



PARENT CONNECTION

8 WAYS TO HELP CALM YOUR CHILD'S FEAR OF THUNDERSTORMS

It's the time of year when snow is behind us and sunny beach days are just around the corner. This time of the season usually means a lot of unpredictable weather, lots of rain and thunderstorms. There are a lot of people who love the calmness that can come with watching and hearing the rain drops, wind, thunder and lightening. It's a pretty magical thing that happens in nature and it's pretty powerful too. Along with those who love the thunderstorms are many who have fears and anxiety every time the weather person calls for a potential thunderstorm. According to *Very Well*, the fear of thunderstorms, also called *astraphobia*, is a common thing in children and can be seen as a normal development for children as they begin to understand the world. It can persist and develop into a true phobia and when that happens, it's not fun to see as a parent.



- Here are **8 tips** to help calm your child's fear of a thunderstorm:
- LEARN ABOUT THE STORMS** • Go to your local library and learn what you can about storms, thunder and lightening. Oftentimes fears comes from the unknown and educating your child on the more scientific side of storms can help ease their fears.
 - READ BOOKS ABOUT OTHER'S FEARS** • There are a lot of good kid's books that talk about common fears and thunderstorms too. Reading to your child is a good way to show them that they're not the only ones who find the storms intimidating and can show them that you don't have to be afraid.
 - DISTRACT THEM** • Get away from the windows and move your child's attention to something else. Pop in a movie, have a mini dance party or listen to some calming music.
 - WATCH THE STORM** • Take your child to the window and wonder at the coolness of the storm together. Keep the viewing short at first and gradually build up to watching longer and longer, watching for cues that it may be time to go on to the distraction method.
 - MAKE IT FUN** • Turn the thunderstorms into an excuse to start a tradition. Bust out the flashlights, marshmallows and make a living room picnic in the dark. Put on the same movie and give your child something to look forward to with every thunderstorm instead of fear.
 - FIND A SAFE SPACE** • Let your child be comforted in your arms with their favorite blanket. Giving them a sense of safety can be really helpful in the earlier stages of their fear.
 - TURN OFF THE TV** • While weather bulletins are important to know what's going on, sometimes the constant updates can increase a child's fear.
 - LISTEN TO YOUR KIDS** • Even if thunderstorms are your favorite thing in the world and you love watching them, that doesn't mean everyone does. Take the time to listen to your child's fear, take it seriously and don't tell them that it's "silly" or "not something to worry about." The more you listen to what they're saying, the easier it will be to help them along.



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PROTECT CHILDREN FROM THE SUN

Kids don't have to be at the pool, beach, or on vacation to get too much sun. Their skin needs protection from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays whenever they're outdoors.

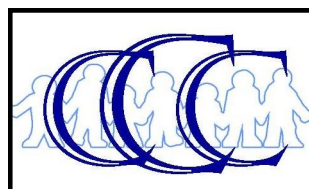
- ☼ **SEEK SHADE** • UV rays are strongest and most harmful during midday.
- ☼ **COVER UP** • When possible, long-sleeved shirts and pants/skirts can provide protection from UV rays.
- ☼ **GET A HAT** • A hat that shades the face, scalp, ears, and neck are easy to use and give great protection.
- ☼ **WEAR SUNGLASSES** • Look for sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.
- ☼ **APPLY SUNSCREEN** • Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA and UVB protection. Apply sunscreen generously 30 minutes before going outdoors.

For more information visit:

https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/children.htm



CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS



SUMMER READING

Flora & the Flamingo
By Molly Idle

The Very Lonely Firefly
By Eric Carle

Crabby Crab
By Chris Raschka

Summer Days & Nights
By Wong Herbert Yee

Harry by the Sea
By Gene Zion

Octopus's Garden
BY Ringo Star



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