



Look after yourself

Hopton Primary School

Wellbeing Newsletter 2



Anxiety



If you need to speak to anyone over concerns about your child's emotional wellbeing, ring school on Tuesdays between 12:30 and 1:00 and ask to speak to Mrs Barrow (Assistant head and pastoral lead).

01924 489736

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is our body's way of protecting us from threats. This reaction evolved out of the survival needs from our early ancestors, who needed to protect themselves from more immediate, physical dangers. Even though we face fewer physical challenges in the modern world, our body still reacts in a similar way.

Anxiety tends to run in families. Some of this will be passed on in the genes, but they may also 'learn' anxious behaviour from being around anxious people.

What signs should you look out for?

Physical signs:- Feeling tired, having difficulty sleeping, not wanting to eat, headaches, racing heart, feeling sick, frequent toilet visits, getting a very hot, dry mouth

Thoughts and feelings:- Feeling worried, feeling sad, being irritable, overthinking, unwanted thoughts, problems concentrating, nervousness,

Coping behaviours:- not wanting to go to school, be away from parents or trying new things.

Repeating certain behaviours, actions or rituals (often called 'obsessive compulsive behaviours')

Self-harming

How to help if the child is having an anxiety attack:-

If you are sure the child is having an anxiety attack then move them to a quiet, safe place if possible.

Help them to calm down by encouraging slow, relaxed breathing in unison with your own. Encourage them to breathe in and hold for 3 seconds and then breathe out for 3 seconds.

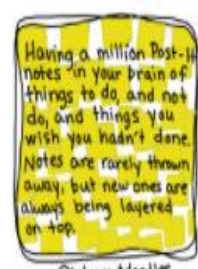
Be a good listener, without judging.

Explain to the child that they are experiencing a panic attack and not something life threatening.

Explain that the attack will soon stop and that they will fully recover.

Assure the young person that someone will stay with them and keep them safe until the attack stops.

ANXIETY FEELS LIKE...



ANATOMY OF A PANIC ATTACK



Causes of anxiety

Experiencing lots of change in a short period of time.

Struggling at school with work or making friends.

Experiencing family stress around things like housing, money debt.

Going through distressing or traumatic experiences in which they do not feel safe.

Bullying or cyber bullying.

Positive affirmations



REASONS TO KEEP GOING



How to help if the child is ready to talk?

Feeling anxious is a normal response to life when it gets difficult or stressful, so everybody feels anxious at times.

If your child is feeling unmanageable amounts of worry and fear, and they are beginning to show some of the signs of anxiety on a more regular basis, then there are a variety of different ways you can help them. A lot of these strategies are about helping your child to understand themselves and to find out what works for them.

Think together about whether there's anything in particular that's making them feel anxious. It's important to empathise with their experience and validate their feelings. Don't tell them not to worry.

Help your child to recognise the signs that tell them they're getting anxious, so they know when to ask for help or help themselves. Getting to know these signs can make them less frightening and overwhelming when they happen.

Anxiety is best overcome by confronting fears rather than by avoiding them. Support the child to recognise that avoiding feared situations allows the anxiety to grow even stronger. The sooner the fears are confronted the sooner they will get better.

Things to do that might reduce stress:- Have time out. Is there a quiet corner where they can draw/paint, write a journal, colour in, read, listen to music. They might want some noise blocking headphones, if sound agitates them.

Make a worry box or self soothe box. It might help to write down their worries and put them in a box, giving them a physical place where their worries can be 'held'. Or they might prefer a self-soothe box, which they can fill with things that help them when they feel anxious like photos, fidget toys, scented oils, positive quotes or little notes from people who care about them.

Help them to do things that are important for their mental health:- physical exercise, sleeping well, eating healthily, drinking water and spending quality time with loved ones.

Practise breathing exercises that they can do on their own to calm themselves down. (See books and apps)

Practise Meditation or do yoga (See websites)

Help them think of a happy place that they can picture in their heads to help them relax. They might want to draw it as a poster and put it on their wall as a reminder.

Books to help with keeping calm



Books to help with keeping calm	
<p>My strong mind by Niels Van a story about developing mental strength</p> <p>When my worries get too big by Dunn Buron A relaxation book for children who live with anxiety</p> <p>What to Do When You Worry Too Much: A Kid's Guide to Overcoming Anxiety (What-to-Do Guides for Kids) by Dawn Huebner</p>	<p>Breathe like a Bear by Kira Willey For foundation and Key Stage 1 children 30 mindful moments with animals and familiar objects</p> <p>Yoga together by Elisabeth Jouanne (Book with 40 yoga poses linked to everyday objects for young children)</p> <p>Calm, Mindfulness for kids, Wynne Kinder</p>
Fun children's websites for exercising, and skills in keeping calm.	
<p>Cosmic Kids Yoga Yoga exercise through stories</p> <p>Zen den peaceout meditation videos</p> <p>Children's massage Once upon a Touch by Mary Atkinson and Sandra Hooper Learn some basic massage techniques for children which are incorporated into stories.</p> <p>Join the local football, cricket , tennis club.</p>	<p>Kids Mindfulness https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFFJT9cYsm0&t=236s calm compilation</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk_qU7I-fcU breathing exercise</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNKA2k4+TaTw the magnificent garden</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihwcv_ofuME 3 minutes body scan</p>
Apps to use to keep calm	
<p>SAM http://sam-app.org.uk/ This includes a personal tool box, negative thought buster, colouring exercise and information.</p> <p>Positive Penguins (for children) http://positivepenguins.com/ Aimed at 8-12 year olds. Helps children understand their feelings and challenge negative thinking. Four positive penguins take children on a journey to help them better understand the relationship between what they think and what they feel</p>	<p>For adults Headspace Be kind to your mind Less stressed. More resilient. Happier. It all starts with just a few minutes a day. free</p> <p>Calm Stop,breathe @think</p>
Websites for children experiencing forms of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder/skin picking/compulsive hair pulling, body Dismorphic Disorder	
<p>OCD-Action www.ocdaction.org.uk Tel:- 08453906232 Email:support@ocdaction.org.uk</p>	<p>OCD-UK www.ocduk.org Produces usef-ful friendly guides including a teen, children's and parents guide www.ocduk.org/childrens-ocd-guide www.ocduk.org/parents-guide-to-ocd</p>
General websites to help with anxiety.	
<p>YoungMinds www.youngminds.org.uk tel: 08088025544 Email: parents'young minds.org.uk</p> <p>Young minds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving children's emotional wellbeing and mental health</p> <p>ChildLine www.childline.org.uk Tel: 0800 1111 Help and advice is free and confidential.</p>	<p>Moodcafe Relax like a cat. To help children relax https://www.moodcafe.co.uk/for-children-and-young-people/relaxation-for-children.aspx</p> <p>NHS (For adults) www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/</p>
<p>Websites to purchase anxiety toys for a self-soothe box.</p>	<p>Spiiffy Amazon</p>

Sometimes professional help might be needed.

It's a good idea to seek professional help if self-help strategies are not making the situation better and your child is feeling persistently anxious, often having distressing thoughts, or avoiding things like going outside or speaking to others. Speaking to your GP is usually the first step to accessing mental health services. Together you can discuss whether referral to CAMHS, an assessment by a mental health specialist, is necessary.

(Thrivingkirklees.org.uk 0300304 5555)

The type of support or treatment offered will depend on your child's age and the kind of anxiety they are experiencing. Talking therapies such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) can help your child to understand the thoughts and feelings behind their anxiety and find practical strategies to help them cope.