

STEVE Hi. I'm Steve Whiteside, and I'm a child psychologist at the Mayo Clinic Department of Psychiatry and Psychology.

WHITESIDE: I'd like to take a few minutes today to talk with you about our five-day intensive treatment program for childhood anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorders. We designed this program to be accessible to kids who don't have access to their own high-quality care in their home area. For that reason, it's a short program that includes children and parents together so that they learn the skills and continue to work on their symptoms after they've returned home.

Childhood anxiety disorders are one of the most common psychiatric symptoms that children experience. Together with OCD, these symptoms can be very debilitating, interfering with a child's ability to go to school and be successful, to have friends, and to take care of the daily things they need to do at home.

Fortunately, exposure-based cognitive behavioral therapy is an effective treatment that can significantly reduce symptoms and also improve a child's functioning. Unfortunately, access to this high-quality care is very limited and there are many children who don't have these types of services in their home area. For that reason, we've developed a short five-day intensive treatment program to be available to these kids.

Our program has three goals. first, to educate the child and the family on how anxiety and OCD work, why these symptoms tend to not go away on their own, and how exposure-based therapy can be successful. Secondly, we help the child face their fears or do exposure exercises four times a day throughout the rest of the week so that by the end of the week, they're feeling calmer and confident.

Our third goal is that we don't expect to be able to treat this child's symptoms fully during that one week. So we want to teach the parents how to be therapists or how to be what we call "exposure coaches." So the parents are involved in all aspects of treatment and they learn how to help their child plan and conduct an exposure. Hopefully by the end of the week, not only are their children feeling better and more confident, but the parents are also confident that they know how to continue helping their child continue their therapeutic exercises after they return home.

The initial research that we have conducted suggests that this treatment is similar in effectiveness to other research-based exposure therapy for childhood OCD. Again, my name is Dr. Steve Whiteside. I'm a child psychologist at the Mayo Clinic Department of Psychiatry and Psychology, and I've enjoyed having the opportunity to tell you about our five-day intensive treatment for childhood OCD and anxiety disorders. Thank you.