



It's heartbreaking to see that anxiety is so common among primary school children.

A recent [article](#) published in Fairfax media revealed just how pervasive the problem is in schools.

It stated that the latest Australian government research shows that 7% of primary school children are experiencing an anxiety disorder. That's two children in every classroom whose wellbeing, happiness and learning is significantly impacted by anxiety.

While figures don't lie, anecdotal evidence suggests that this is the tip of the iceberg as many primary school children experience anxiety, yet their condition isn't classified as a disorder.

According to Professor Frank Oberklaid of the Royal Children's Hospital, ".... for teachers and principals having to deal with this (anxiety) in their day-to-day work, it's the elephant in the room. There's no doubt that the wider cultural

environment in which children are being raised is having an impact on emotional health.”

Parents are anxious about their parenting

The article cites many reasons for the current increase in anxiety among children including parental anxiety, over scheduling, high parental ambition, the new digital landscape, the pace of change, pressure on kids to perform and constant bombardment of images and information through the new 24 hour media landscape.

Add the fact that modern parents are very anxious about their parenting, about whether they are doing enough for their kids and we have the perfect storm for kids with genetic predispositions (30-50% of anxiety is genetic) for anxiety.

What to do?

Parenting Ideas founder Michael Grose co-author of new highly-acclaimed book *Anxious Kids* believes that parents hold the keys to managing the current anxiety epidemic.

Grose writes, “Childhood is the ideal time for parents to teach anxiety recognition and self-management tools to kids.”

He encourages parents to scaffold children to success through gradual immersion rather than avoidance of anxiety inducing events.

He also suggests that parents consider making lifestyle changes for children including increasing daily exercise, eating real foods, encouraging kids to play more, monitoring digital usage, prioritising sleep and providing opportunities for kids to spend more time in nature. These lifestyle factors contribute significantly to children’s mental health and reduce the likelihood of children becoming overwhelmed by anxiety.

How we can help you manage the elephant in the (class)room

Children's anxiety management and minimisation is a major focus of Parenting Ideas' work. We have a series of articles, videos and webinars designed to inform and educate parents and teachers about anxiety.

These resources, alongside a multitude of others on topics such as digital parenting, resilience, positive parenting and parent engagement in schools are available in the digital Resource Centre at Parenting Ideas Schools.

Here's how membership works

Your school becomes a member of Parenting Ideas Schools and every teacher in your school has access to the quality parenting articles and videos to pass on to parents.

Premium members also have access to regular professional learning modules on topics such as student well-being, parent engagement and parenting assistance as well as teacher webinars to help stay up-to-date in these areas. Importantly, these resources are available for teachers to access in their own time.

Membership of Parenting Ideas Schools is available for a twelve month period.

Great news

In recognition of the current anxiety epidemic in schools we are giving an extra **3 months free membership** for every school that becomes a Parenting Ideas School before the 20th September.

To find out more about our memberships for schools, or to take a self-guided tour of our member portal you can visit our website. If you prefer to speak to a team member, please call us on (03) 5983 1798.