

PARENT CHEAT SHEET #1

DEALING WITH FEARS

CHILDREN'S EDITION



Young children deal with a variety of emotions, both negative and positive, as they develop emotionally and spiritually. Some of the fastest growing emotional issues among children are around the various levels of "Fears."

Anxiety and fear disorders have been reported to be affecting 1 in 8 children nationally. These negative emotions can influence grades, sleep, and physical health.

As Christian parents, we have the opportunity to turn to God's word to help us deal with these negative emotions in our child's life.

Here is a quick helpful resource to consider, pray over, and help deal with the four kinds of "Fears" (*Physical, Emotional, Spiritual and Mental*), and the four stages of "Fears" (*Anxiety, Worry, Fear and Panic*).



STAGE 1 ANXIETY

DEFINITION:

A feeling of anxiousness or nervousness based on something that is going on. Typically, uneasiness about a circumstance whether real or perceived.

COMMON ANXIETY/STRESS IN CHILDREN:

- Separation
- Changes or the unknown
- Surroundings/environment
- Darkness, new places or new people

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. - Philippians 4:6-7

BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS:

PHYSICAL Start by praying together about the situation.

EMOTIONAL Have them make a list of the things or reasons for why they are anxious or stressed.

SPIRITUAL Have them make a second list of the things that they know about God's Power.

MENTAL Take a minute to think and process with your child about the situation. Pray over and through the emotions.



STAGE 2 WORRY

DEFINITION:

Allowing yourself to think about something to the point of starting to feel upset or distressed.

COMMON ANXIETY/STRESS IN CHILDREN:

- Loss of object or person
- Feeling of disappointment or disapproval
- Feelings of failure

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT:

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? - Matthew 6:25-27

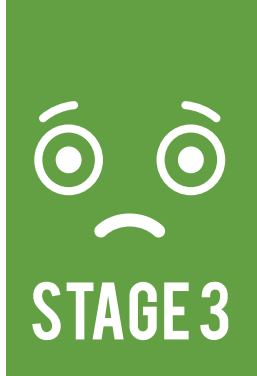
BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS:

PHYSICAL Identify the source or topic of worries.

EMOTIONAL Help them put their feelings into words.

SPIRITUAL Pray together, and thank God for how He provides.

MENTAL Take a minute to talk and think about how real or unreal the worry is. If there is a real problem, think of a plan to come up with a solution to the problem.



STAGE 3 FEAR

DEFINITION:

An emotional reaction to the belief that there is the presence of danger or a threat. The feeling that there is impending pain or suffering, physically or emotionally.

COMMON ANXIETY/STRESS IN CHILDREN:

- Animals, bugs or strange people
- Injury, illness or death
- Sleeping alone/kidnapped
- Imagined threats, monsters

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT:

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not FEAR The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense he has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. - Isaiah 12:2-3

BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS:

PHYSICAL Start with calming your child down through physical touch and presence.

EMOTIONAL Talk about trust and God's strength.

SPIRITUAL Talk about having faith in God. Think together about the idea that fear is the opposite of faith.

MENTAL Talk about the idea that we have a God that we can trust and save us. Pray for God's strength and defense from all evil.



STAGE 4 PANIC

DEFINITION:

Overwhelming emotion, causing overpowering feelings of helplessness and physical terror/behaviors.

COMMON ANXIETY/STRESS IN CHILDREN:

- Feeling of immediate danger: thunder, lightning
- Emotionally overwhelming situations: death of a loved one
- Complete feelings of helplessness and loss of control: unfamiliar sound or sudden unexpected surprises

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. - Psalms 46:1-3, 10-11

BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS:

PHYSICAL Find a "refuge" for your child by getting them to a "safe place" for them.

EMOTIONAL Calm your child down and get them to a point of "be still". Consider breathing with them calmly. Rest your hand on their shoulder.

SPIRITUAL Pray over your child, reassuring them that you and God are present with them.

MENTAL Talk calmly and rationally about the situation, circumstances, and their emotions. Reassure them of God's control over all of life and their situation.