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The practice of exposure is used if a child has anxiety. This practice teaches children how to manage their fears and worries. This is done by exposing them to situations that make them anxious. Practicing exposure helps children cope with situations instead of trying to avoid them.

How does this practice work?

- Identify one fearful situation a child experiences.
- Approach the scary situation in small, incremental steps.
- Teach the child skills to cope with each small step. These steps might involve a real or imaginary experience.
- Identify what fearful situation causes the anxious feelings.
- Expose the child to one of their fearful situations, having the therapist monitor how they are doing.
- Learn that the fear will pass. A child will know that whatever it is they are afraid of won't really hurt them.
- Practice these steps over and over until a child overcomes their fears.

Example: Sofia is afraid of dogs

Step 1- Show Sofia pictures of dogs.

This step will be done over and over until she does not feel afraid when she looks at pictures of dogs.

Step 2- Sofia and a dog are placed in the same room.

This step will be done over and over until Sofia does not feel afraid being in the same area/room as the dog.

Step 3- Sofia will pet the dog.

This step will be done over and over until she does not feel afraid when she pets the dog.

Step 4- Sofia will practice steps 1-3 until she is no longer afraid of dogs.