

New study finds mums not to blame for anxious kids

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Mothers of anxious children are often concerned they are somehow contributing to their child's anxiety by being over-protective or over-involved.

Now a new study published in this month's *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, suggests that over-protective behaviour exhibited by [mothers](#) of [anxious children](#) is a natural response to the child's [anxiety](#)

The study was conducted at Macquarie University's Centre for Emotional Health. Lead researcher Associate Professor Jennifer Hudson, said that previous research from the Centre has shown that parents of anxious children can be over-involved and over-protective.

“What the research has not been able to show up until now is whether it is the child's anxiety that brings out overprotective behaviour,” she said.

In the current study, the research team compared children with anxiety disorders and children who were not anxious when they interacted with a mother who was not their own.

When mothers interacted with an anxious child, they provided significantly more help to the child than mothers interacting with a child who did not have an anxiety disorder.

“These results suggest that over-protection is a normal response to an

anxious child and not the fault of the mother,” Hudson said. “These findings may help reduce parental feelings of guilt and blame and may help parents understand their own and their child’s behaviour.”

Provided by Macquarie University

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