

When I Feel Afraid

This month in THE GREAT BODY SHOP, your child will learn about fear, how to cope with it, and fear's effects upon the body. We urge you to reinforce the material by discussing it at home. The lessons cover:

- Lesson 1:** Understanding and Coping with Common Fears
- Lesson 2:** How Being Afraid Affects Your Body
- Lesson 3:** Recognizing Real Dangers
- Lesson 4:** Your Body Is Private!

Normal Fears

It's perfectly normal to have fears. Fears change over time. A toddler may have separation anxiety and cling to a parent. As the child grows, he/she may begin to fear unreal or imagined things like the boogie man. By the time the child reaches age seven and older, his/her fears may be based in possible dangers. Healthy fear can cause children to act in a safe way. For example, a child who fears getting hit by a speeding car will cross the street safely and cautiously. Parents can help children with their fears by remembering a few do's and don'ts.

Do talk to your child to help find out the cause of their fears. Most of the time, talking and a little TLC goes a long way to helping ease a child's fears.

Do encourage your child to find some healthy coping skills. For example, if your child is afraid of the dark, place a night light in their room.

Don't laugh at or scold your child for his/her fears. Don't ignore the fear, especially if it is causing prolonged anxiety. A doctor, counselor, or child psychologist may be able to help.

Stressed Out?

With all of the emphasis on testing, your child might feel stressed. Excessive worry (or stress) can cause a host of health problems for your child. Watch for excessive tiredness, sleeplessness, over or under eating, and other symptoms of stress.

Help your child face their stress by talking it out, exercising, or trying some of the coping skills found in THE GREAT BODY SHOP.

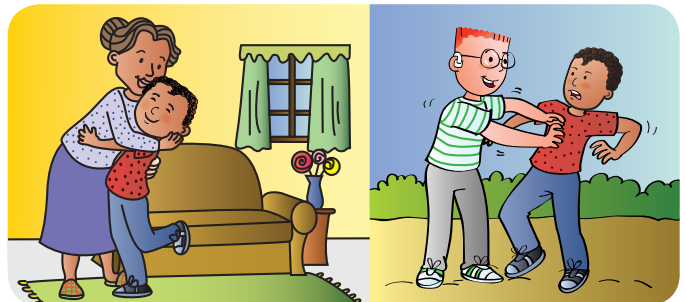
Trusting Yourself

In this issue, your child will learn that fear can be a very important warning signal of danger. Students will learn to "trust their gut instincts" when confronted with a situation they think might be dangerous.

Ask your child for examples of situations in which "being scared" can warn us of danger, such as being offered a ride by a stranger or playing on a busy street. Reinforce the fact that your child should trust his/her own instincts in these situations.

Personal Safety

In Lesson 4 of THE GREAT BODY SHOP, your child will learn that some adults can't be trusted. In class, students will learn about safe and unsafe touches and practice saying "NO" when someone tries to touch them in an inappropriate way. We'll also talk about the importance of telling a trusted adult if that happens. You can make the message much stronger if you talk about it at home.



Read All About It

Scared Silly

by Sara Desmet. Red Cygnet Press, 2006.

A possum, an anteater, and a pig decide to join forces and explore the deepest, darkest depths of the forest each night. But something spoils their fun. The possum, who cannot stop scaring the others, drives his friends away. He soon sees that friendship is as much about compromise as it is about fun.