

Parent Coffee Morning

Mental Health Support Team



**MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORT TEAMS**





Introductions

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What is anxiety?

- A natural evolutionary response
 - Fight/Flight/Freeze
- Experienced by everyone
- It is meant to be helpful
- Causes changes to our thoughts, feelings and behaviours

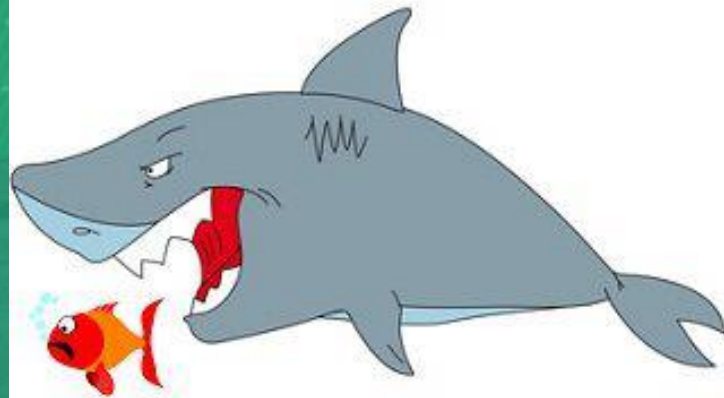


Fight, flight or freeze

When we are in an anxiety-provoking situation, our in-built alarm system goes off, which tells us to fight, flight or freeze to keep ourselves safe.

However, it can also be set off when we are not in danger.

FEAR



**Stress Response from
Immediate Danger!**

ANXIETY



**Stress Response just
from your Thoughts!**

Common Symptoms

Physical

Headache
Tummy ache
Sweaty palms
Heart beating faster
Dry mouth
Feeling sick

Behavioural

Avoidance
Being quiet/withdrawn
Being more chatty
“Acting up”
Crying

Emotional

Worried
Upset
Stressed
Angry
Numb
Confused


Thoughts

Worries or negative thoughts about the anxiety-provoking situation, about their ability to cope, or about other peoples' perceptions



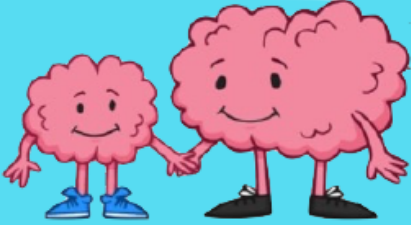
Flip your Lid



 *Attachment and Trauma Treatment
Centre for Healing (ATTCH)
Healing life's hurts through awareness,
compassion, & self-care*

Big Brain, Little Brain: "Flipping Your Lid"

Adapted from Siegel, D., & Bryson, T., 2012



INFORMATION AND STRATEGIES


WHAT IS "FLIPPING MY LID"

Let's learn how your brain works. When you "flip your lid" it means that your feelings get so big that you lose control of your ability to think and act clearly. You may start:


- kicking, screaming, pushing, throwing things
- fidgeting, acting restless, trying to run away from a situation
- feeling numb, unable to move, find it hard to speak.
- feeling unable to control your reactions

SO HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN?


"HAND, BRAIN MODEL"
Pretend your hand is a brain. Your wrist is your brain stem. It helps you with life functions like breathing, your heart beating, and sleeping.

1 

Place your thumb across the palm of your hand to make a number 4, pointing your fingers straight up. Your thumb is your "little brain" and is where emotions, memories, and senses are stored. It is the feelings part of your brain.

2 

Put your four fingers over your thumb. That is your "big brain" and it hugs your "little brain". The "big brain" helps you to think, reason, problem solve, and have self-control. It is the thinking part of your brain.

3 

Different Types of Anxiety

Anxiety doesn't come in one shape or form but there are some more common types of anxiety.

- Separation Anxiety – being anxious to separate from a care giver
- Social Anxiety – being anxious that they will be perceived negatively by others
- Worries/ Generalised Anxiety – lots of different topics and usually 'what if?'



What makes a child vulnerable to anxiety?

- Genes (around one third)
- Life events or experiences
- Learned behaviour
- Temporary circumstances (or a combination of these)

When does anxiety become a problem?

It is common for younger children to feel anxious around drop-off. There may be many factors leading them to feel anxious, such as separating from their care giver.

But if the anxiety is causing distress that gets in the way of every day life, stops them from taking part or attending school, this may be a sign to try some additional strategies.



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What keeps the anxiety going?



- Avoidance
- Safety behaviours
- Reassurance
- Missed opportunities for coping
- Lack of confidence – specifically in their ability to cope
- Lack of independence
- Worries becoming stuck



The Cycle of Avoidance





Help your child understand

- Help them to understand what they are feeling
 - Naming emotions
 - Make suggestions
 - Talk about your own emotions
- Let them know that anxiety is a normal emotion
- Empathise, e.g. ‘I can see you are feeling...’

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What are our hopes for our children?

Gives things a go

Shows more independence

Trusts their internal voice

Increased Resilience

Increased Confidence

Easier transitions to school

Personal regulation tools

Understanding their own emotional management



*How can I help
my child?*

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Reducing Reassurance

- Try to avoid jumping in to reassure or problem solve
- Ask questions
- Focus on positives, e.g. 'It sounds like there are lots of fun things happening at school today'
- Support your child to learn they can cope, e.g. 'You were worried yesterday but had a good day, maybe that shows us today will be good too'

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Take Steps to Improve Confidence and Resilience

- Encourage independent behaviour
- Encourage them to try new or challenging things
- Use praise and rewards for brave behaviour
- Encourage your child to break the avoidance cycle

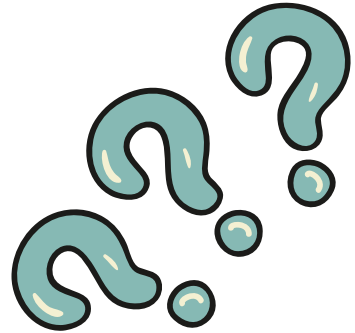


What would this look like at drop off?

- Letting them know you understand
- Validating that their experience is real
- Focusing on the positives, e.g. 3 good things
- Checking in with your own emotions
- Avoiding giving an ‘escape route’

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Curious questions you could ask...



Why are you
feeling
worried?

What do you
think will
happen?

What is the
worst that
could happen?

What is about
the situation
that is worrying
you?



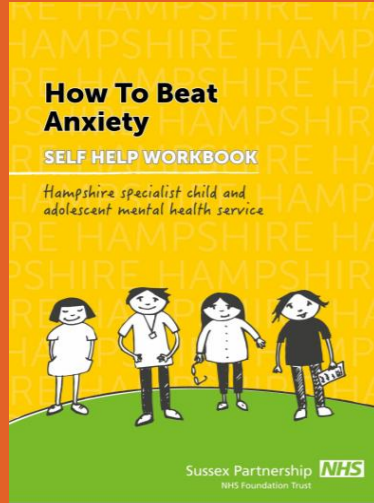


Even if you don't think your child is anxious now, you can begin using these strategies to prevent the onset of anxiety, and promote their confidence and resilience.

Helpful Resources

Apps:

Mindshift
Headspace
Self help for anxiety
management (SAM)
Worry Box
Clear Fear



Hampshire CAMHS How To Beat
Anxiety Workbook –
www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk

Books:

Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries by Cathy Cresswell
and Lucy Willetts
What To Do When You Worry Too Much by Dawn Huebener



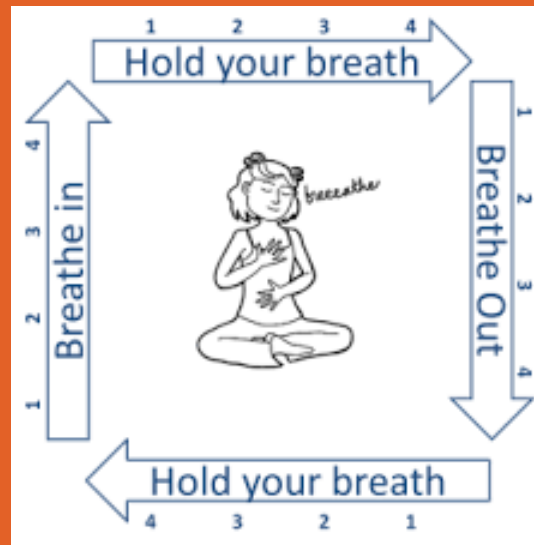
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Helpful Resources: Activities

Worry Jar/Monster



Breathing Techniques



Self-Soothe Box




<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/video/5-of-7-make-your-own-self-soothe-box/>

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Helpful Resources: CAMHS events

A training day for Parents and Carers in Winchester

A one-day event focused on parents and carers understanding their own needs and learning strategies to look after themselves as they support a young person with their own mental health needs. The sessions will include looking at emotional regulation.



HOW TO COPE WHEN YOUR CHILD CANT

8TH MAY 2025



P.A.C.E. 2025

ALTON BASINGSTOKE
ANDOVER LYNDHURST

A free event to help families better understand the needs and difficulties that young people can face and how to manage potential issues/concerns they have about their young person.

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NEW
FOR 2025



Hampshire Child and Adolescent
Mental Health Services

HAMPSHIRE CAMHS INFORMATION & ADVICE SESSION YOUNG PERSON'S MENTAL HEALTH

10am - 2pm

Wednesday, 5 March 2025 and then every
first Wednesday of the month

The Arc, Jewry Street
Winchester, SO23 8SB

This is an opportunity
for parents/carers,
professionals or young
people to come and chat
to our CAMHS clinicians,
ask questions, get advice
and resources.



hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk

An illustration of three young men in school uniforms walking on a green path. The man on the left has dark skin and curly hair, wearing a black jacket with orange trim and a striped tie. The man in the middle has red hair and is wearing a grey suit with a striped tie. The man on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a black suit with a striped tie. They are all looking towards the right. The background shows a blue sky with white clouds and a white building.

*Thank you
for listening*

Any questions?