

Roundtable Safety Moment

Anxiety

Anxiety is the body's normal stress response; however long-term stress has negative effects on a young person's life and health. Anxiety can be caused by everyday activities as well as bullying and school issues or traumatic events such as the death of a loved one or abuse. Due to the rising percentage of youth struggling with anxiety, it is important that all adults working with youth of all ages understand and recognize the signs of anxiety and know how to help youth find the help they need and tools to cope with the anxiety. Take note that as with other mental health disorders, symptoms of anxiety can vary from person to person.

The following are more commonly seen symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Anger or irritability
- Trouble with sleeping
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Stomach aches
- Nervousness, or being on edge

How to help:

- Recognize the signs of anxiety.
- If a youth appears to be struggling, talk with a parent or adult about concerns.
- Don't dismiss it. (Avoid terms such as: "don't worry", "you'll be fine", "calm down", etc.)
- Encourage the parent and youth to find a trusted person to talk about any issues/struggles that they might be facing and who can help them discover ways to cope.
- Ensure the youth gets adequate rest and healthy meals while camping.
- Listen and strive to be kind, calm, and compassionate.
- Provide a safe environment for everyone at meetings, camps and activities.
- Anxiety occurs at all ages and as scout leaders recognize anxiety, they can help parents and youth find success in a positive way.

Additional Resources:

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/safety-moments/psychological-first-aid/>

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/programs/>

<https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/trail-to-adventure/supporting-our-scouts-mental-health-at-camp/>

<https://www.scouts.org.uk/news/2020/april/tips-for-coping-with-anxiety-attacks/>

https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwgNanBhDUARIsAAelcAtMMFjVg8qmoOH8ZOUowbju3HgfJtVRO8-i6YiTOiNBf8-gTVrrP3QaAnmBEALw_wcB

