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# PARENT CHEAT SHEET #1

## DEALING WITH FEARS - YOUTH EDITION

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### EXPLANATION AND INSTRUCTION

*Pre-teens through teenage-year children deal with a variety of emotions, both negative and positive as they continue through the adolescent years developing who they are emotionally and spiritually. One the fastest-growing emotional issues among teenagers are around the various levels of "Fears".*

*Anxiety and fear disorders have been reported to be affecting 1 in 8 children nationally. These negative emotions can influence grades, sleep, relationships and physical health.*

*During these years, because of hormones and the onset of puberty, emotions may fluctuate greatly.*

*Parents should do their best to deal with both real and perceived fears before they become something more serious.*

*As Christian parents, we have the opportunity to turn to God's word to help us deal with the common levels of these negative emotions in our children's life.*

*Even as parents, we need to make sure to deal honestly and biblically with our own parental and personal fears that may arise.*

*Here is a quick helpful resource to consider, pray, and deal with the 4 Kinds of "Fears" and 4 stages of "Fears."*



### FOUR KINDS OF FEARS



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### STAGE 1 - ANXIETY

#### Definition

A feeling of anxiousness or nervousness based on something that is going on. Typically, uneasiness about a circumstance whether real or perceived.

#### Common Anxiety/Stress in Older Children/Teens

- School assignments ●
- Peer Pressure/Relationships ●
- Personal Appearance ●
- Pressure to Achieve/Succeed

#### Biblical Encouragement



Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

*Philippians 4:6-7*

#### Biblical Instructions



Start by praying together about the situation.



Have them make a list of the things or reasons for why they are anxious or stressed.



Have them make a second list of the things that they know about God's character and His Power.



Take time together to talk openly and honestly about how to overcome and guard against stress and worry. Think of practical steps to avoid stress.

Take some time to pray over the emotions and situation.

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### STAGE 2 - WORRY

#### Definition

Allowing yourself to think about something to the point of starting to feel upset or distressed.

#### Common Worries in Older Children/Teens

- Disappointment or disapproval ●
  - Feelings of failure ●
- Social and relational issues ●
- Physical Appearance/Self-Esteem ●

#### Biblical Encouragement



Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

*Matthew 6:25-27*

#### Biblical Instructions



Identify the source or topic of worries.



Reassure your child of their value and worth to God.



Pray together about who God is creating them to be and their potential.



Talk about the real outcome of worry. Have them think about the fact that we have to allow things to be completely in God's hand and that worry will not solve anything.

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### STAGE 3 - FEAR

#### Definition

An emotional reaction to the belief there is the presence of danger or a threat. The feeling that there is impending pain or suffering, physically or emotionally.

#### Common Fears in Older Children/Teens

- Social Acceptance/Fitting In ●
  - Failure: academically or extra-curricular ●
- Unknown: the future, world issues, success ●

#### Biblical Encouragement



Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not FEAR The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense he has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

*Isaiah 12:2-3*

#### Biblical Instructions



Encourage your child to take a big breath or go for a walk/work out to relax.



Talk about the ideas of trust and dependence.



Discuss the difference between faith and fear. Have them consider that fear is actually the opposite of faith. Pray and have them give over their fears to God.



Talk about the idea in the verse that we have a God that we can trust, and He saved us. Talk about the thought that even when we are not feeling happy, we can still find joy!

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### STAGE 4 - PANIC

#### Definition

Overwhelming emotion, causing overpowering feelings of helplessness and physical terror/behaviors.

#### Common Panic in Older Children/Teens

- failure: academically or other ●
- relational breakdown or similar ●
  - overwhelming situation  
i.e. death of a loved one ●
- Complete feelings of helplessness and loss or control, real or imagined ●

#### Biblical Encouragement



God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

*Psalms 46:1-3, 10-11*

#### Biblical Instructions



Have your child sit down or find a “refuge” emotionally or physically.



Calm your child down. Work on getting them to “be still.” Consider breathing with them calmly. Rest your hand on their shoulder.



Pray over your child, reassuring them that you and God are present with them.



Talk calmly and rationally about the situation, circumstances, and their emotions. Reassure them of God’s control over all of life and situation.