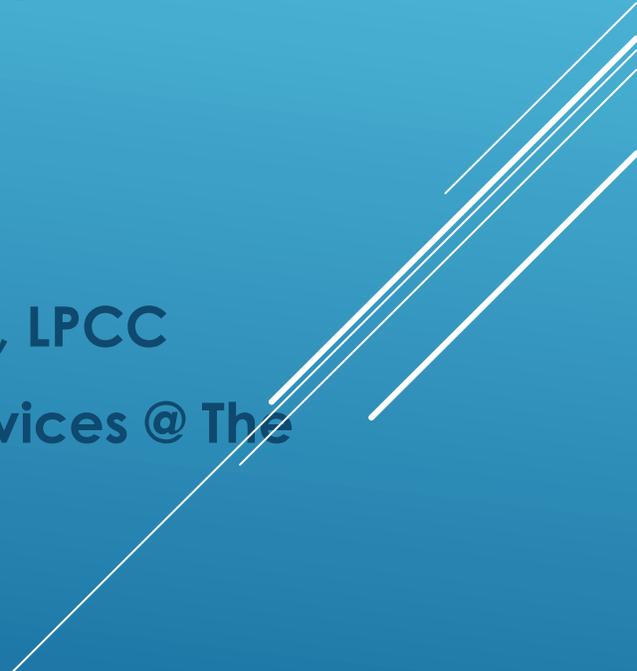
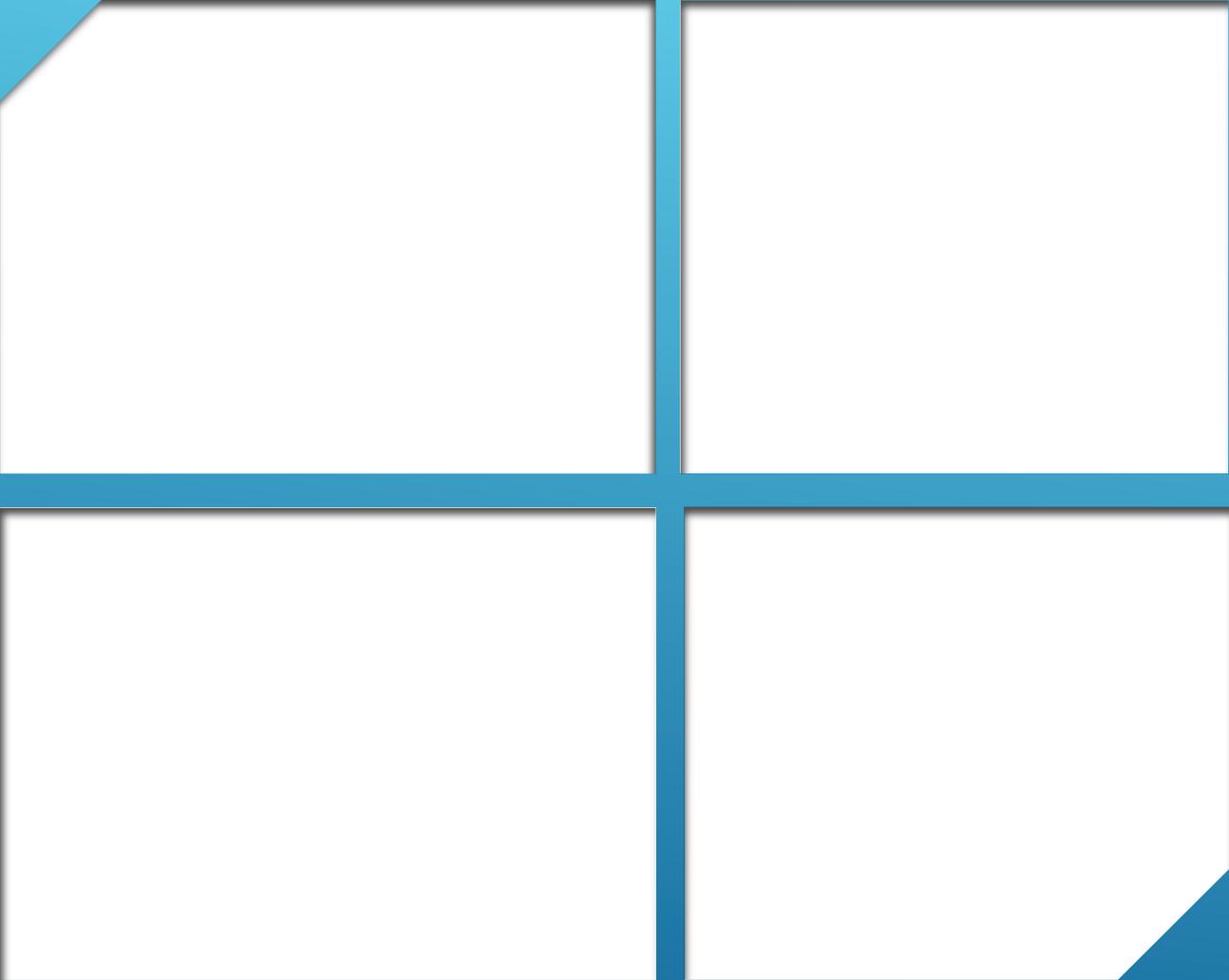


# **ANXIETY AND ATTENTION SERIES: HELPING THE CHILD WHO STRUGGLES WITH ANXIETY**

**Presented by Tierney A. Payne, LPCC**

**Manager of Africancentric Services @ The  
Nord Center**

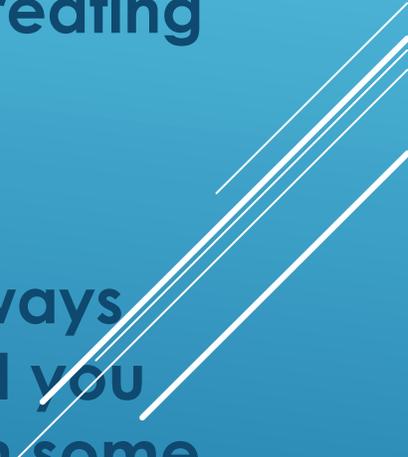




**Has this pandemic increased the anxiety level of your child? Is mask wearing, social distancing and all of the new restrictions creating stress?**

**Or**

**Has your child always been anxious and you are eager to learn some new strategies to help?**



**IF YOU ANSWERED,**

**YES, TO ONE OR MORE OF THESE  
QUESTIONS**

**THEN YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

**And, This presentation is for  
you!**

# Objectives:

- To gain a better understand of what anxiety is.
  - Identify the signs of anxiety to see if your child may be struggling with anxiety.
  - Discuss practical strategies families can utilize to help a child who struggles with anxiety.
1. Understand how creating and providing structure. can help reduce and alleviate symptoms of anxiety.
  2. Learn and develop positive coping skills to reduce symptoms or anxiety.
  3. Develop and Implement an Action Plan to reduce and/or alleviate symptoms of anxiety in your child.

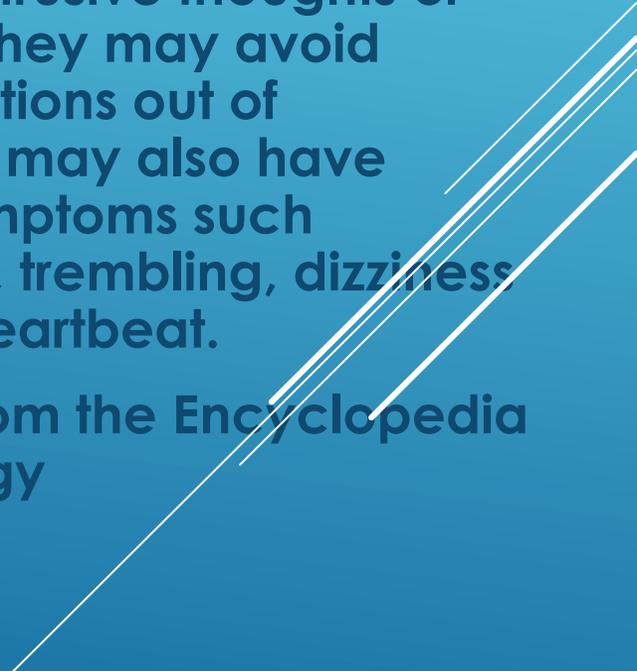
In 2020, our world as we knew it, was turned upside down! Many people were excited and looking forward to new opportunities taking place in 2020. However, no one was expecting that the world would be hit with a pandemic, such as the Coronavirus, that would have an effect on the entire world. The Coronavirus as well as other contributing factors, such as racial and political tension, loss of family and friends and jobs have contributed to the increase in anxiety in people.

We all feel anxious from time to time, and have normal levels of anxiety, in which the amount of anxiety is intermittent and is expected based on certain situations and events. However, today we are going to discuss the kind of anxiety that interferes with many life functions.



Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with anxiety disorders usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness, or a rapid heartbeat.

Adapted from the Encyclopedia of Psychology



# Common signs and symptoms that your child(ren) may be struggling with anxiety:

- Excessive worry and/or fear
  - Inability to control the worry and/or fear
  - Difficulty with focus and concentration
  - Irritability
  - Eating/Sleep Disturbance
  - Fatigue
  - Somatic complaints (stomachaches, headaches, etc.)
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# **PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FAMILIES CAN UTILIZE TO HELP A CHILD(REN) WHO STRUGGLES WITH ANXIETY**

- ❖ Provide an atmosphere of peace and calm**
- ❖ Limit news coverage regarding Covid-19**
- ❖ Be sure to check your level of anxiety, depression, irritability/anger and utilize positive coping skills to decrease symptoms. Seek professional help if needed**

# **PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FAMILIES CAN UTILIZE TO HELP A CHILD(REN) WHO STRUGGLES WITH ANXIETY**

- ❖ Follow policy and procedures to keep yourself, children and others safe- (wash your hands, wear your mask and social distance)**
- ❖ Be sure to check your level of anxiety, depression, irritability/anger and utilize positive coping skills to decrease symptoms. Seek professional help if needed**
- ❖ Show empathy by validating your child's feelings and letting them know they are safe**

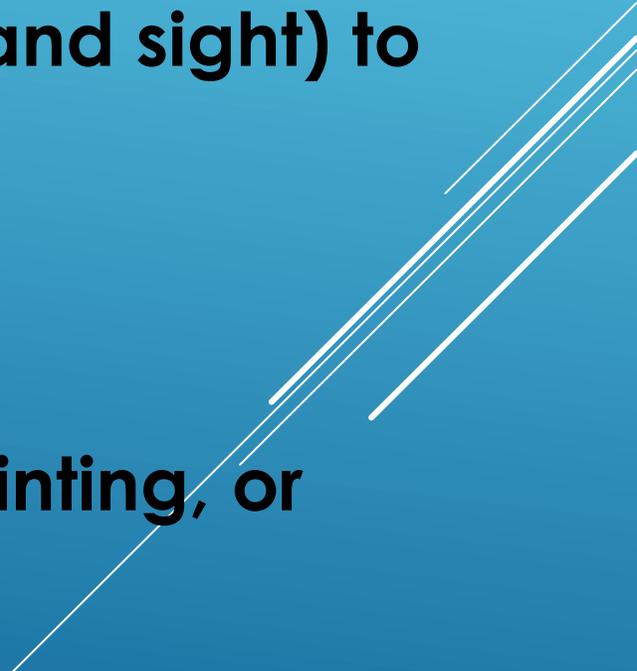
# **PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FAMILIES CAN UTILIZE TO HELP A CHILD(REN) WHO STRUGGLES WITH ANXIETY**

- ❖ **Model self-care by getting the right amount of sleep, eating right and set aside time for self**
- ❖ **Keep connected with family and friends through phone calls and/or video conferencing. If visiting in person be sure to maintain social distancing and follow procedures for hand washing and mask wearing.**
- ❖ **Set clear expectations and structure**

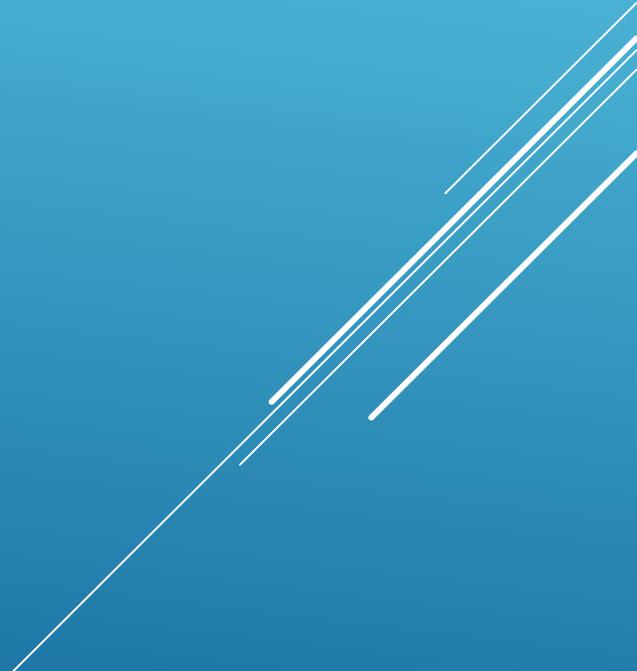
# How providing structure can help to decrease and/or alleviate anxiety in your child(ren)

1. It helps your child(ren) feel safe
  2. Your child(ren) develops a sense of mastery over different situations
  3. Your child(ren) learns to manage their environment and themselves by organizing their time and their belongings
  4. Increases cooperation and eliminates power struggles
  5. Helps parents follow through with expectations
  6. Provides opportunity to create connection between you and your child(ren)
- 

# Coping Skills to Help Your Child(ren) Cope With Stressors

- **Take Deep Breaths to calm down**
  - **Utilize your 5 senses (smell, hear, taste, touch and sight) to focus your attention away from the stressor**
  - **Find an activity to distract you**
  - **Be creative- use drawing, coloring, writing, painting, or building something, etc.**
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# Coping Skills to Help Your Child(ren) Cope With Stressors

- Exercise or do something physical (walk, dance, etc.)
  - Play a game (computer and/or board game)
  - Watch a funny movie
  - Listen to music and/or play an instrument
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# Action Plan to reduce and/or alleviate anxiety symptoms in your child(ren)

- Provide structure and consistency to see if that will reduce and/or alleviate symptoms.
- Try positive coping skills to see if that will help reduce and/or alleviate anxiety symptoms
- If symptoms don't stop seek a counselor to schedule an assessment to see if counseling is needed
- Help your child practice coping strategies and do homework that may be assigned by counselor
- If symptoms continue or become worse than talk with counselor to see if an evaluation for medication maybe needed

**Questions????**

