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A little doe's big worry: I feel uncomfortable around other children

Illustrations:
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SOCIAL ANXIETY
due to unpleasant
experiences
+
tips for adults

Impressum

Tatjana Gjurković i Tea Knežević, magistre psihologije
Velika briga male srne: Osjećam se nelagodno s drugom djecom

Nakladnik: Evenio d.o.o.
Urednica: Jelena Kovačić
Ilustracije: Jelena Brezovec
Grafička priprema: Jelena Brezovec
Lektorica: Tamara Kranjec
Tisak: Denona d.o.o., Zagreb

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Varaždin, svibanj 2024.

ISBN 978-953-385-021-4

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**Social anxiety
due to unpleasant
experiences**

Until recently, anxiety was mostly mentioned in the context of difficulties in adults. However, experts who work with children have noticed a significant increase in anxiety symptoms among children. Younger children are increasingly troubled by the subjective feeling that something bad will happen in the future and that they will not be able to cope with that situation.

An anxious child is overwhelmed by feelings of deep worry, tension, restlessness, discomfort, confusion, and insecurity. They are hyper-focused on potential sources of threat and have an urge to avoid them, to do everything possible to protect themselves. Child has difficulties relaxing and playing, remembering and learning, falling asleep, wants to isolate, complains of stomach aches, headaches, and other psychosomatic symptoms, refuses activities and socializing that they previously enjoyed, develops phobias or panic attacks, and needs help of an adult to learn to cope with these unpleasant states.

Depending on the cause, we distinguish several types of anxiety, and in this picture book we meet a little doe who suffers from **social anxiety due to unpleasant experiences from the past**.

In the story, we meet a little doe who loves dancing, and she happily attended dance classes with her friends. But one day she started refusing to go to dance lessons. Over time, little doe started refusing all activities and social interactions. She didn't want to go to birthday parties or play with her friends, she only wanted to hang out with her mum and dad. She couldn't explain with words why she refuses and avoids socializing, so her parents kept persuading her, but this only increased her resistance. Little doe couldn't explain that she felt uncomfortable and didn't want to go to places where she had some unpleasant experiences in the past.

As we will see in this story, in order to reduce a child's anxiety, it is essential for parents to understand that there must be a cause and to learn **how to help the child regain a sense of security - now**. The tips for adults at the end of the picture book can help with this.

And don't forget, your soothing voice, attention, and the closeness you establish with the child you're reading to can greatly help reduce anxiety, restore a sense of security, and your little one's overall health.

Enjoy these moments together. ♥

”

Hi! I'm a little doe and I love dancing! I used to go to dance school and perform on stage, but now I don't go anymore. Not because I don't like dancing, but because I don't feel comfortable there anymore.

Mum and dad say I should hang out with friends, and they keep trying to persuade me, but I'd rather just stay home and play with them.

Now get comfy and listen to my story...



– Mum, mum, am I going to the dance school today? – the little doe asked almost every day. She had always loved dancing, so her parents enrolled her in a dance group. Her friends, fox and the weasel, as well as the beaver and the lynx, also danced in her group. Their dance coach was a forest bear, who taught them all the cool dance moves.

The doe learned many different dance steps, which she then showed to her mum and dad at home. She really enjoyed jumping happily to the music, spinning around and imagining that she was dancing on some big stage.

– Oooh, you're doing great! What a turn! You're really trying hard and enjoying it. – her parents encouraged her.



But one day doe was no longer excited about going to her dance class.

– Mum, I don't want to go to a dance class today. – she said quietly, lowered her head and just stood there.

– But why, honey? You love to dance. – mum asked her in surprise.

Little doe couldn't explain why, but she just didn't want to go. A strong feeling in her body and worried thoughts in her head made her want to stay home.

– No, I don't want to go there anymore. – she protested.

– Come on... your friends will be there! It'll be great as always. Grab your dancing shoes and don't forget your water bottle. – mum was firm and clear.


It was hard for the little doe to protest any further, so this time she chose to listen to her mum and go.

And in the following days, the little doe timidly and quietly kept telling her mum that she didn't want to go dancing. She would say that she's tired, that she didn't have time because she had to learn a poem for school, or that her stomach hurt.



The doe's parents were confused because they would sometimes see her dancing in her room. So, it was strange that she still protested when it was time to go to dance lessons.

„Our daughter really loves to dance. So why doesn't she want to go to her dance class?“ they wondered. They asked her a few times, but she still couldn't say why. They felt sorry she wanted to quit now, with the dance performance coming up and all the parents invited.



– We really want to see you dance on stage. After the performance, we can go for some forest grass and berry ice cream that you love so much – they promised. She listened to them again, went to the performance and danced on the stage.

As soon as the performance was over, doe's parents noticed a sense of relief in the little one. She was more relaxed, cheerful and it was as if her body was somehow lighter.

– There, the performance is over and now I don't have to go to the dance lessons anymore, right? – little doe asked hopefully as they sat down and ordered her favourite ice cream.