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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Attention: Health/Food/Lifestyle Section Editors

ADABC seminar helps parents manage anxious kids **Almost 3,300 Richmond children held hostage by anxiety disorders**

Vancouver – Raising children in a volatile world is challenging enough, but it's especially difficult for parents of children suffering from anxiety disorders.

Children with anxiety disorders are among the best and the brightest, but are afraid to engage in life. An anxiety disorder may first present as an unwillingness to participate in normal activities most kids enjoy such as sports, sleepovers and even attending school, as well as in somatic symptoms such as chronic stomachaches and headaches.

However, an anxiety disorder may soon result in further significant changes/interferences in a child's life, including the child's social interactions with peers, school performance, behaviour, and sleep.

Anxiety disorders in children are more common than one would think and can get in the way of any kind of future or hope for a normal life. Approximately 10 per cent of children suffer from one or more anxiety disorders, and 80 per cent go untreated. That amounts to almost 3,300 children in the Richmond area.

Thankfully, help is available. To help educate parents about anxiety disorders and facilitate early intervention, the Anxiety Disorders Association of BC (ADABC), in cooperation with the F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids Mental Health, is offering a free and helpful seminar on Jan. 31 in Richmond on parenting children with anxiety disorders. The seminar will teach parents how to identify if a child has an anxiety disorder, and how to manage the problem at home.

Adrienne Wang, the cognitive behavioral therapist who will be facilitating the Richmond ADABC seminar, says that the biggest challenge for parents is to know exactly how to help their children overcome anxiety. "Sometimes what seems helpful may inadvertently worsen or prolong the child's problem. For example, allowing the child to avoid a feared situation (e.g., school, sleeping alone) as a mean of coping can actually perpetuate the child's fear of the situation."

Wang says there's no one specific cause of anxiety disorders in children, but that they may emerge from a combination of genetics, inborn vulnerability, and life-experiences.

"The ADABC seminar will help parents of anxious children identify anxiety symptoms and related difficulties in their children. It will also provide them with evidence-based anxiety management skills to help their children better cope with anxiety," said Wang.

"Helping parents better understand anxiety disorders in their children can normalize the problems

their children have been having, as well as prevent the exacerbation of the illness and development of other problems (e.g. depression, substance use problems, etc.),” added Wang.

The ADABC-sponsored Family Skill Building Seminar takes place in Richmond Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. at the Richmond Cultural Centre, 7700 Minoru Gate. ADABC will also be hosting seminars in the Tri-Cities area, Abbotsford, Victoria, and Vancouver. For more information, call 604.525.7597, email info@anxietybc.com, or visit www.anxietybc.com.

Funding for ADABC programs is provided by Fraser Health, the Provincial Health Services Authority, the Ministry for Children and Family Development, and other regional health authorities and foundations. ADABC members play a key role in supporting the ongoing dissemination of resources and advocacy with their membership fees and donations, while the public and corporate sponsors assist ADABC during its fund-raising campaigns. ADABC is very grateful to all its supporters and well-wishers.

ADABC is one of seven provincial agencies that make up the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information. These agencies are working together to provide high quality, evidence-based information on mental health and substance use to help individuals and families living with mental health and substance use problems live productive, fulfilling lives. Funding is provided by the Provincial Health Services Authority with additional support from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The Anxiety Disorders Association of BC, a non-profit organization, was established in 1999 by a group of concerned consumers, family members and professionals. Its mission is to increase awareness and promote education of anxiety disorders, increase access to evidence-based treatment, and encourage and develop new treatments and delivery.

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