

Solution-focused hypnotherapy for children and young people

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Today's society is fast paced, highly pressured and all about being successful. It is not surprising then that children, just like adults, can suffer from a range of emotional or psychological problems at some point in their lives. No matter how hard we try to remove pressures in our own parenting and caring styles, we know that there are external influences on our children from school, peers, the media and sometimes even other family members. And of course, there are so many internal pressures which children place on themselves, perhaps resulting from comparing themselves with others around them or from hearing news stories which they find themselves worrying about.



When is a problem a problem?

Children and young people can be very resilient and will often work through problems without additional help. Providing a loving and nurturing environment is sometimes the only thing we need to do to see them through a difficult time. But what happens when our children get 'stuck' in a difficulty or feel that they - or their opportunities - are being held back by a problem that is stubbornly persisting? This can feel lonely and isolating for anyone, but for children, who may not yet have the cognitive skills to make sense of what is happening nor the language skills to express or explain their distress, it can cause a rapid decline in self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. Complaints of tummy aches, headaches or feeling exhausted often follow along with avoiding previously enjoyed activities.

What can hypnotherapy help with?

Amongst other things, anxieties, fears, phobias, stress, trauma, nightmares, bed-wetting, negative habits, bereavement, loss, divorce, problems with learning and a variety of school issues can all get in the way of a carefree childhood. Hypnotherapy can help with the huge range of typical and more

unusual childhood problems. It is especially helpful for dealing with anxiety and bad habits as well as for developing confidence and improved self-esteem. Research shows that the 'optimistic child' will be more successful in every area of life, now and in the future. Hypnotherapy bears no resemblance to stage hypnosis. It is highly respectful and centred only on providing relief and benefit.

Why hypnotherapy?

Hypnotherapy is a safe form of relaxation, which allows children and teenagers to gently release negative beliefs about themselves or their world. Delivered by a suitably qualified, registered and experienced paediatric therapist, hypnotherapy is highly effective in helping children and young people overcome problems. It does not just alleviate symptoms but can teach, develop and empower coping strategies, which will arm them for future difficulties they will encounter in life.

Hypnotherapy can be a powerful tool in building resilience and confidence and is a safe, relaxing and unthreatening way to regain control. Many children prefer this approach to traditional counselling or psychotherapy because they don't need to

justify, explain or re-live their anxieties or actions.

How does it work?

Children are usually easily relaxed and focused because they have an ability to change and to be versatile, and, before the age of twelve, to accept most ideas uncritically. They have been learning and taking on board ideas since before they were born so they are already experts in working this way. It is an ideal therapy for children who are not keen to talk their problems through as it works on an unconscious level. Imagination is the key to linking and working with the conscious and the unconscious mind. Stories, adventures, visualisations, imaginative games, role-playing, magic and puppets help the unconscious mind to address problems. Children have an innate ability to use metaphor to process difficulties and this is harnessed for maximum positive impact.

Sometimes children with autism may appear to have limited imagination but by using a skilful blend of approaches, hypnotherapy can still be used with great effect. Your presence in the therapy sessions will bring reassurance for your child as well as helping you learn the skills to support in between sessions. Sometimes, older

children may wish to work alone with the therapist but you should be given a recap of the session and the skills taught.

What happens in hypnotherapy?

Hypnotherapy sessions will be unthreatening and fun so that your child enjoys them. Even if the 'problem' is difficult, sessions are positive and will never be unnecessarily upsetting for your child or for you. Hypnotherapists use familiar ideas and your child will be helped to feel very comfortable. The therapist will build rapport with your child and will be very skilled at engaging with them and engrossing them in therapeutic activities. Depending on their age, children may be relaxed with eyes closed or open, with lowered activity levels or possibly increased activity.

One parent's perspective: Poppy is an eight year old girl who suddenly became very anxious and withdrawn, refusing to participate in her previously loved hobbies and in family life. After three sessions, her future looks much brighter...

"I hope my words might encourage more people to take this more sympathetic route rather than either ignoring the problem (which, having spoken to many mums since Poppy's problem

started can turn out to be disastrous) or getting a GP to refer the child for counselling (which has a very long waiting list and would have been no use for us as Poppy is not a talker and would have pretended everything was all right).

Since her three sessions of hypnotherapy, our daughter has picked herself up and tackled little by little every area that had caused her a problem since September. Her final hurdle was jumped this week when a supply teacher put her in the middle of the line to sit in assembly rather than at the beginning so she could sit near a teacher. She didn't notice until half way through assembly that she was in the middle! Once she had she realised she felt fine and asked her teacher the next day not to bother putting her at the front anymore... she has become so much more independent. Last Saturday she went to her swimming class without us having to get in the pool (we couldn't even get her in the water nine months ago!) The last ten months have been hell but I'm so glad that someone mentioned hypnotherapy to us as it not only helped her out of her 'black hole' but, by giving her the tools to deal with issues, it has made her a lot stronger at tackling things as they happen rather than let them fester".

What next?

The best way to start looking into how your child or teenager can be helped is to speak to an experienced paediatric hypnotherapist. You should be given the chance to meet the therapist and discuss the problems free of charge and to know in advance if hypnotherapy is likely to be helpful in your situation and roughly how long the therapy might take.

When your child has put their problems behind him or her, life will seem so much brighter. Good luck!



Foundations Hypnotherapy

Hypnotherapy solutions for all children and young people aged 4 to 18

Is your child struggling with anxieties, stress, bereavement, loss, nightmares, phobias, worries, trauma, pain or unwanted and distressing habits?

What would it mean to see that smile again? A smile with carefree, self-assured resilience...

Perhaps you just want to help your child to feel more confident with learning, hobbies or social situations?

Your child doesn't need to carry these childhood problems and issues into adulthood or suffer with them another day longer.

Get in touch today and let's provide the solution together.

GHsc
VALIDATED PRACTITIONER
General Hypnotherapy Standards Council

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