

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect. The central area is a plain white space where the text is placed.

# Understanding Anxiety in Children

# What causes Anxiety?

- ▶ Inconsistencies- boundaries, schedules, discipline.
- ▶ Not being grounded/balanced.
- ▶ Pressure to perform, do, and be.
- ▶ Not enough down time.
- ▶ Appropriate outlets.
- ▶ Technology.

# Research by Anxiety and Depression Association of America states:

- ▶ Anxiety disorders affect one in eight children.
- ▶ Research shows that untreated children with anxiety disorders are at higher risk to perform poorly in school and miss out on important social experiences.
- ▶ Anxiety disorders are often misdiagnosed as ADHD, the symptoms of Anxiety may keep the child from focusing.
- ▶ Kids tend to endure more anxiety than their parents assume they do. A 2009 survey by the American Psychological Association found that 28% of teens and 14% of tweens said they "worried a lot" or "a great deal," and to an extent far greater than what their parents were aware of. (Jensen, 2013)

# Typical Fears and Worries

- ▶ Infants- fear of loud noises, strangers
- ▶ Toddlers- fear of the dark, monsters, separation from parents
- ▶ School-age- fear of physical injury/getting sick, storms, and school pressures
- ▶ Teenagers- fear of social evaluation and school performance

# Common Stressors

- ▶ Divorce
- ▶ Family move or friend moves away
- ▶ Loss of pet
- ▶ Loss of relationship
- ▶ Poor performance at school
- ▶ Death of a relative
- ▶ Transition from elementary to middle school to high school

# Symptoms of Stress and Anxiety

- ▶ Recurrent fears and worries
- ▶ Difficulty falling asleep or having bad dreams
- ▶ Difficulty relaxing
- ▶ Difficulty separating from parents
- ▶ Fear about going to school
- ▶ Irritability, moody, crying, tantrums
- ▶ Uncomfortable in social situations

# Physical Symptoms

- ▶ Stomachaches
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Jittery feeling
- ▶ Sweating
- ▶ Increase heart rate

# Tips for Parents and Caregivers

- ▶ Pay attention to your child's feelings. Being present.
- ▶ Stay calm when your child becomes anxious about a situation or event.
- ▶ Recognize and praise small accomplishments.
- ▶ Don't punish mistakes or lack of progress.
- ▶ Be flexible and try to maintain a normal routine.
- ▶ Modify expectations during stressful periods.
- ▶ Plan for transitions.
- ▶ Build your child's personal strengths.
- ▶ Let your child learn to do things on his/her own.

# Tips continued...

- ▶ Try to keep your fears to yourself and as best you can present a positive or at least neutral description of a situation.
- ▶ Work together as parents. Have an agreed upon way of handling your child's anxiety.
- ▶ Have the same expectations of your anxious child as you would of another child (i.e., go to birthday parties, make decisions, talk to adults). However, understand that the pace will need to be slower and the process may be different.
- ▶ Ask open-ended questions when having one on one time with your child, i.e. who did you play with at recess?

# More Tips

- ▶ Maintain a healthy diet. Be aware of what your child is eating.
- ▶ Physical activity.
- ▶ Get an appropriate amount of sleep, 10-11 hours per night is the recommended amount.
- ▶ Monitoring technology. (television, phone, internet)

Take Away and Commitment to one idea

The background of the slide is white with abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes on the right side. These shapes include triangles and polygons in various shades of green, from light to dark, creating a modern, layered effect. A thin, light gray line also runs diagonally across the right side of the slide.