

Managing Expectations

Managing Expectations, an *Awesome* strategy and our Biggest Challenge

Structure gives comfort

Help reduce their anxiety by managing their expectations. Give them **clear instructions** on how things will go and give them the **opportunity to ask questions** if they need more detailed information or instructions.

I don't know about you, but I get crazy trying to make sure my girls are ready for school on time! I REALLY don't like rushing out the door super stressed every morning, it's not a fun way to start the day, for any of us. So we have re-vamped & re-implemented the 'Daily Routines Chart' (again) and it's going great! Both my girls like ticking off each task each day once it's done, as well as the rewards they get. And I love the fact that everything is done with minimal stress, minimal interaction from me, and on time!

Here is a link to the chart we use, feel free to print it off and implement your own rewards and calm mornings at home. [Get the free printable 'ECK Daily Routines Chart' here](#)

Green and Red Thinking

We were introduced to green and red thinking through the 'Courageous Kids Program' at Kids First (see link in resources table below). It can be great, but you need to be careful to choose when the timing is right for this to go down well, (not when they are in melt-down, but when things are calmer), it can start some really good discussions.

How to use Green and Red Thinking

1. Acknowledge each of their thoughts and worries.
2. Ask if they think this is helpful **green** thinking? Or unhelpful **red** thinking?
3. Ask other questions around their thinking:
 - What do they think is the worst that could happen? (negative **red** thinking) Eg. It might not be multi-day at school and everyone else is wearing their school uniform
 - What could we do then? Eg. We could go home and I could get changed
 - What do they think is the best that could happen? (positive **green** thinking)

The more positives the better, distraction and a positive focus can create a great mind shift.

Detective Thinking – Help your child manage their own “what if’s”

If your child is anxious about starting something new there can be sooo many "what if's"!!!

Our response as their parent needs to be:

- What do you think?
- What would be an unhelpful thought?
- What would be a helpful thought?

This is referred to as **Detective Thinking** from the **Cool Kids Anxiety Program** (*see link to the website in resources table below*).

This helps them become **more self-reliant**, rather than expecting us to continually reassure them that it will be ok. One of my favourites, because we can't always know it is going to go great... Let's just '**Give it a go**' (thanks Forestville!) and see what happens.

Using Growth Mindset – Help when your child says “I can’t...”







And when the “I can't do it's” start popping up... Introduce some **Growth Mindset** tools.

The simplest way to do this is by adding “**Yet**” to the end of their sentences, “You can't do it... **YET**”, and then ask “but... what might help you get better at it, so you **CAN** do it one day?” (An easy and great answer here is: **Practice!**)




Give examples: “...sports stars, do you think they were born Olympic level swimmers? Or do you think they have and continue to practice A LOT?!?”

You can find some fantastic Free **Growth Mindset Printables** on the **Big Life Journal** website (*see link to the website in resources table below*).

HELPFUL RESOURCES

	<p>Courageous Kids is an Anxiety Prevention & Resilience Program for Children, run by Kids First. This is where we were first introduced to a fantastic strategy to help manage worries through green and red thinking.</p> <p>Learn More about the Courageous Kids Program</p>
	<p>The Cool Kids program is a structured, skills-based program that teaches children (including teenagers) and their parent(s) how to better manage a child's anxiety. This is where we learnt about Detective Thinking, another great strategy for managing anxious thinking.</p> <p>Learn more about the Cool Kids Program</p>
	<p>Receive fantastic Free Growth Mindset Printables from Big Life Journal.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="527 1079 847 1514"> <p>GROWTH MINDSET ENCOURAGEMENT NOTES - 1</p>  <p>Printables by Big Life Journal - biglifejournal.com</p> </div> <div data-bbox="899 1079 1224 1514"> <p>GROWTH MINDSET ENCOURAGEMENT NOTES - 2</p>  <p>Printables by Big Life Journal - biglifejournal.com</p> </div> </div> <p>Visit the Big Life Journal website</p>
	<p>Find a list of Top Growth Mindset Movies for Children on the Big Life Journal website.</p> <p>Free printable list of Top Growth Mindset Movies for Children</p>

PROGRAMS AND VIDEOS TO HELP WITH MANAGING ANXIETY

	<p>The Resilience Centre provides programs, courses and has a team of Psychologists to help manage anxiety and build resilience. 'Because life happens'.</p> <p>I haven't done any of their courses yet, but they seem to have some great information and resources.</p> <p>Learn more about The Resilience Centre</p>
	<p>YouTube Video: Tales of Resilience, Living with Anxiety (4 mins) by Kate Elton. It is a short and inspiring video from a young person living with Anxiety. Kate shares how far she's come and what has and continues to work for her.</p> <p>See YouTube video Living with Anxiety</p>
	<p>YouTube Video: Gifts in Shitty Wrapping Paper (18 mins) by Jules Allen. Jules shares why she thinks the TRUE key to successfully managing anxiety is Acceptance rather than Resilience.</p> <p><i>A confronting and very moving TedX talk.</i></p> <p>See YouTube video Gifts in Shitty Wrapping Paper</p>