impair functioning
- Use groups, psychoeducational classes, and school-based programs to reach more underserved families and youth

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## **Learning Objectives:**

1. Determine family patterns that support generational anxiety and address them using skill-based interventions.
2. Apply parental and school-based coaching and collaboration as integral pieces of treatment.
3. Assess the most common “elimination strategies” that increase anxiety and impair functioning.
4. Use clinical tools within group sessions, psychoeducational classes, and school-based programs to help more underserved families and effectively treat anxiety.

## **Outline:**

1. Identify family patterns that support generational anxiety and address them using skill-based interventions.
  - How to recognize the 6 cognitive patterns of anxiety and depression
  - Active assignments for families to create different responses and patterns
  - Increase prevention through parents’ understanding of emotional family legacy
2. Apply parental and school-based coaching and collaboration as integral pieces of treatment.
  - Why seeing children alone inhibits prevention (and treatment)
  - How to shift the common reactive paradigm in schools
  - The importance of targeting and building concrete skills for prevention
3. Assess the most common “elimination strategies” that increase anxiety and impair functioning.
  - Common interventions that support anxiety and depression
  - How to intervene with an active, “on offense” approach
  - The backwards use of accommodations for anxiety
4. Use clinical tools within group sessions, psychoeducational classes, and school-based programs to help more underserved families and effectively treat anxiety.
  - Ideas for groups and other formats to focus on parenting prevention
  - How accurate information and myth-busting strengthen families
  - Setting the expectations of parental engagement (hint: it’s what parents want)

## **Reference List:**

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