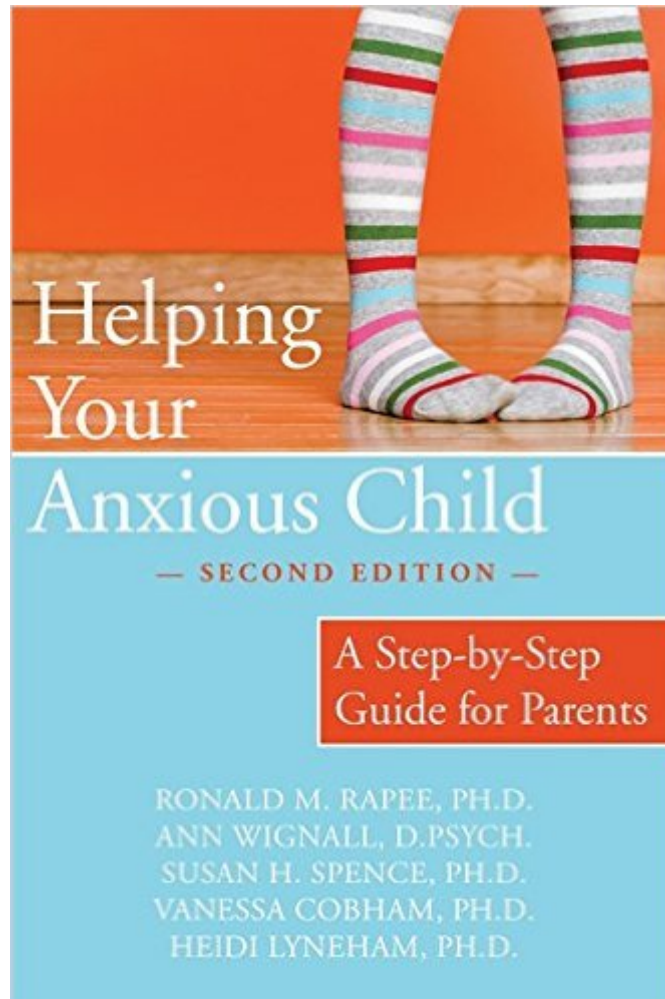


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# Helping Your Anxious Child: A Step-by-Step Guide For Parents



## Synopsis

Most children are afraid of the dark. Some fear monsters under the bed. But at least ten percent of children have excessive fears and worries—phobias, separation anxiety, panic attacks, social anxiety, or obsessive-compulsive disorder—that can hold them back and keep them from fully enjoying childhood. If your child suffers from any of these forms of anxiety, the program in this book offers practical, scientifically proven tools that can help. Now in its second edition, *Helping Your Anxious Child* has been expanded and updated to include the latest research and techniques for managing child anxiety. The book offers proven effective skills based in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to aid you in helping your child overcome intense fears and worries. You'll also find out how to relieve your child's anxious feelings while parenting with compassion. Inside, you will learn to:

- Help your child practice "detective thinking" • to recognize irrational worries
- What to do when your child becomes frightened
- How to gently and gradually expose your child to challenging situations
- Help your child learn important social skills

This book has been awarded The Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Self-Help Seal of Merit—an award bestowed on outstanding self-help books that are consistent with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) principles and that incorporate scientifically tested strategies for overcoming mental health difficulties. Used alone or in conjunction with therapy, our books offer powerful tools readers can use to jump-start changes in their lives.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker specializing in the treatment of Anxiety Disorders. I have

purchased at least 10 copies of this book because I am always loaning or giving it to parents. Dr. Rappe explains the different types of Anxiety Disorders in a very informative, understandable, non jargonly manner. Most importantly, the book is very hopeful about the benefits of treatment for anxiety. There is also a free downloadable workbook which teaches cognitive behavioral strategies through activities and worksheets. I have found "Detective Thinking" to be especially helpful to my clients. Also, the book presents Exposure Therapy (in my opinion the most effective treatment for anxiety) in a clear and easily implemented manner. I have used the "Step by Step" handouts in my clinical work with both individual and group clients. Dr. Dawn Huebner's books are also terrific resources for parents and therapists, especially "What to Do When You Worry Too Much", "What to Do when you Dread Your Bed", and "What to Do When Your Brain Gets Stuck."

Our six year old daughter has always been painfully shy in new situations to the point that it can prevent her from engaging in activities. Our first approaches of reassurance, expectation setting, and other suggestions gleaned from internet research never helped; however it only took reading this first chapter of this book to get several simple suggestions that made a huge difference. In fact we haven't read the rest of the book because using these tips (especially the "worry brain" drowning out the "calm brain" concept) we were able to help our daughter manage her anxiety. A month ago she clung to us every morning when we took her to her first grade classroom and had to be peeled off us by the teacher, sometimes in tears. Now she waltzes right in and I have to remind her to give me a kiss goodbye. She still gets shy in new groups, but the paralyzing fear is gone and we have tools to deal with it if it arrives. We may have only read a part of this book but it was money well spent.

So I bought this book because my 7 year old son is plagued with unrealistic worries (i.e. heart attacks, brain attacks, guns, death, "going flat," injections, skin melting . . . to name only a few). We have worked with a therapist, but I thought this book could help in-between sessions. While we use the exercises about realistic thinking and this is helpful, the crux of the book is using "step ladders" to lessen kid's fears by exposing them to the discomfort of their fears slowly and thus desensitising them (for example, a kid who obsesses about making a mistake at school and looking stupid, slowly works to purposefully make innocuous mistakes so they can realize they can handle the discomfort; there are also stepladders that work well with separation anxieties.) I don't know how to make "stepladders" regarding death, guns, injections and the like, and although the book acknowledges that anxiety disorders will cover a lot of unrealistic fears (and they give an example of a child afraid

of being kidnapped from their bed), it ignores them in the sample exercises, and I have not figured out how to do stepladders for guns or skin melting without having child protective services pay me a visit. So if your child suffers from social anxiety, separation anxiety, OCD, this book is helpful. Otherwise, not so much.

I am a therapist that works with children and I find this book to be a jewel! It helps parents to learn how to help their children outside of the therapist's office. It also does a great job of explaining anxiety in non jargon terms and know where to go with your anxious child. It also has a workbook that you can download for free to work with your child! I work with more elementary school kids so some of the exercises and words were a little advanced. However, with some creativity you can scale it down. I felt this is more geared towards middle-school age kids. However, I really liked this book!

I haven't finished the book yet, but this is the first thing we've tried that has really helped my 10 yo daughter. You have to follow the program, not just read the book. As we started having family meetings to learn about anxiety and do the exercises once/week, my daughter started talking more and more at those meetings and at other times about what's going on for her internally. I think the topics we cover in the meetings are helping normalize her experience, and frame it less as a "problem" and more as "life management". Her anxieties aren't all the type that are explicitly covered in the book, but we're finding it possible to extend the ideas to her stuff, with a little creativity. Working the exercises has helped us open some family discussions of things beyond the book, too. For example, last week we had a great chat about how people talk about anxiety as "worries and fears", but sometimes we'll say we're anxious when we're more overwhelmed than fearful or worried. Is that still anxiety? And do you manage it the same way? I'm so glad we're finally finding a way to talk about these things together, instead of having my daughter withdraw whenever the topic comes up.

This book was a great help for me. My 11yr old goes for therapy but I needed help dealing at home. I skip through to a part that pertains to the certain circumstance. Great help for any person that has to deal with an Anxious child.

I have a 7 year old with anxiety. I've read lots of books looking for ways to help him and although this gave ideas, the book was very dry and didn't do a good job of catching my attention. We used a

few ideas, but not many. There are better books out there.

I was very impressed with the step-by-step method described in this book. It was encouraging and motivating for parent and child. I employed these methods with some students and saw great improvement. The approach is very doable. It recognizes many different types of anxiety and situations and offers many ways to liberate the child (and others) from the paralysis and hysteria of severe anxiety as well as dealing with everyday low level anxiety. I highly recommend reading this book and incorporating these ideas. You and your whole family will be glad you did.

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