

Chloe Chessell and Gemma Halliday

University of Oxford



Wednesday, 15th November 2023

Online

Brief guided parent-led CBT for child anxiety problems

Introduction:

Anxiety problems have a particularly early age of onset and are common among preadolescent children. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is the only psychological intervention for child anxiety problems with a robust evidence base, however, very few children with anxiety problems access CBT. Brief therapist guided parent-led CBT approaches involve therapists working with a parent/carer (rather than a child directly) to support parents to apply CBT techniques to help their child to overcome anxiety difficulties. This approach has been shown to be an effective and cost-effective way to help increase access to evidence-based treatments for preadolescent children with anxiety disorders. This workshop will provide an overview of the rationale and evidence base for parent-led CBT, include practical tasks to develop skills in delivering parent-led CBT for preadolescent children with anxiety disorders, and support clinicians to troubleshoot common challenges in delivery. The workshop will specifically focus on developing skills to deliver and/or supervise the delivery of the “Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries” treatment.

Content

The workshop will be in two parts. The initial part of the day will focus on understanding the theoretical rationale and evidence-base for therapist guided parent-led CBT approaches, including child anxiety development and maintenance. We will then guide participants through a session-by-session overview on how to deliver the “Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries” treatment, giving participants practical tasks to develop their clinical skills in delivering treatment components. There will be time for discussion and reflection on how to address common challenges in ways in that adhere to the treatment model’s key principles of **empowering parents** to create **opportunities for exposure** for their child.

Learning objectives:

- To understand the theoretical background and evidence base for therapist guided parent-led CBT approaches.
- To have an overview of the content of ‘Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries’.
- To develop confidence in engaging parents in this approach.
- To develop skills and confidence in delivering the approach with parents of preadolescent children with anxiety disorders.
- To have an awareness of common challenges in engaging and working with parents to support them to help their anxious child, and how to overcome them.



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Training modalities

The workshop will be interactive and include both experiential and didactic teaching and videos. Participants will have a chance to discuss concerns and challenges they anticipate or experience when working with parents to help them to manage their child's anxiety, and how to navigate these.

Key references:

- Creswell, C. & Willetts, L. (2018). *Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries: A self-help guide for parents (2nd Ed.)*. Robinson.
- Creswell, C., Parkinson, M., Thirlwall, K., & Willetts, L. (2019). *Parent-led CBT for child anxiety: Helping parents help their kids*. Guilford Publications.
- Halldorsson, B., Elliott, L., Chessell, C., Willetts, L., & Creswell, C. (2019). Helping your child with fears and worries: a self-help guide for parent's treatment manual for therapists. Available here: <https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/87041/>
- Thirlwall, K., Cooper, P. J., Karalus, J., Voysey, M., Willetts, L., & Creswell, C. (2013). Treatment of child anxiety disorders via guided parent-delivered cognitive-behavioural therapy: Randomised controlled trial. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 203(6), 436-444.

About the presenters:

Gemma Halliday is a Research Clinical Psychologist in The Oxford Psychological Interventions in Children and Adolescents (TOPIC) research group at the University of Oxford led by Professor Cathy Creswell. Cathy, together with Lucy Willetts, developed the parent-led CBT programme 'Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries'. Gemma is working on child anxiety prevention and early intervention studies which involve online delivery of parent-led CBT. She has extensive experience of delivering, supervising and training clinicians to deliver this approach. She has previously worked with children, young people and their families in CAMHS, paediatrics, and in the care system.

Chloe Chessell is a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP), PhD candidate at the University of Reading, and postdoctoral researcher at the University of Oxford. Chloe has extensive experience of delivering parent-led CBT to parents of children with anxiety disorders and training Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs) and Children's Wellbeing Practitioner (CWPs) to deliver this approach. She is currently adapting parent-led CBT for parents of children with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

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All workshops, unless otherwise indicated are intended for a cross/mixed ability audience, and are delivered online

