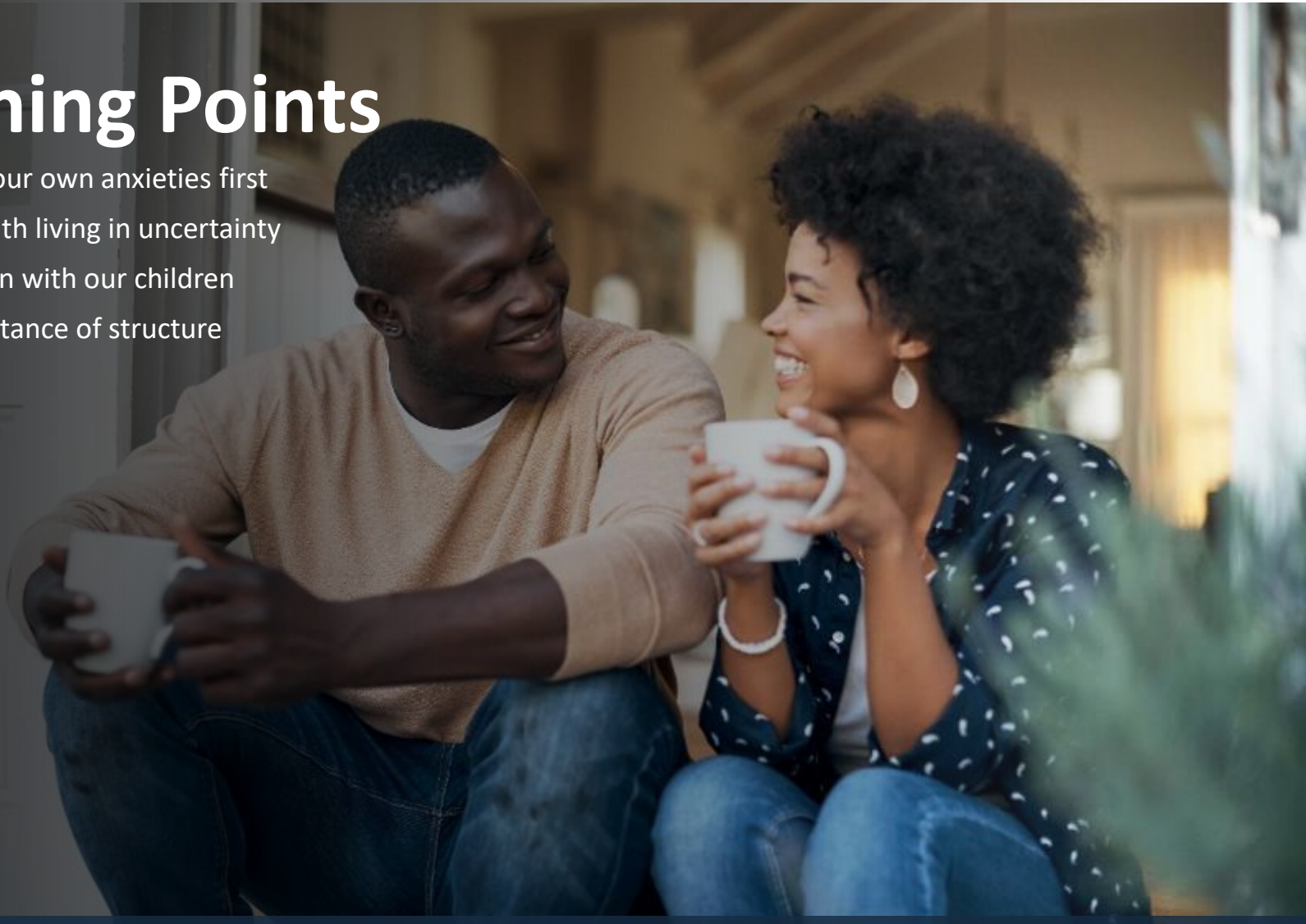


A low-angle, close-up photograph of a young child with dark skin, wearing a light blue shirt, looking upwards with a curious expression. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green and yellow, suggesting an outdoor setting. A semi-transparent orange rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title text.

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing for Kids and Teens

Learning Points

- Handling our own anxieties first
- Dealing with living in uncertainty
- Checking in with our children
- The importance of structure



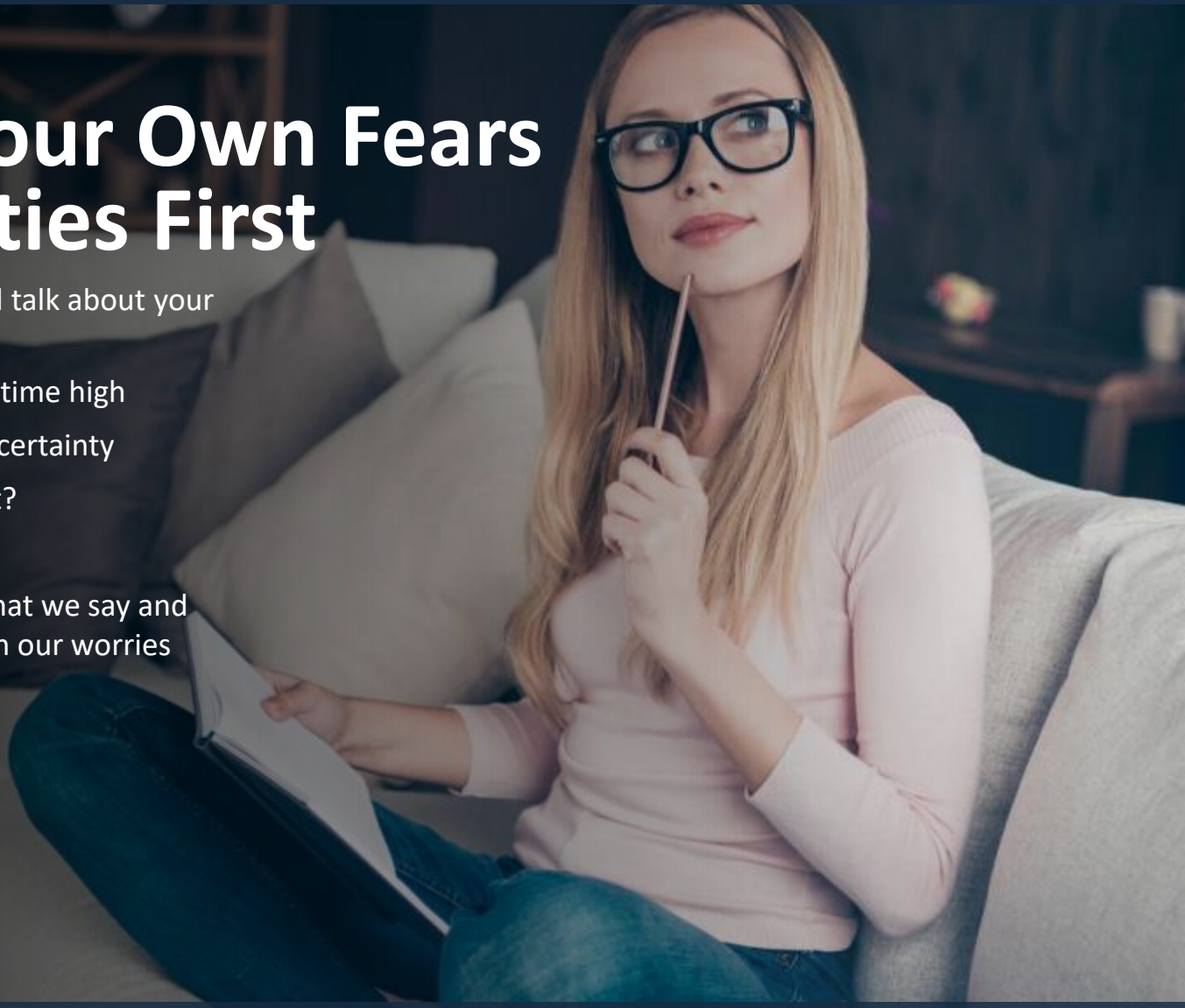
As A Parent...

What are your biggest concerns about your children and adolescents?



Manage Your Own Fears and Anxieties First

- Be aware: write down and talk about your fears/anxieties
 - Our fears are at an all-time high
- For most, the fear is of uncertainty
- Use a scale - how bad is it?
 - Fight/flight/freeze
- We must be mindful of what we say and do, our children pick up on our worries and anxieties



Start With Each Child Separately

- Maturity is very individual
- Fears and anxieties can come quickly and leave as quickly
- Be consistent
- Be honest
- Use accurate information throughout the family

What Are the Signs and Symptoms?

Young Children (Ages 3-6)

- Behavioral Changes:
 - Mood swings
 - More frequent tantrums or acting out
 - Increased attachment or clinginess
- Physical Changes:
 - Stomach aches or headaches
 - Changes in sleep patterns
 - Nightmares
 - Bed wetting
 - Grinding teeth



From Ages 3-6

- Practice patience
- Regressions are to be expected
- Be aware of adult conversations while children are present
- Keep daily routines simple and predictable
- Acknowledge their emotions and give words to describe feelings
- Explain how we are all working together to keep each other safe

The Early Years: Preventive Parenting

- Teach Values
- Establish & Enforce Family Rules
- Talk & Listen To Your Child

What are the Signs and Symptoms?

Older Children (Ages 7-12)

- Behavior Changes:
 - Mood swings
 - Overreacting to minor problems
 - Acting out and/or lying
 - Bullying
 - Withdrawn
 - Changes in academics
- Physical Changes:
 - Stomach aches or headaches
 - Changes to appetite
 - Nightmares

From Ages 7-12

- Have your child select a place where they feel comfortable talking
 - The car
 - Their bedroom
 - An outside location
- Continue to explain and educate
- Keep things as positive as possible
 - Talk through, use the tool of "social stories"
- Discuss what the "new normal" will look and feel like
 - Preparation for getting ready to go back to school
 - Use the resources that the schools offer: the teachers and the school website as a helpful tools
- Give them time to share what their fears/anxieties are
- Be sure they know the proper ways to stay healthy
 - Washing hands, face coverings, not sharing food or utensils

From Ages 7-12

- Everything from previous slide works for these ages as well
- Practice safety guidelines
- Encourage and reinforce
- Be positive
- Recognize that one fear may grow to more

Age 13 and older

- Acknowledge that this is an unsettling time
- Share your fears and anxieties
- Share your practices of what helps you
- Practice patience
- Recognize that this is unprecedented times and unprecedented fears

Teach Values

- Communicate Values Openly
- Recognize Your Actions
- Look For Conflict
- Make Sure Your Child Understands



Establish And Enforce Family Rules

- Be Specific
- Be Consistent
- Be Reasonable



Talk And Listen To Your Child

- Don't Wait Until Your Child Has A Problem
- Don't Be Afraid To Admit You Don't Have All The Answers
- Be A Good Listener
- Be Available To Discuss Even Sensitive Subjects
- Give Praise
- Give Clear Messages
- Model Good Behavior



Key Points for Parents

You can never have too much:

- Compassion
- Empathy
- Patience
- Integrity
- Respect
- Commitment
- Laughter
- Play
- Rest/Relaxation

Structure and Flexibility

- Keep some structure
- Know when flexibility is key
- Focus on comfort
- Know when the child needs extra help



Resources

- American Psychological Association - <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/>
- Kids Health – www.kidshealth.org
- Children's Books
 - **When Sophie Gets Angry, Really, Really Angry** by Molly Bang
 - **The Feelings Book** by Todd Parr
 - **Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day** by Judith Viorst
 - **The Way I Feel** by Janan Cain
 - **The One-Minute Gratitude Journal** by Brenda Nathan

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A top-down view of a wooden desk with various items: a keyboard on the left, a mouse in the top center, scissors on the top right, a clock on the right, a succulent in a yellow pot on the bottom left, a smartphone at the bottom center, and a spiral notebook with a pen on the bottom right.

Thank You For Attending

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing in Kids and Teens