

What can parents do?

Understand the problem

- School anxiety & avoidance are **common**
- They can present in **different ways** across **different ages**
- School anxiety & avoidance **can get better**
- Try to **hold onto hope**

Identify underlying factors & patterns, such as

- Medical or psychiatric illness
- Learning disability, academic or social difficulties
- Stress, transition, loss, family issues
- Avoiding negative feelings or pursuing rewarding activity

Have a clear approach & plan

- Identify anxiety early on, try not to enable or reinforce the anxiety, don't let the Anxiety Bully win!
- At home, support regular **structure and routine**
- Help identify and practice **coping strategies**
- Prioritize **clear, calm, and brief** communication about whatever is anxiety-inducing
- **Demagnetize** home, **magnetize** school

Partner with your school

- Build consensus around a behavior plan which is **clear** and **realistic** and includes **coping strategies, reasonable accommodations & appropriate rewards**
- Be open to **support from specialists**

Remember:

- Setbacks are normal
- Celebrate the positives
- Things can improve
- You are not alone
- This is an opportunity for growth and resilience

4 Cs of Communication:

- Calm
- Curious
- Compassionate
- Concerned

Self-Compassion and "Good Enough" Parenting

- Prioritize the basics
- Focus on the positive
- Connect with others

"My child isn't giving me a hard time. My child is having a hard time."

If you have questions or concerns about your child, or are interested in learning more about Cartwheel's clinical services, please contact a member of your school's counseling or guidance team.

About Cartwheel: We partner with school districts to provide students and families with rapid access to mental health assessments, evidence-based therapy, medication management and consultation, and parent/guardian guidance. All of our services are via telehealth with licensed clinicians. We are committed to providing affordable care for everyone - including uninsured families and those covered by Medicaid.