



Live Webinar

Practical Strategies for Parents

Supporting Your Child During Uncertain Times

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Welcome & Why This Matters

When the world feels uncertain, children ask one question:

“Am I safe?”



Children may not understand geopolitics, but they feel emotional shifts immediately.

This morning, we will cover

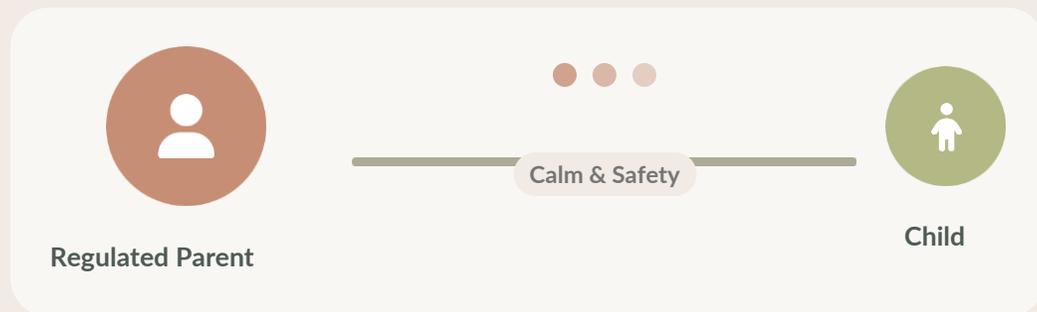
-  How to stay regulated
-  How to explain what's happening
-  How to support anxious children
-  Managing online learning at home
-  When to seek extra support

Children Borrow Regulation

Children do not calm themselves first.

They calm through you.

Anxiety spreads, but calm spreads too. Through **co-regulation** and mirror neurons, your nervous system acts as an anchor for theirs.



♥ Key: Parents don't need to be fearless — just steady enough.

Your signals communicate safety



Tone of Voice



Facial Expression



Pace & Speed



Body Language

Managing Your Own Regulation

— Before answering questions

✓ Pause

✓ Slow your breathing

✓ Lower your voice

✓ Limit news exposure

✓ Avoid adult speculation in earshot

Try this now:



i Exhaling longer signals safety to the nervous system.

How to Explain What Happened (Young Children)

Keep it simple:

*“Some scary things happened far away.
Adults are working to keep everyone safe.
We are safe.”*



Provide Containment

Avoid These Common Pitfalls

-  Graphic details
-  Too many unknowns
-  Repeated future speculation

Young children need containment, not complexity.

How to Explain It (Older Children & Teens)

Start by asking:

“What have you heard?”

Follow up with:

“What are you thinking?”



Strategy & Response



Correct Misinformation: Teens see social media speculation. Correct facts calmly without over-explaining



Model Tolerance: Show them how to handle the unknown. It's okay not to have every answer.



The Key Message: *“We can’t predict everything, but right now we are safe.”*



Older children need validation of their observations, not just dismissal of their fears.

Questions Children May Ask

Common concerns and how to respond safely



"Are we going to die?"

"We are safe right now."



"Will it happen again?"

"Adults are monitoring things carefully."



"Why can't I go to school?"

"Online learning is a way of being careful."



Tip: Keep answers short and repeat consistently.

Common Stress Reactions

Behaviors you may notice during uncertain times



Clinginess



Sleep Changes



Irritability



Repetitive Questions



Withdrawal



Increased Rigidity

*"This is **stress** – not misbehaviour."*

If Your Child Is Still Highly Anxious

Instead of repeating explanations, calm the body first.



Wall Pushes



Slow Breathing



Back-to-Back
Breathing



Cold Water
on Wrists



Quiet Sensory
Space

"Regulate first. Explain later."

Containing Repetitive Questions

Use one consistent phrase



“
**We are safe right now.
If anything changes, adults will handle it.**
”



Understanding Repetition

Do not expand the answer each time.
Repetition is their attempt to feel safe, not to get new information.

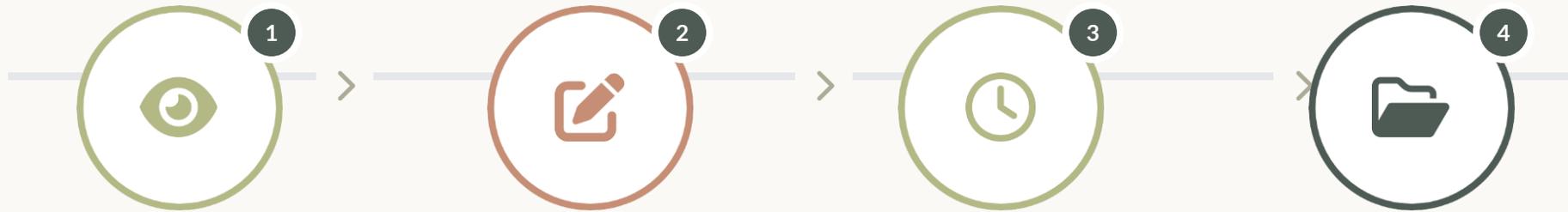


Building Containment

Consistency builds containment. Same words, same tone, every time.

Worry Time Strategy (7+)

Create a container for anxiety to reduce rumination



Notice Worry

Catch the thought when it pops up during the day.

Park It

Write it down on a list. Don't dwell on it now.

Worry Time

Review list during your scheduled 10 mins.

Close

Problem solve what you can, let go of the rest.

Outside Worry Time Say:

"That's a worry thought. We'll look at it later."

✓ Result: Breaks the cycle of constant worrying

Supporting Online Learning

Structure reduces anxiety

 Wake at normal time

 Get dressed

 Visible daily schedule

 Movement breaks

 Clear start & finish times

 Maintain bedtime



Your Calm Study Space

"Predictability = Safety"

Sample Home Schedule

Predictability creates a sense of safety



Morning



Healthy Breakfast



Online Lessons



Midday



Movement Break



Lunch Time



Afternoon



Short Work Blocks



Calm Activity



Evening



Family Time



Screen Wind-down

Movement Break Ideas (Small Space)

Heavy muscle work reduces anxiety and regulates the nervous system.



**Wall
Push-Ups**



**Chair
Squats**



**Marching
on the Spot**



**Animal
Walks**



**Freeze
Dance**



**Carry Books
or Laundry**

"Movement is regulation — not reward."

Supporting Neurodivergent Children

Uncertainty can feel
overwhelming.

*Expect increased rigidity. This is coping.
Predictability lowers anxiety.*

Support with:



Visual schedules



Clear timelines (“3 days online”)



Literal language



Reduced “what if” conversations



Predictable routines

Tools You Can Teach Your Child



Box Breathing



5-4-3-2-1 Grounding



"Name the Alarm"



Control Circles



"Is this a real danger right now, or a false alarm?"

Managing Sleep

Anxiety increases at night



Start Early

Earlier Wind-down

Begin the routine sooner to allow more time for settling.



Reduce Input

No Evening News

Limit stimulating content and scary information.



Set Environment

Low Lighting

Dim lights to signal the brain it's time to rest.



Connection

Short Reassurance

Keep the bedtime ritual consistent and comforting.



If They Wake

Calm Responses

Keep interactions boring, quiet, and safe.

Reduce Exposure

Highly anxious children need less input.



Limiting sensory overload helps reset the nervous system.

Temporarily reduce or turn off



News playing in background



Social media scrolling



Adult debates within earshot



WhatsApp speculation & rumors

Lower Expectations Temporarily

In times of stress...

↓ Attention Drops

↑ Emotions Rise

↓ Productivity Decreases



Safety

Prioritize physical and emotional security above all else.



Connection

Focus on relationship and being present with your child.



Routine

Maintain simple structures to provide containment.

 Remember: Academic progress will recover.

When to Seek Extra Support

Seek help if you notice:

- ! Panic attacks
- ! Persistent refusal to sleep
- ! Extreme withdrawal
- ! Physical complaints (headaches, stomach aches)
- ! Anxiety lasting several weeks



"Early support is protective."

Don't hesitate to reach out.

 **Contact Therapy by Insights**

Reliable Mental Health Resources



Mental Health Foundation

mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/articles/talking-children-about-scary-world-events



Anna Freud Centre

annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/



YoungMinds

youngminds.org.uk/parent/



UNICEF Parenting

unicef.org/parenting



▶ Click links to open resources in a new tab

Reliable UAE News Sources



UAE Government Portal

<https://u.ae>



NCEMA

<https://www.ncema.gov.ae>



Emirates News Agency (WAM)

<https://wam.ae>



Official updates only. Rely on official sources and avoid social media speculation.

You do not need perfect answers.



Steady
Presence



Calm
Tone



Clear
Structure



Repeated
Reassurance

*"This is a normal response to an abnormal event.
Your calm is your child's anchor."*



Therapy

By Insights Psychology



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www.insightspsychology.com

We are here to support you.