

# Depression, Anxiety, and Coping Skills

**Bayside Academy Parent Education -  
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# Who am I?

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**This content is TOUGH.  
Be kind to yourself, take a  
breath or a break.**

**Let's work towards being  
non-judgmental.**

# Why this topic, why right now?

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Difficulties of brain development

HORMONES

Managing multiple demands in multiple areas of life

Social Media

**Current events** - COVID and lockdowns/school closures,  
Election, unrest around racial justice issues, wildfires

- 1 out of 10 teenagers will experience an episode of depression before age 18
- Between 60% - 80% of adolescents with depression go undiagnosed and untreated

# DEPRESSION

- After age 15, girls are twice as likely to experience depression than boys
- Suicide is the second most common cause of death for people aged 15-19

# What about depression here at Bayside?

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**26%** of last year's 7th graders reported feeling **SAD** or **HOPELESS** almost every day for two weeks or more

**12%** of last year's 7th grade students reported having thoughts of suicide

\*Data from California Healthy Kids Survey, 2020

# Depression is a medical illness

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A **long-lasting** and **overwhelming** feeling of sadness, loneliness, and loss of interest that impacts how someone thinks, feels, and behaves

# How does depression happen?

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## Biological

Genetics  
Brain Chemistry  
Medical Difference

## Psychological

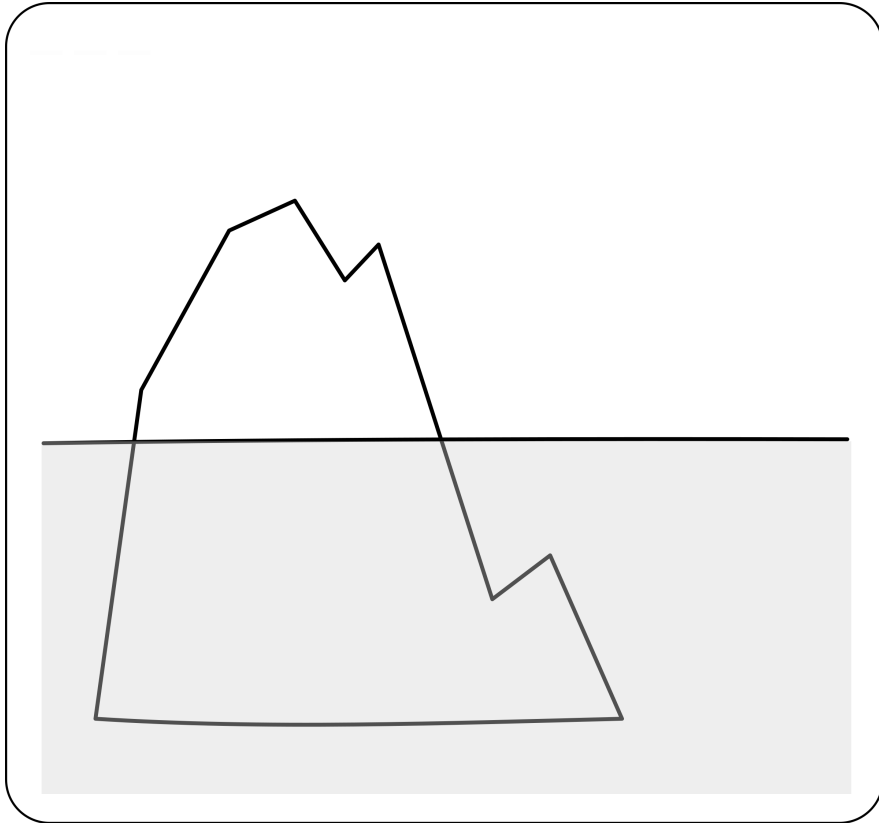
Thought Patterns  
Self-Esteem  
Coping Skills

## Social

Family  
School  
Neighborhood  
Peers  
Social Stressors  
Culture



# Depression as an iceberg



What do we see?

What can't we see?

# What does depression look like?

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Upset, sad, or irritable most of the day, nearly every day

Decreased interest in all or most activities

Significant weight gain or loss

Sleeping too much or sleeping too little

Difficulty focusing, can't stay still, restless

Worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt

# It can also look like...

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Having a short fuse: explosive, violent, angry, defiant

Increased risk taking behaviors like drinking, drugs, sexual behavior

Self-harm behaviors

Physical symptoms (head or stomach aches, numbness) - child goes to the nurse a lot or wants to stay home sick

# How is depression different from stress?

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Can you pinpoint the reasons?

Can you feel better?

How intense?

Can you manage it on your own?

Every day? Most of the day?

# I've heard these comments before...

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“They’re just doing it to get attention”

“They’re just being dramatic”

“It’s a phase - they’re just being teenagers”

“They have so much, what do they have to be depressed about?”

# People with depression tend to think...

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Negative thoughts about themselves, the world, their future

“Nobody loves me”

“I’m such a disappointment”

“No wonder I can’t do anything right”

# A note on suicide

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Increases in observable signs of depression, sudden anxiety and agitation, threatening suicide or making suicide plans, writing suicide notes, giving away prized possessions, saying goodbye, expressing a belief that nothing will help and there are no solutions

# If you believe your child may be suicidal...

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Take it seriously. Listen to your gut and warning signs.

Show interest and support; listen and ask questions.

Be direct: talking about suicide does not increase the risk of suicide.

Safeguard the area (remove means like weapons, pills, sharp objects) and don't leave your child alone.

Seek professional help: 911, emergency room, 1-800-273-TALK



# What is anxiety?

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A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an upcoming event or something with an unclear outcome

**TYPICAL**

**CLINICAL**

# 1/3

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Anxiety is the most common mental health disorder in the US, affecting nearly  $\frac{1}{3}$  of adults and adolescents

\*According to the National Institute of Mental Health

# What are our kids anxious about?

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Identity

Their futures

Home life

Pressure to conform

Social acceptance

Pressure to be the best

Body image

Appearance

The world around them

Basic necessities

Self-worth

...what else?

# Like most medical conditions, it can get better

With time and treatment, we can learn how to make ourselves better!

Between 80-90% of people with depression respond positively to treatment.

## **1. Talk with your child about your concerns:**

“I’m concerned about you and how you feel.”

“I’ve noticed these changes and I wanted to check in with you.”

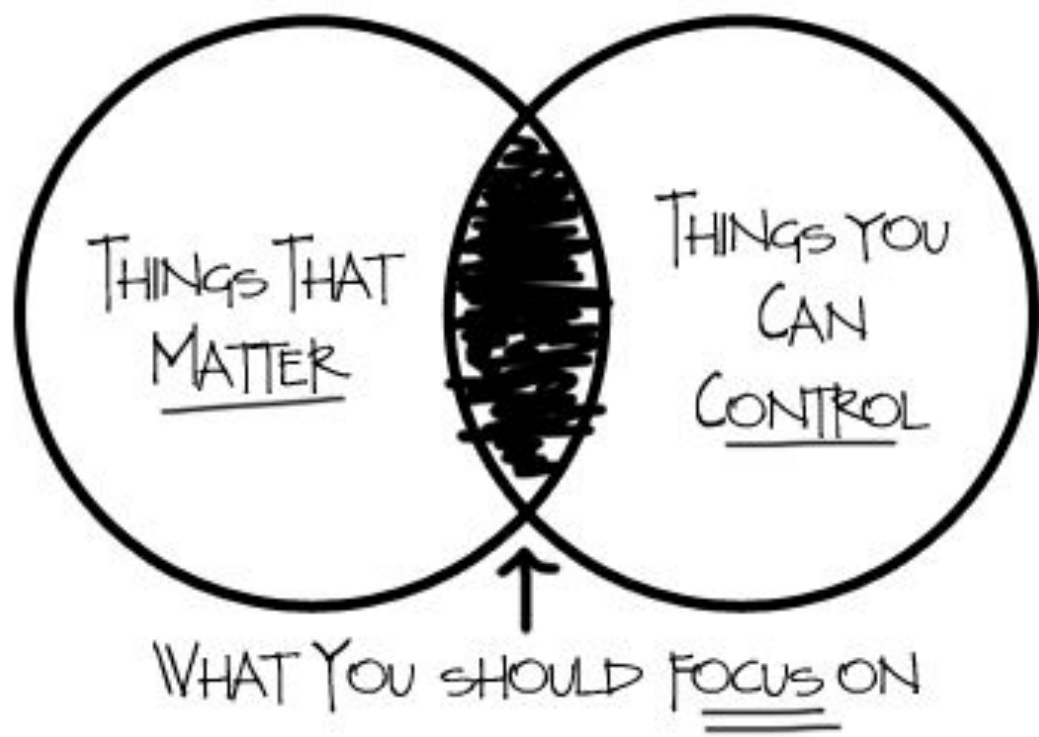
**2. Set up an appointment with your child's doctor:** At that appointment, bring up your concerns explicitly.

“I've noticed the following changes in my child, and I'm worried they may be depressed/have anxiety.”

**3. Call the school counselor** and share your own concerns and observations. Ask the counselor to check in with your child's teachers to see if they see the same.

**4. Seek mental health counseling/therapy** for your child. There are options here at school for counseling, too!

One key to addressing  
anxiety and depressive  
feelings is helping kids see  
**WHAT THEY CAN CONTROL**



**You can control what  
happens**



# ASSUMING YOU CAN CONTROL WHAT HAPPENS...

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- Focuses on action rather than freezing
- Encourages problem-solving and creativity
- Helps kids feel like they can be the authors of their lives

# What are scenarios they can control?

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- Worry about the huge social studies test on Friday!
  - ACTION PLAN: take a breath, review my notes, make a list of questions to ask the teacher about, put together a study guide and timeline
- Anxiety caused by seeing the shiny and pretty lives of celebrities on Instagram
  - ACTION PLAN: spend the evening purging Instagram (and other social media) of people that make me feel BAD about myself for any reason
- Stress of not getting along well with mom lately
  - ACTION PLAN: work with my friend to come up with a letter of what I'd say to my mom, tell her what's up so we can work on making it better

But...there are also  
plenty of things **THEY**  
**CAN'T CONTROL**

**You can't control what  
happens,  
BUT you can practice  
controlling how you react to it**

# ASSUMING YOU CAN CONTROL HOW YOU REACT...

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- Helps kids feel empowered
- Focuses on action rather than freezing
- Encourages emotional awareness

# What are scenarios where they can control how they react?

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- Parents argue constantly at home
  - ACTION PLAN: set yourself up for success by finding a spot that gets you away from the arguing, journal about what makes a positive relationship and good communication, buy earplugs, make a playlist of loud music to listen to while they argue
- People were talking smack at school and it was just a lousy day
  - ACTION PLAN: do my breathing exercises, spend the evening doing nice things for myself, know that I get a fresh start tomorrow

**The theme is**

- (1) ACKNOWLEDGING the emotion and**
- (2) DECIDING what to do with the energy caused by that emotion**

# Once we know:

- Whether we have control over the situation or our reaction
- What emotions are coming up

Then we can come up with an action plan!





**It is essential that we teach our children how to help themselves calm down and cope with their emotions and worries**

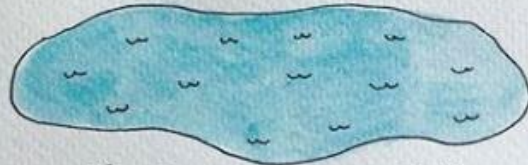
# RESILIENCE



I SWAM ACROSS THIS



I SWAM ACROSS THIS



I SWAM ACROSS THIS

I CAN SWIM ACROSS THIS.

A thick, horizontal, light blue brushstroke representing a body of water.

Art by Mari Andrew -  
follow her on  
Instagram!  
@bymariandrew

# Create a MENU of coping skills

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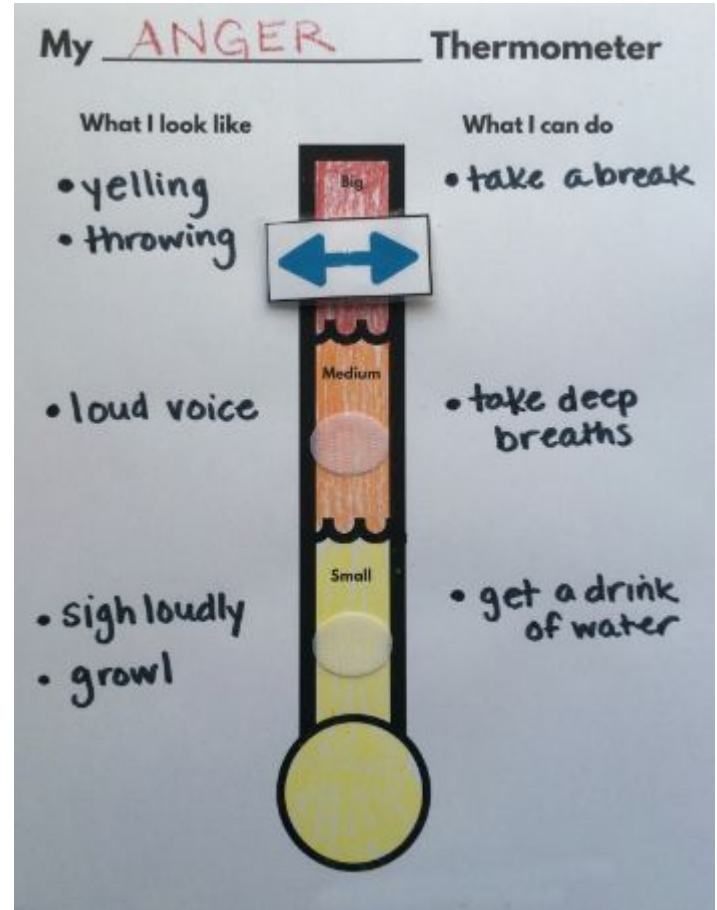
*“When I feel this way, what can I do?”*

- Develop the menu in a moment of calm
- Post it on your fridge
- Encourage your child to keep a copy in their wallet or take a photo on their phone
- Reference the menu when you know your kid needs it
- Use their suggestions for YOUR own moments of need and tell them that you're doing it

# How you can organize the menu

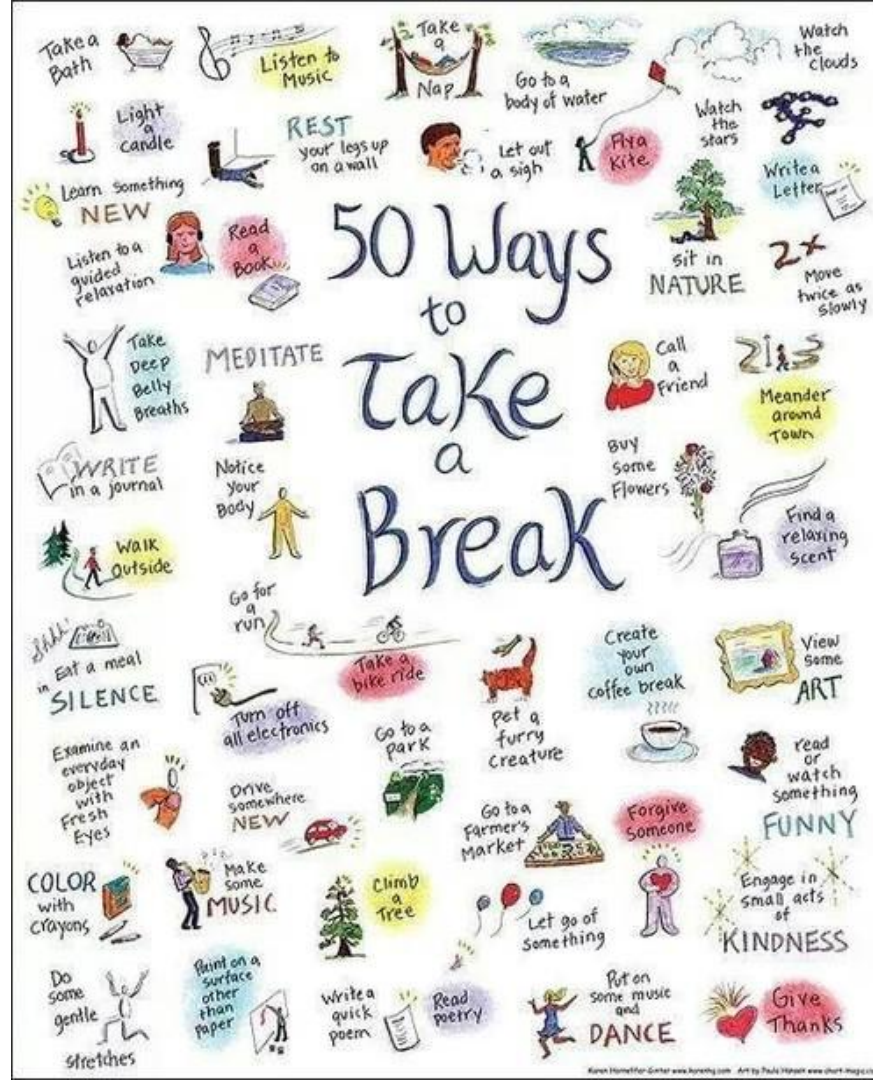
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By understanding what the emotion is, what it looks like, and ideas for each step



# How you can organize the menu

By making a list!



# How you can organize the menu

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# Distraction

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Conversation - call, text, or facetime a buddy

Read a book or a magazine, listen to an audiobook

Do puzzles, crosswords

Clean or organize something

Plant a garden

Draw, color, paint, do a craft project, knit

# Emotional Release

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Make an angry, sad, and POWERFUL playlist and let yourself be pissed, cry, and then be rebuilt

Take a cold shower

Throw ice at the concrete

Scream into or punch a pillow

Jump on bubble wrap

Go for a run, use the punching bag in the garage, write a letter and rip it up



# Self Love

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Give yourself a massage with great smelling lotion

Take a hot bath or shower

Get a manicure or pedicure

Buy a small treat and really enjoy it

Bake or cook something

Write yourself love notes or mantras

# Thought Challenge

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Write down negative thoughts and list all the reasons they might not be true

Imagine someone you love had these thoughts - what would you tell them to do?

Think of other times you've felt this way - how did you get out of it?

# Access Your Highest Self

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Help someone else

See how many smiles from strangers you can give and get

Pray

Volunteer

Do randomly kind things for others

# Grounding - use the body and the senses to center yourself

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TOUCH - find your softest blanket; wear your comfy clothes; ask for a backrub; ask for a hug; walk barefoot on grass/sand; play with putty or clay

TASTE - make a cup of tea; take several minutes to eat a square of chocolate;

SIGHT - find the most beautiful view in your neighborhood; look at photos of peaceful places; make a pile of your favorite photos of yourself

# Grounding - use the body and the senses to center yourself

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SMELL - find your favorite scented lotion; make the food that smells the best; find the most comforting smell in your house

HEAR - play thunder or running water recordings off YouTube; listen to your breath for five minutes; lie in bed and listen to the sound of your house settling; sing to yourself

# The Importance of Controlling Breath

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Birthday Candles (“Take 10”)

Color Breathing

Stretch and Breathe

Breathing during panic attacks

# A few other tried and true tips

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- Eating right and sleeping right is the foundation for stress management
- The Mindfulness App/Headspace/Calm
- Debrief on coping skills: How did it make you feel? I noticed that when you \_\_\_\_\_, you are \_\_\_\_\_. Why do you think that works for you? When does this not work for you?
- Parents/adults are the models!

**Kids can be very good at calming themselves -  
we need to help them know how!**



# Extra Reading and Resources

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[How To Help Your Kids Reframe Their Anxiety](#)

[How To Help A Child Struggling With Anxiety](#)

[What To Say To Kids When The News Is Scary](#)

[Coping With Seasonal Affective Disorder](#)

[When The Headlines Won't Stop, Here's How To Cope With The Anxiety](#)

[Feeling lots of...Feelings? Journaling can help](#)

Questions?  
Comments?

Get in touch with me!  
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