



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**PROJECT  
CORNERSTONE**  
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are all experiencing a wide range of emotions in our lives these days. Project Cornerstone has made available a lesson to assist students in dealing with the emotions of anxiety, worry, and sadness. For younger students, K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade, read the book *Worries Are Not Forever* by Elizabeth Verdick. For grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, view the video, *What Causes Anxiety and Depression-Inside Out* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNsTy-j\\_sQs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNsTy-j_sQs).

After the lesson, students will be able to:

- Express their feelings of anxiety, worry, or sadness
- Identify physical changes that occur with feeling anxious, worried, or sad
- Learn tools to cope with anxious, worried thoughts and sadness

As caring adults in our children's lives, we can help by promoting optimism in a time of negativity. This is not always easy. We can't make our children happy every day, but we can give them strategies to cope. Optimism comes from showing our children that steps to a positive outlook are well within their reach.

- How you respond to news makes a difference in how kids process it. Help them put things in perspective by explaining that sometimes the loudest voices capture the most listeners. Putting things in perspective lessens children's fears and restores hope.
- Talk about what you're grateful for. Research shows that expressing gratitude actually makes people happier. Have your child start a gratitude journal or have each family member share one thing they are thankful for to start each day.
- Tune out the world for a while. Simply being together to talk, play a game, or do a puzzle emphasizes the importance of family time. By spending time as a family, device free, you show your children what's really important.
- If your child expresses a worry or is anxious, respond to them with:
  - 😊 "I'm here to listen."
  - 😊 "You're safe. Let's talk. What can I do to help?"
  - 😊 "Talk to your worry. What do you want to tell it?"
  - 😊 "Let's walk. Moving can help make worries go away."
  - 😊 "You are not alone. We can get through this together"

Sincerely,

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