

ANXIETY IN CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety provides us with the energy to deal with current threats or challenges. It has similarities with fear however sometimes with anxiety, we are not sure what we are worried about or scared of. With fear, we are usually aware of what we are scared of e.g., fear of heights. However, often when we are feeling anxious it can be worries about future situations and events such as, passing exams or meeting new people. Although feeling anxious can be uncomfortable, it is necessary within certain levels, so we are aware of potential threats and challenges. We do need this emotion at some level so we can be aware of potential threats or challenges and to think about overcoming them.

WHAT CAN LEAD TO ANXIETY?

- When worries or stress pile up.
- Keeping thoughts, feelings and worries to ourselves.
- Exams, worries about schoolwork.
- Increased stress.
- Loss, grief, and change, e.g., changes at school, someone close to us has died or moved away.
- Relationship difficulties e.g., falling out with family/ friends.
- Feeling isolated or lonely.
- Coping with new situations, e.g., new school, meeting new people.



WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP?

- If the levels of anxiety become stronger/ more intense no matter how hard they have tried.
- Your child is feeling anxious most or all of the time and for an extended amount of time.
- It is affecting everyday daily life.
- They are also getting low moods or depressed.
- They are experiencing panic attacks.
- Having thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

WHAT ANXIETY CAN FEEL LIKE



In their Body

When feeling anxious, they might feel:

- Tense Body e.g., neck, shoulders.
- Feeling sick or have butterflies in their stomach.
- Headaches and Stomach aches.
- Fast heart rate.



In their Mind

They might have:

- Lots of thoughts and worries
- A very busy mind with worries and concerns perhaps about the past or future. Although a busy mind can feel unpleasant the thinking process of the mind can be helpful with coming up with a solution to our worries and concerns.

WHAT CAN HELP TO MANAGE ANXIETY?

DEVELOPING DAILY ROUTINES THAT HELP MANAGE ANXIETY - Think of things your child or young person could do every day or most days to help them feel more relaxed and less anxious. Here are some examples to build into a regular daily routine:

- 1. LOOKING AFTER ONESELF** – Encourage your child or young person to taking time for themselves. They could try things like relaxation techniques, mindfulness, meditation, breathing exercises, listening to music, or drawing.
- 2. SPENDING TIME AND TALKING TO OTHERS** – Encourage them to talk and associate with other Children and Young People, Adults, or someone they trust about their feelings. This could be hanging out with friends and family.
- 3. GETTING PHYSICAL EXERCISE** – This will help them use up energy which will then help with relaxation. For example, you could try and find sports your child or young person would enjoy getting involved in or perhaps organise walks or hikes as a family.
- 4. GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP** – When we do not get enough good quality sleep our bodies can produce more stress related hormones like adrenaline which can lead to increased stress/ anxiety.
- 5. A HEALTHY DIET** – Ensure your child or young person is avoiding high levels of caffeine and sugar. Encourage eating plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and drinking plenty of water.
- 6. HAVING FUN!** – Encouraging them to find activities they enjoy doing such as, spending time outdoors themselves and with others, joining a club, or taking up a new hobby.

REACHING OUT FOR SUPPORT!

We have provided some useful contacts along with ourselves that you can contact on behalf of your Child or Young Person.

The Miracle Foundation SCIO are a bereavement and trauma organisation for Children and Young People between the age of 4 and 18 years old.

We have a great team of counsellors and art therapists that can help you deal with the thoughts and feelings you are experiencing. We will help you develop healthy techniques to deal with your emotions, build on your emotional strength and provide you with a hope for the future. We are here to support and help you when you are struggling during difficult times.

IF YOU NEED HELP/SUPPORT STRAIGHT AWAY, YOU CAN CALL 999 OR GO STRAIGHT TO MY NEAREST ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPT IF YOU CAN GET THERE SAFELY.

USEFUL CONTACTS

If someone is at risk of coming to harm, the services would need to get in touch with emergency services or appropriate authorities.

CHILDLINE

A confidential service, operating times can be found on the website.

TEL: 08001111

ONLINE COUNSELLING: 1-2-1 chat

SHOUT

A free confidential and anonymous service available 24/7.

TEXT: 85258

SAMARITANS

Whatever anyone is going through, Samaritans can be called any time, from any phone for free.

TEL: 116 123

If you are over 16

BREATHING SPACE

A free, confidential, phone service for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16 experiencing low mood, depression, or anxiety.

TEL: 0800838587



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