

# Specific phobias (SP)

## WHAT ARE SPECIFIC PHOBIAS?

Specific phobias (SP) are fears of particular things or situations. Some common specific phobias in childhood include the dark, storms, dogs, spiders, costumed characters, heights, blood and injections. When confronted with the situation, the child becomes extremely anxious and distressed.

As with other anxiety problems, children with specific phobia will avoid the feared situation or be extremely distressed if they have to endure it.



As with all the other anxiety problems, fears of specific objects or situations are very normal. It is only considered a disorder if it significantly interferes with the child's daily activities, is not age-appropriate and persists for longer than 6 months.

## HOW COMMON ARE SPECIFIC PHOBIAS?

About 2-9% of young people develop specific phobias (Schniering, Hudson & Rapee, 2000).

## WHAT CAN I DO IF MY CHILD HAS SPECIFIC PHOBIA?

The Emotional Health Clinic provides services to treat children with Specific phobias.