Utah State University DigitalCommons@USU

All Archived Publications

Archived USU Extension Publications

1-1-2001

How Can I Address My Child's Fears?

Tom Lee

Warning: The information in this series may be obsolete. It is presented here for historical purposes only. For the most up to date information please visit The Utah State University Cooperative Extension Office

Recommended Citation

Lee, Tom, "How Can I Address My Child's Fears?" (2001). *All Archived Publications*. Paper 236. http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/extension_histall/236

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archived USU Extension Publications at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Archived Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact becky.thoms@usu.edu.







A weekly question/answer column

How Can I Address My Child's Fears?

Tom Lee* answers:

Children's fears and worries are very real to them. Consider these tips to help your children gain a sense of control.

- Be a good listener so children will feel comfortable talking to you. Then when they have concerns or worries, they will come to you.
- Help children express their fears. Listen to and accept their feelings without minimizing them or being unduly concerned. With younger children, this may include providing materials to draw a picture or encouraging them to act out an event.
- Tell your children the truth about scary things. "The shot will hurt for a little while." "It might be scary to see grandma's body in the casket when we go to the funeral."
- Provide books about other children experiencing fears. "Ira Sleeps Over" or "There's a Nightmare in My Close" are some of the classic children's books dealing with fears.
- Suggest things your children can do to cope with fears rather than telling them there's nothing to be afraid of, or to "stop acting like a baby."
- Help children practice problem solving. One five step process includes relaxing, identifying the problem, outlining the options, rating possible outcomes, then choosing the best solution.
- Model good problem solving yourself. Share ways that you make everyday decisions with your children.

^{*} Tom Lee is Utah State University Extension Family and Human Development Specialist