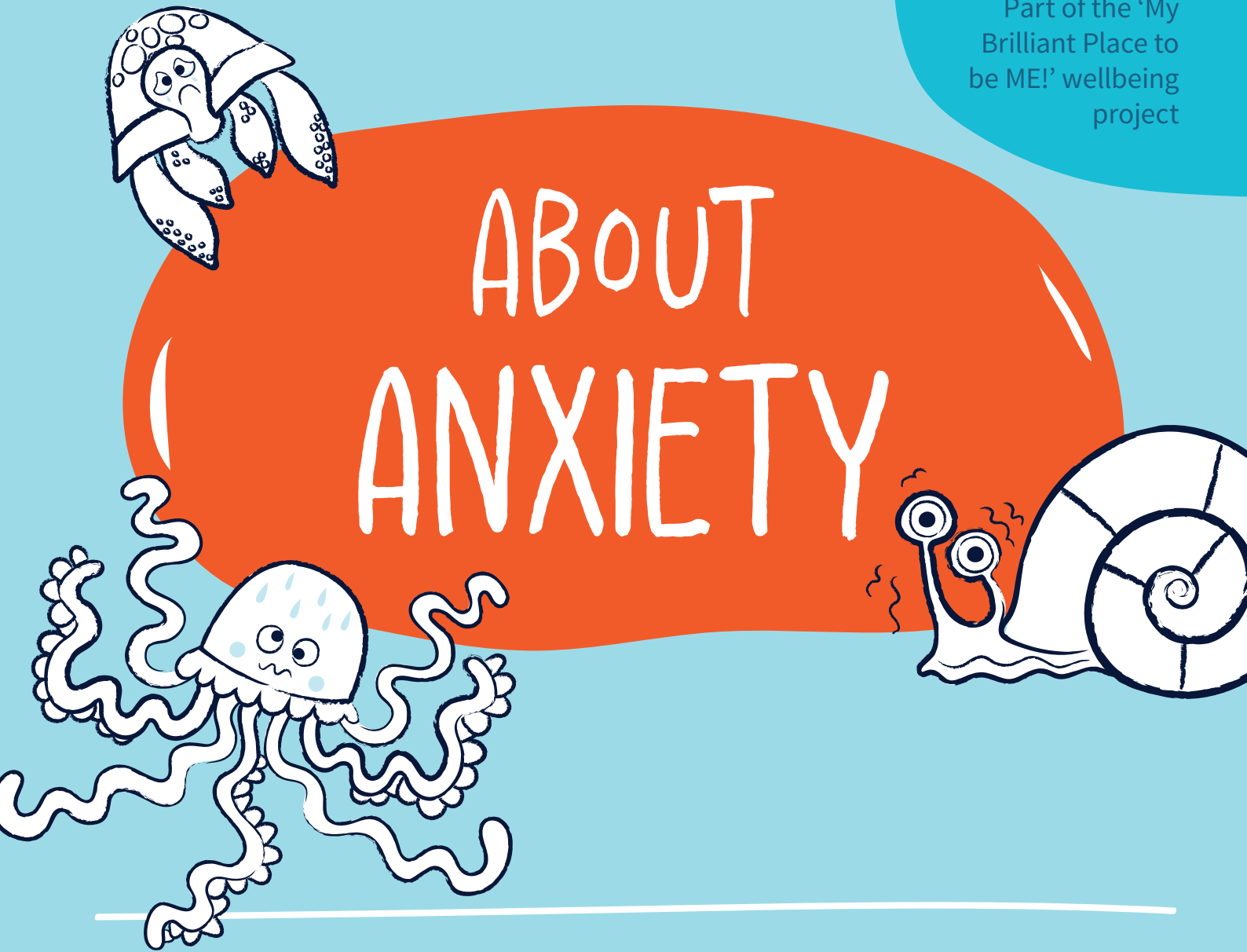


Part of the 'My Brilliant Place to be ME!' wellbeing project

# ABOUT ANXIETY



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS OF PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN

[WWW.HEADSTARTKERNOW.ORG.UK/BRILLIANT-ME](http://WWW.HEADSTARTKERNOW.ORG.UK/BRILLIANT-ME)

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COUNCIL  
*one and all • oen hag oll*



# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
WORRY AND ANXIETY?.....	4
ANXIETY – FEELINGS, THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIOURS.....	5
SEVERE ANXIETY.....	6
WHEN TO SEEK HELP.....	7
MANAGING YOUR OWN ANXIETY.....	8
HOW TO EXPLAIN ANXIETY TO CHILDREN.....	9
ANXIETY IN THE BODY.....	10
SUPPORTING A CHILD WITH ANXIETY.....	11
LISTENING TO YOUR CHILD’S WORRIES.....	12
SUPPORTING A CHILD WITH ANXIETY – AND BREATHE.....	13
BREATHING AND COPING IDEAS TO TRY.....	14
SOME MORE WAYS TO MANAGE WORRIES.....	22
THINGS TO SAY TO YOUR CHILD WHEN THEY’RE FEELING WORRIED.....	28
PARENTAL ANXIETY.....	30
FURTHER RESOURCES AND INFORMATION.....	32

## INTRODUCTION

### IT’S A TOUGH TIME TO BE A CHILD...

**And it is a tough time to be a parent or carer.** We’ve faced COVID, a cost of living crisis, wars, disasters, and fears about social media and climate change.

Some or all of these things will have had an impact on our children (as well as ourselves). **About 1 in 10 primary school children struggle with their mental health.** This has increased in recent years. The most common issues are emotional, like anxiety and depression.

**Anxiety has always been around, and it is a normal and common part of everyday life.** When it interferes with someone’s daily life. When it stops them from doing what they want. **Then it becomes a problem.**

**This brief guide to anxiety for parents and carers aims to:**

- Help you and your child understand more about anxiety.
- Help you spot when anxiety is becoming a problem.
- Provide ideas for supporting a child at home.
- Suggest coping strategies for children.
- Signpost to help, advice, or further information.

You can also find this guide online at [www.headstartkernow.org.uk/about-anxiety](http://www.headstartkernow.org.uk/about-anxiety) (and we will add to/update it there).



### LANGUAGE MATTERS.

**We are not our feelings.** We are not angry or scared. **We are feeling angry or feeling scared.**

Being around adults who model positive coping strategies is very helpful for a child’s wellbeing.

# WORRY AND ANXIETY?

**Worry** is when we have stressful thoughts about something, like a new school.

- Sometimes, we feel anxious for no apparent reason.
- Anxiety can affect our thoughts, feelings and behaviour.
- Anxiety can affect our bodies too, like feeling sick, butterflies and more.

**Anxiety** describes the feelings that can come along with worry.

- Anxiety activates the body's **fight-or-flight response**. This means our body prepares to respond to 'danger.' It prepares to either run away or confront it.
- Primary age children often feel **anxious about 'things'**, e.g. the dark, dogs, school, separation from parents, change, and more.
- Feeling anxious at times is a normal part of everyday life for all of us.
- Anxious feelings are usually normal responses to stress. They ease, quite naturally, with time.
- It can become difficult when anxiety doesn't ease. It can impact a child's daily life and stop them from doing things they want to, including going to school.

WHAT MIGHT ANXIETY LOOK LIKE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN (5 TO 11 YEARS)?

“ They become more aware of ordinary and extraordinary dangers but may not possess the resources and problem-solving skills to be able to overcome and manage those fears (through the news; overheard adult conversations; family conflict; illness; death). They also have much greater imagination, including the capacity to imagine the worst case.

They may experience anxiety in ways that are readily recognised: worrying; feeling sick; butterfly tummy; constantly seeking reassurance; being afraid of many things (that are not dangerous); constantly fearing the worst; irritable; demanding; need to keep checking things; feeling overwhelmed by negative thoughts. ”

From Managing Anxiety Problems Practical guidance for schools in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by Dr Lynette Rentoul

# ANXIETY

Feelings, thoughts and behaviours

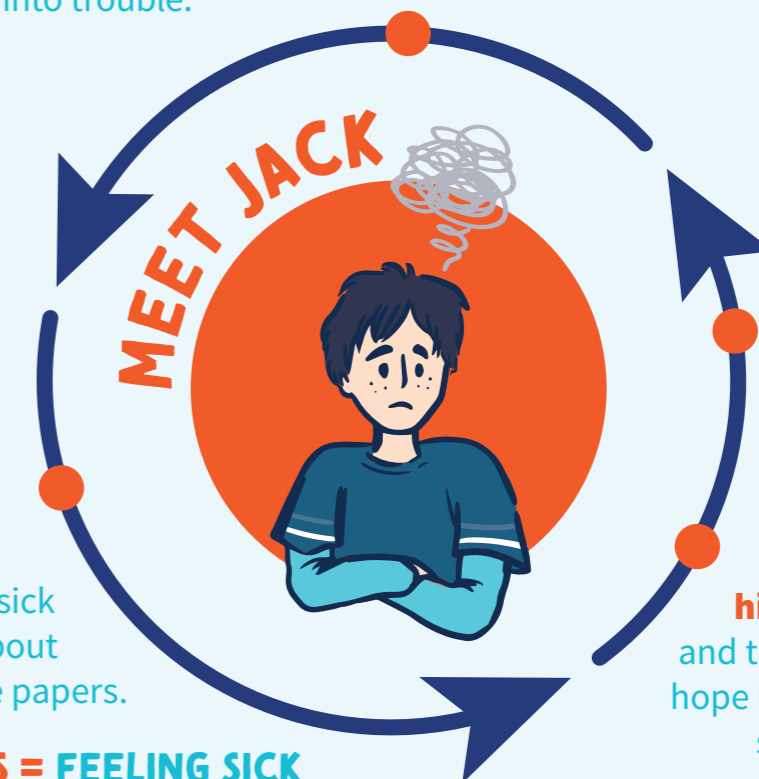
ANXIETY IS A FEELING OF WORRY OR FEAR THAT SOMETHING BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN.

- We can start to think **negative thoughts**, too. There are also **physical reactions** like 'butterflies in the stomach' or 'feeling sick'.
- Anxiety can also affect how we **behave**. It is very common to avoid things that cause us the anxiety. And then, we can get stuck in a spiral...

## JACK

loves school but recently he's started worrying about SATS. He didn't do very well on one of the practice papers they do most days. Now, **he thinks** he is going to muck up the real ones and he'll get into trouble.

**THOUGHTS =** "WHAT IF I MUCK UP THE 'REAL' TESTS?"



**BODY FEELINGS = FEELING SICK**  
**EMOTION = FEAR / WORRY**

**BEHAVIOUR = AVOIDING SCHOOL**

But then he starts to think that he's getting even more behind...

Jack starts telling his mum he's not well and that he feels sick in the hope he won't have to go to school to do the tests.



## WHEN TO SEEK HELP

IF ANXIETY CONTINUES TO INTERFERE WITH YOUR CHILD'S EVERYDAY LIFE AND CAUSES THEM LASTING DISTRESS, CONTACT YOUR GP AND TALK TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL.

## SEVERE ANXIETY

SEVERE ANXIETY CAN AFFECT A CHILD'S HEALTH AND HAPPINESS.

**Most** children who feel anxious will outgrow their fears. But, some will need help to overcome their anxiety. If the anxiety affects a child's daily life and goes on for a longer time, it may be an 'anxiety disorder'.

The most common types of anxiety disorders in children are:

- **Social anxiety** is an intense fear of social situations. It's a fear of being judged or embarrassed in public. It can also include intense worry or 'fear of missing out' or not being included.
- **Separation anxiety** is intense fear of being separated from parents or carers.
- **Generalised anxiety** is intense worry about many areas of life.

**ChatHealth Parent Line 5-19**  
**TEXT 07312 263 499**

Get confidential health and wellbeing advice and support

Support with behaviour  
 General health and wellbeing  
 Support with medical conditions in school

Get confidential health and wellbeing advice and support

**ChatHealth**  
 Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

[www.cornwall.gov.uk/chathealth](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/chathealth)

**Cornwall's ChatHealth Parent Line** is an excellent source of free confidential advice from local healthcare staff.

## MANAGING YOUR OWN ANXIETY

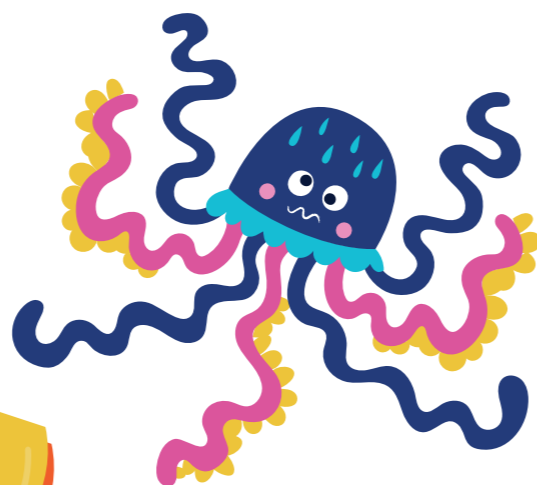
WORRYING ABOUT YOUR CHILD CAN MAKE YOU FEEL ANXIOUS AND ISOLATED.

Make sure that you look after your own mental wellbeing. Look after yourself so you can support your child:

- **Talk to someone that you trust** – this could be a friend or family member.
- **Make time for self-care** – including seeing friends and family, hobbies, and relaxation.

### SELF CARE TIPS

- **Practice breathing and relaxation exercises regularly** (even when you feel ok) to keep anxiety low.
- **Have coping ideas to hand** to use when you start to feel overwhelmed.
- **Remember to eat well and exercise** – both have a huge effect on mood and anxiety.
- **When you feel panicked, drink a glass of warm water** (not boiling) as this can help soothe the nervous system. Try herbal teas, especially ones that contain the herb valerian, which is known to help with relaxation.
- **Write a list of your worries.** Seeing things on paper helps put concerns into perspective and can help you to create a plan for managing anxiety.



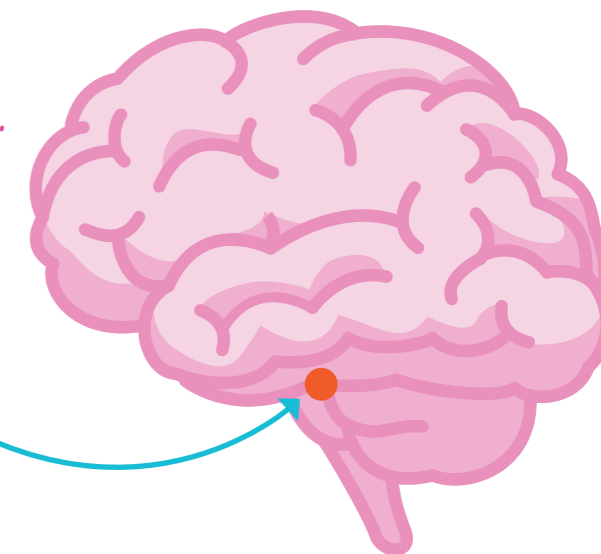
## HOW TO EXPLAIN ANXIETY TO CHILDREN

ANXIETY AFFECTS MANY PEOPLE...

**Adults as well as children.** It feels different for everyone.

It happens because a tiny part of our brains called the **Amygdala** (am-ig-da-lah) is a bit like an alarm, and it goes off when it thinks there is danger.

**The amygdala's job is to get us ready to run away from the danger or fight it.** We call this 'fight or flight'.



**It makes sure we can be fast** (to run away) **or strong** (to fight) by sending special brain chemicals, like adrenaline and oxygen, to fuel our muscles. **It does this very quickly.**

And that's great when there's a huge, scary monster coming straight toward us! But sometimes the amygdala gets it wrong and 'goes off' when there is no danger...

**ASK** | "HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE SMOKE ALARM GO OFF WHEN THE TOAST IS BURNING?"

The smoke alarm can't tell the difference between a real fire and the toast burning. It just wants to let us know it thinks there is danger, so that we can act.

**The amygdala is like the smoke alarm.** It can't tell the difference between things that might hurt us (like a huge scary monster) and those that won't, like trying something new.

When the amygdala goes off but there's no real danger, the extra oxygen and brain chemicals don't get used, but they hang around in the body and can make us feel shaky, upset, dizzy or just 'not right'. **We call this feeling anxiety.**



From an article by Dr Karen Young on the Hey Sigmund website: [www.heyigmund.com](http://www.heyigmund.com)  
An excellent place to find great advice and insight about anxiety, including Karen's wonderful books for children.

# ANXIETY IN THE BODY

If the amygdala ‘alarm’ goes off when there is no danger, the oxygen and brain chemicals it creates aren’t used up. This is why we feel anxiety. **The unused chemicals can build up and affect our bodies...**

## BREATHING

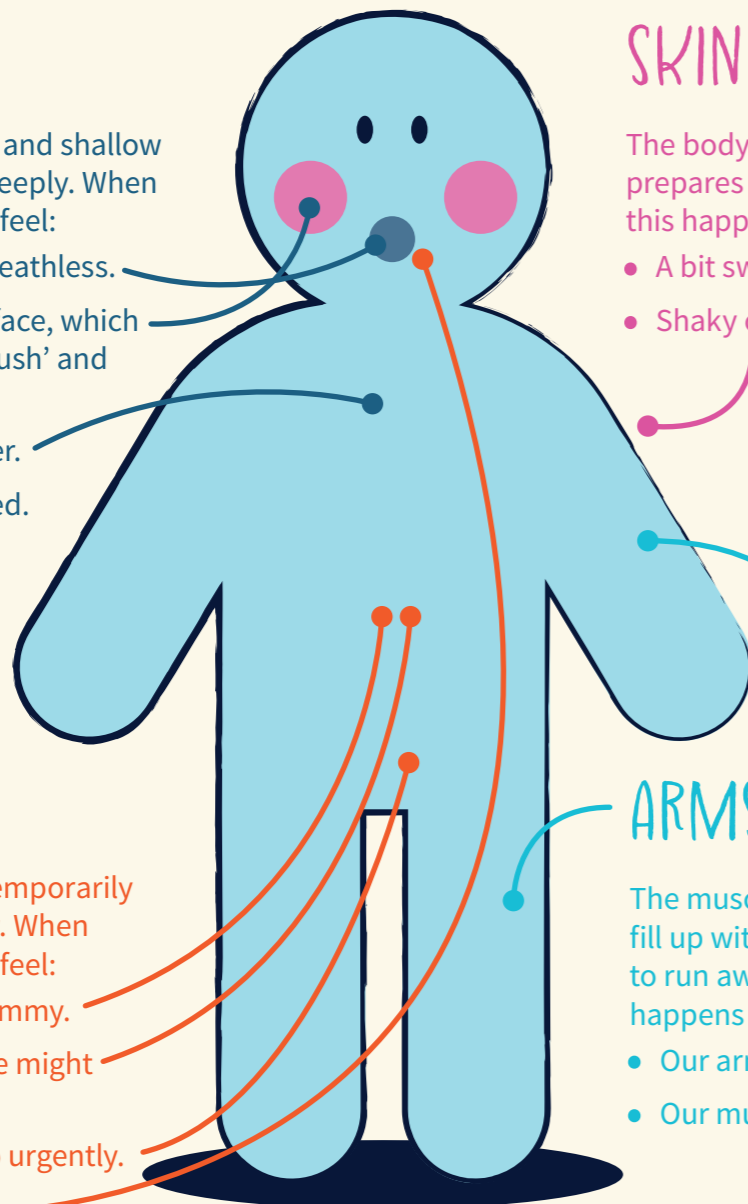
We start breathing fast and shallow instead of slowly and deeply. When this happens we might feel:

- Puffed out or a bit breathless.
- Blood rushes to our face, which makes our cheeks ‘flush’ and feel warm.
- Our heart beats faster.
- A bit dizzy or confused.

## STOMACH

Our digestive system temporarily stops working properly. When this happens we might feel:

- ‘Butterflies’ in our tummy.
- Sick or nauseous - we might even be sick.
- Need to go to the loo urgently.
- Have a dry mouth.



## SKIN

The body cools itself down as it prepares to face danger. When this happens we might feel:

- A bit sweaty.
- Shaky or shivery.

## ARMS AND LEGS

The muscles in our arms and legs fill up with the chemicals we need to run away or fight. When this happens we might feel:

- Our arms and legs tense up.
- Our muscles feel tight.

# SUPPORTING A CHILD WITH ANXIETY

- **Acknowledge** your child’s fear.
- **Remind them** we all feel anxious sometimes.
- **Talk with your child about their worries.** Listen with curiosity and openness.
- **Help them to understand their feelings** - try using an **anxiety thermometer, diary** or **worksheet.** These can help your child to identify their anxieties.
- **Help your child understand anxiety.** It can be empowering to know what is happening in our brains and bodies.
- **Practice healthy coping skills** with your child. (Read on for ideas.)
- **Work on a plan together** to reduce their anxious feelings.
- **Gently encourage your child to face their anxieties.** Support them to do so.
- **Encourage healthy eating, outdoor activity and good sleep.**
- **Take time out to have fun together** and take the focus off feelings of anxiety.
- **Protect your child** from family worries.

## THINGS TO AVOID...

- **Don’t criticise** your child for being afraid or worried.
- **Don’t dismiss their worries** as silly.
- **Don’t tell them to ‘calm down’** or ‘relax’.
- **Don’t label your child** as ‘shy’ or ‘anxious’.

“WHEN I SPEAK TO KIDS OR TEENS ABOUT ANXIETY...

... there are **two things** I hear almost every time.

**The first is, ‘I thought it was just me.’** Anxiety can be so isolating. This will drive more anxiety about the anxiety. If only every young person could know that anxiety is very human. And it happens to all of us.

**The second thing I hear is, “I didn’t know who to talk to.”** I respond, “Talk to an adult you trust. I promise, at some point in their lives - probably many points, maybe even today - they would have felt the way you do.”

Karen Young, Hey Sigmund: [www.heyigmund.com](http://www.heyigmund.com)

# LISTENING TO YOUR CHILD'S WORRIES

WORRIES AND ANXIETIES MAKE US FEEL OUT OF CONTROL. SO, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL MORE IN CONTROL. HELP THEM TO SAY WHAT IS HAPPENING AND HOW THEY FEEL.

## TOP TIPS FOR LISTENING

- **Concentrate on what your child is saying.** Turn off your phone/TV. Sit close and give them time. If you cannot listen at that moment, make a deal with your child to do so shortly and keep your promise.
- **Let your child talk.** Try not to interrupt with your own point of view.
- **Don't dismiss their worries** or say things like 'of course, XYZ won't happen.'
- **Show you're listening.** Comment on what they are saying. Use 'feeling' words (like in the speech bubbles below).
- **Check that you heard them right.** 'You worry that something bad will happen when you walk to school alone. Is that right?'
- **You don't have to know the answer there and then.** You can tell your child you will think about it. Then, tell when you'll talk again. E.g. after tea or tomorrow.

“ THAT SOUNDS SCARY...”

“ THAT MUST HAVE BEEN A SHOCK...”

“ I WONDER IF YOU FELT SAD ABOUT THAT...”



# Supporting a child with anxiety AND BREATHE...

When the amygdala (the brain's anxiety centre) sounds a 'false' alarm, it 'takes over.' **It stops us from using our thinking brain.**

THE MOST POWERFUL WAY WE CAN MAKE OURSELVES THE 'BOSS' OF OUR BRAIN AGAIN IS TO BREATHE. SLOWLY AND DEEPLY.

**It sounds so simple. And it is... BUT**

Many children don't get to learn why it helps. They also need help to practice when they are calm and in control. So, they don't think it works (or "it's stupid").

## HOW TO HELP

- Explain that **good, strong breathing is the most powerful way to calm an upset amygdala** and, to help get our 'thinking brain' back 'online' (and that is a scientific fact!).
- **Help them practice.** Practice with them (little and often works well).
- **Help them find a breathing activity they enjoy** and can do.

## TRY THIS

- **Breathe in for a count of 4**
- **Hold your breath for a count of 1**
- **Breathe out for a count of 7**

## MAKE SURE

**...the breath is going right down into your belly** - not just into your chest. If you're doing it right, your belly will be moving.

## REPEAT

**Try this about 5 to 10 times.**

## PRACTICE

**... every day, before bed.** Keep practicing and you'll be really good at it!

## IN NO TIME...

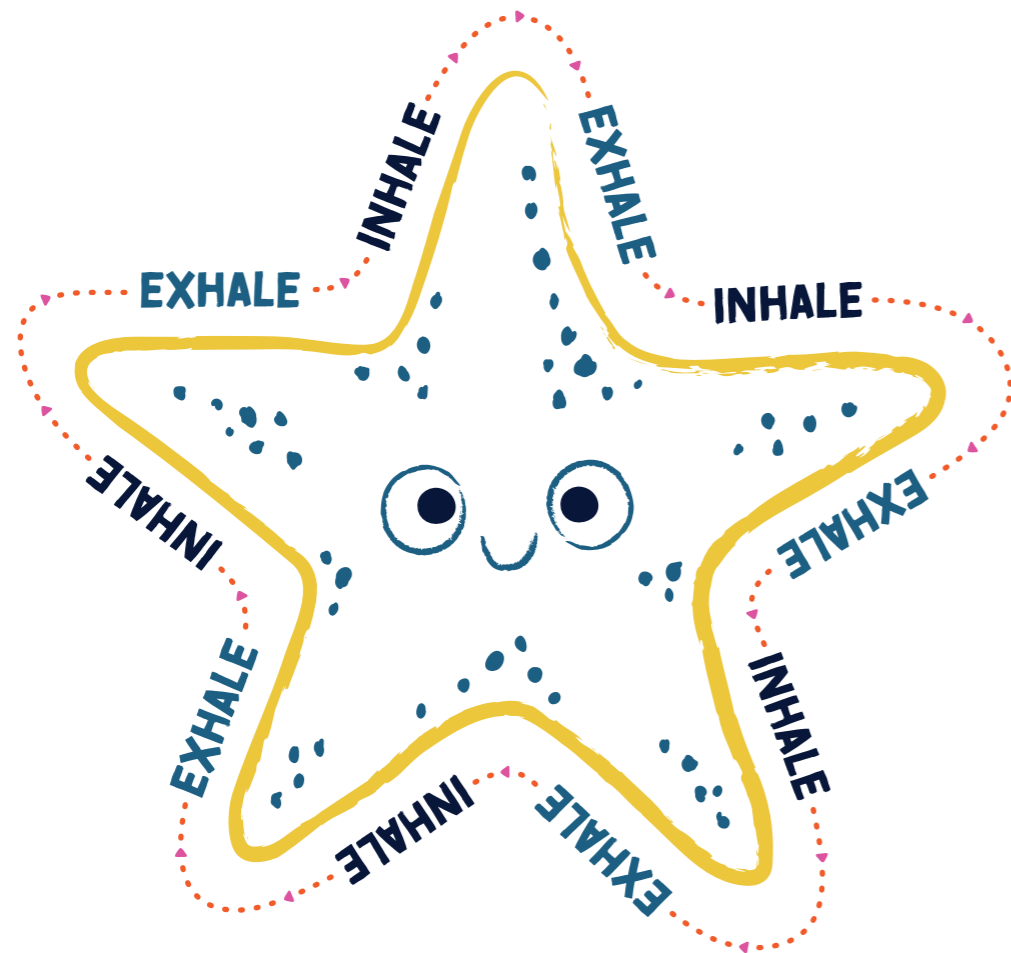
**...brilliant breathing** will be ready to help you whenever you need it!

## TOP TIP!

**A good way to practice** deep breathing is to lie down and put a favourite soft toy on your belly. **If the toy is moving up and down, your breathing is perfect!**

## BREATHING AND COPING IDEAS TO TRY

### STARFISH BREATHING



Start by placing your finger on an 'inhale' and breathe in.

Then trace your finger around the starfish, holding your breath when you get to each point, and then breathing out on every 'exhale' and in on every 'inhale'.

Go around the starfish 2 or 3 times.

### FEATHER BREATHING



1. Hold your hand out in front of you - palm up
2. Imagine you have a feather in your hand
3. Take a deep breath and try to blow the feather into the air and keep it floating
4. Take a deep breath each time you try and blow out gently to keep your feather floating



# BREATHING BANDS

## YOU WILL NEED...

- Some long, coloured pipe cleaners
- Coloured beads (which have a big enough hole for the pipe cleaner to pass through, but not so big that the beads move freely on the pipe cleaner.)

## HOW TO...

- Choose up to 6 beads to thread onto one pipe cleaner. (Pick your favourite colours or make an interesting pattern).
- Thread them on so that they are next to each other (using a pipe cleaner means the beads can only move when you move them).
- Twist the ends of the pipe cleaner together to make a circle/band.
- Wear the band on your wrist to remind you to breathe or take a moment, when you need to. For example:
  - Take one bead and move it all the way around the circle to add to the end of the line as you breathe in.
  - Take the next bead and do the same as you breathe out.
  - Keep going until you're feeling calmer.



# DROP YOUR ANCHORS SENSES



If you're feeling anxious, overwhelmed or upset you can anchor yourself using your 5 senses.

**LOOK AROUND YOU AND NOTICE...**



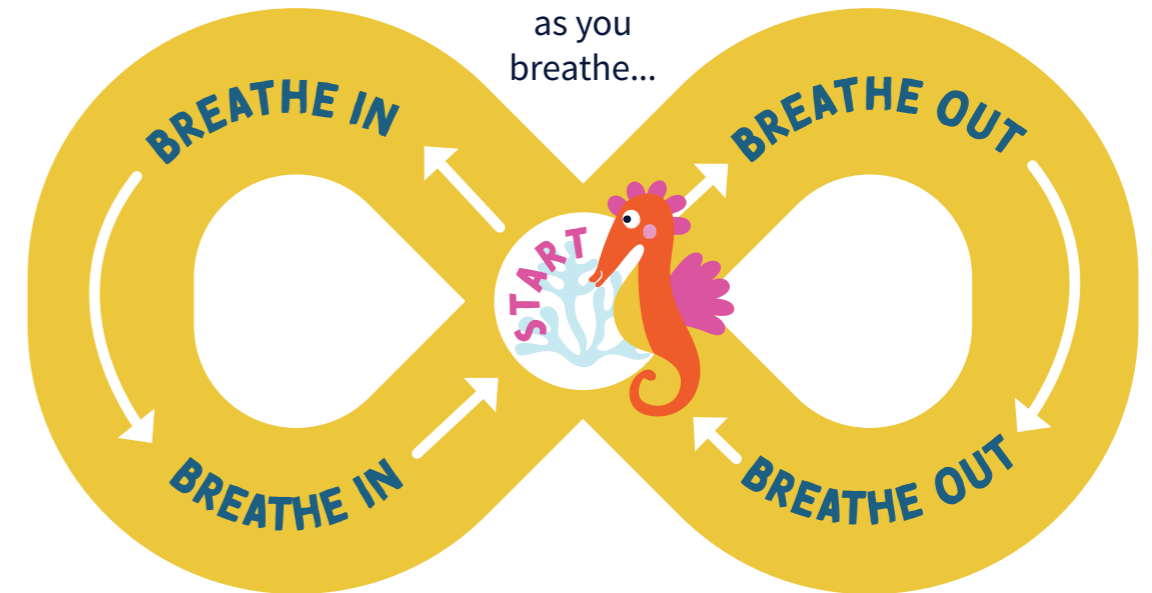
## 5 FINGER BREATHING



- Starting at the bottom of your thumb, slowly trace round your hand with your finger...
- Breathe in as you go up and out as you go down.
- Repeat as many as times as you need to, until you're feeling more relaxed.

## LAZY 8 BREATHING

Slowly follow the shape with your finger as you breathe...



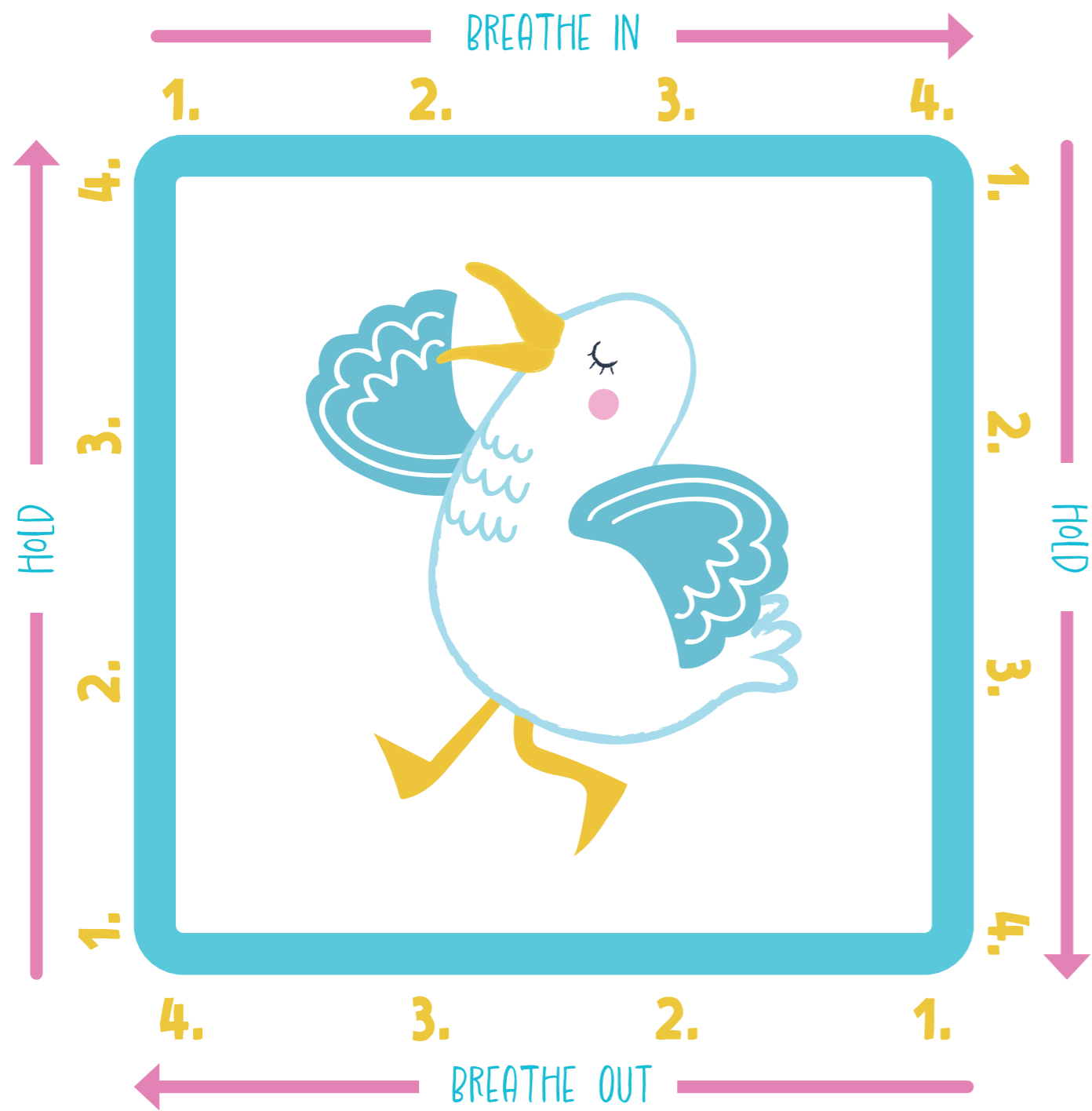
## DEEP BREATHING

Imagine you're at the beach.  
Hear the gentle waves.  
Feel the warm sand between your toes...

START HERE

Follow the circle with your finger ● As you move your finger, breathe slowly and deeply ● Repeat as many times as you need

# SQUARE BREATHING



Find more ideas online at:  
[www.headstartkernow.org.uk/brilliant-me](http://www.headstartkernow.org.uk/brilliant-me)



## AND BREATHE...

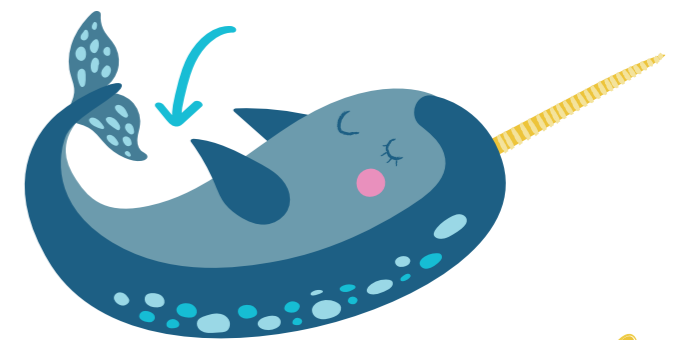
### TRY THIS

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### REPEAT

Try this about 5 to 10 times.



### PRACTICE

... every day, before bed. Keep practicing and you'll be really good at it!



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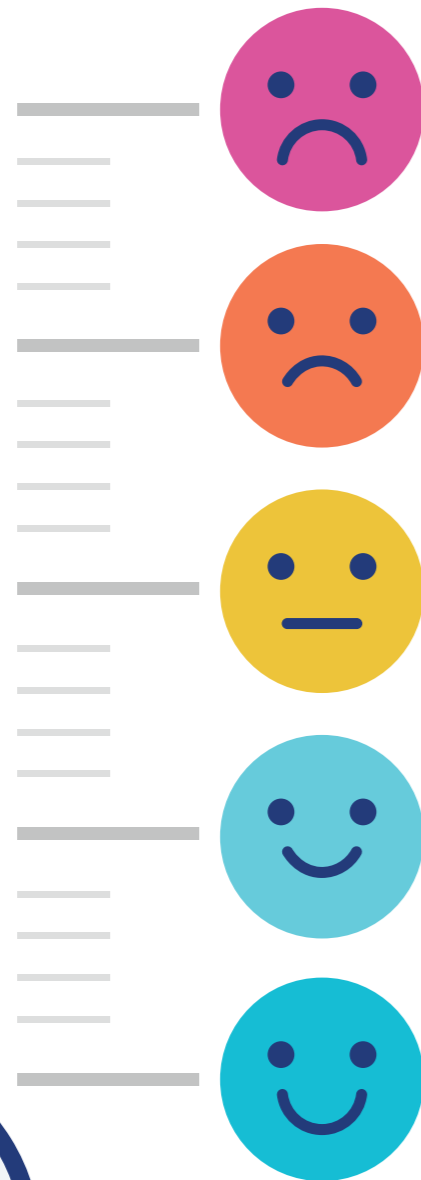
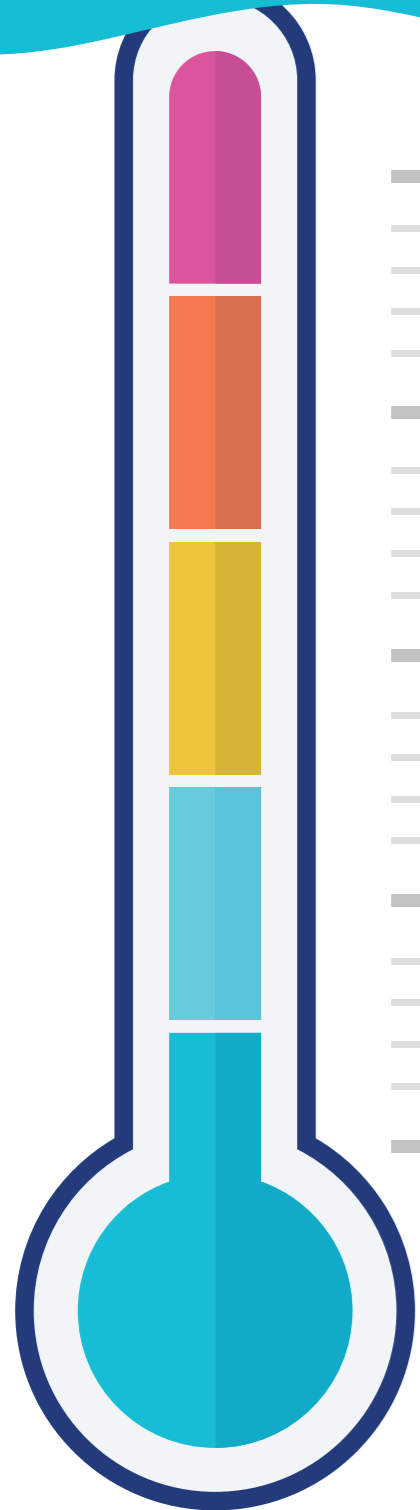
...brilliant breathing will be ready to help you whenever you need it!

### TOP TIP!

A good way to practice deep breathing is to lie down and put a favourite soft toy on your belly. **If the toy is moving up and down, your breathing is perfect!**

# SOME MORE WAYS TO MANAGE WORRIES

## THE WORRY-O-METER



FEELING OVERWHELMED

FEELING ANXIOUS  
AND SCARED

GETTING STRESSED  
AND CAN'T FOCUS

A BIT BOTHERED,  
FEELING UNEASY

FEELING OK

CALM AND RELAXED

### NOTES FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Use the thermometer to explore what causes your child to worry or feel anxious.

Check your child's feelings in specific situations. For example:

- The first day back to school after the holidays
- Going on a trip
- Being invited to a sleepover

**ASK** when your child experiences the different stages on the scale.  
**"WHEN DO YOU FEEL...?"**

**"I FEEL BOTHERED/  
UNEASY WHEN..."**

Discuss when they could use their coping strategies or when it is time to ask for help.

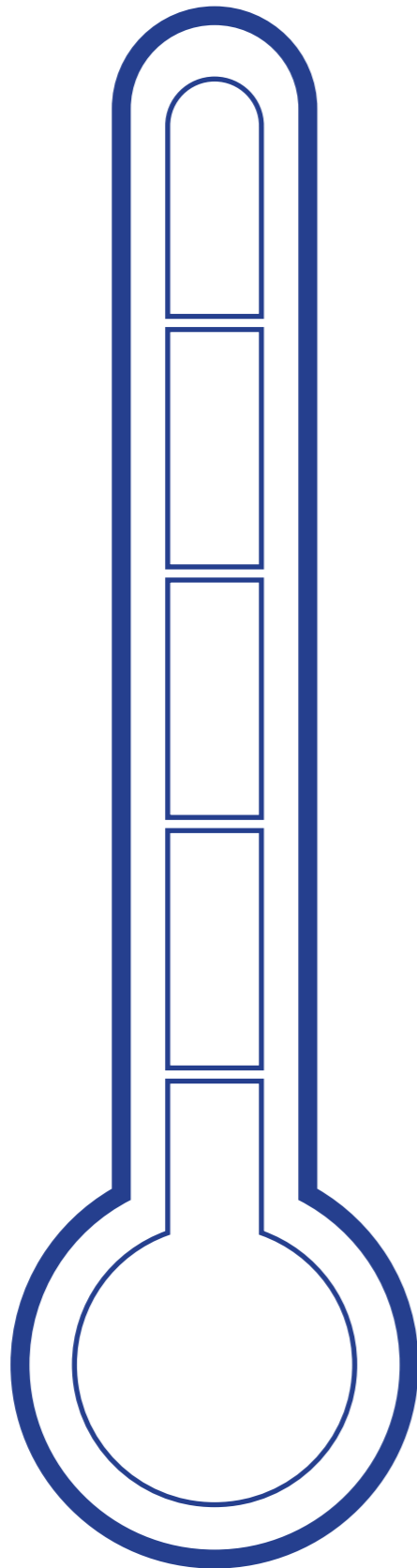
### IDEA

You could make a version of the thermometer together. Use your child's words and colours to help them express their feelings. (See the template on the next page.)

### IDEA

Use a pipe cleaner and a bead to create a moveable scale.

## MAKE YOUR OWN WORRY-O-METER



## THE WORRY LADDER

A WORRY LADDER CAN HELP YOUR CHILD MANAGE SOME OF THEIR WORRIES.

It's a tool you can use to help them think of small steps they can take to try and face deal with things that worry them. You can help them to do the thing they're scared of by breaking it down into smaller chunks and slowly working up to it, one step at a time.

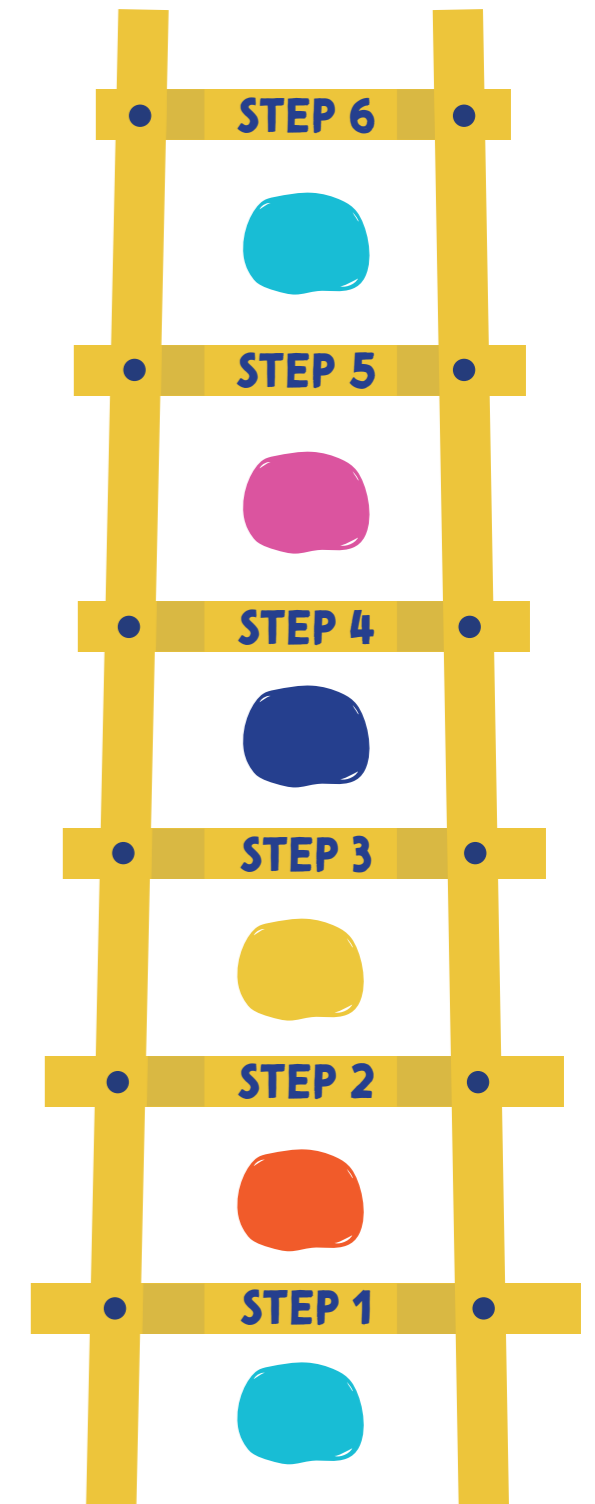
For example, if your child is worried about going to a sleepover because they can't sleep without a night-light. What practical steps could you take together to help them overcome their fear?

### NOTES FOR PARENTS/CARERS

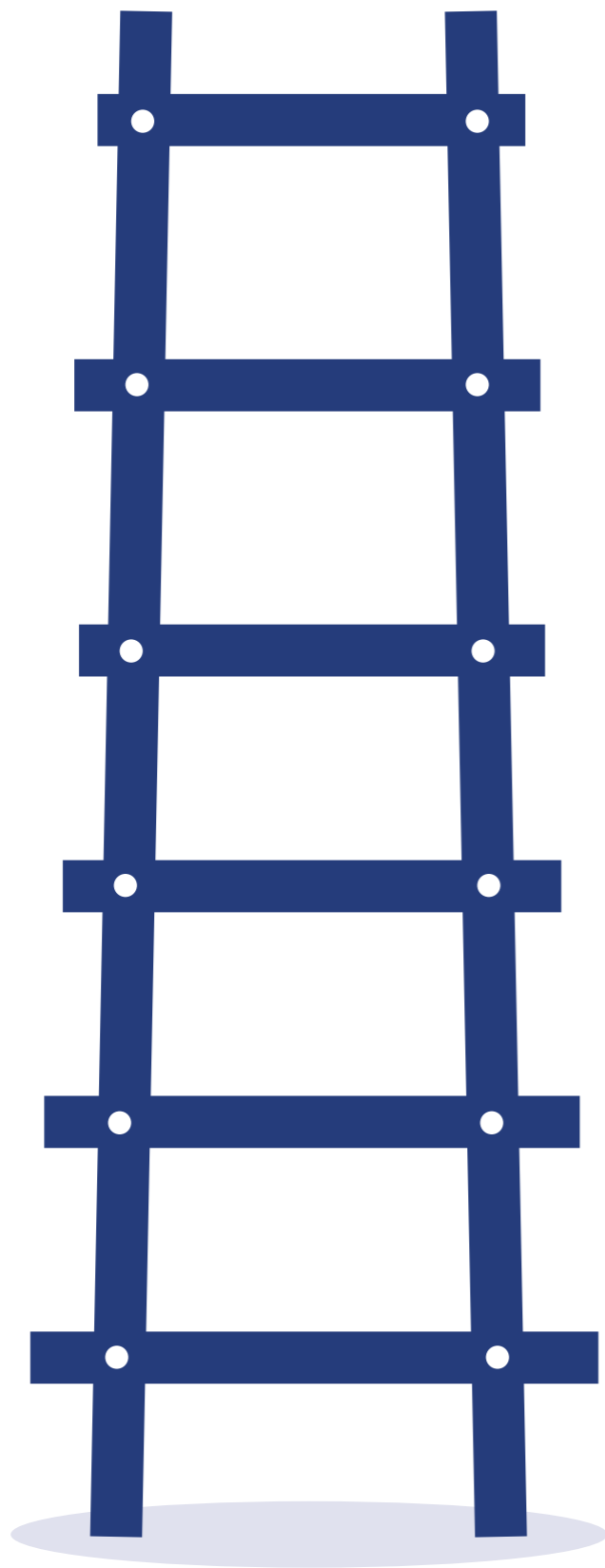
- Draw a ladder with your child. At the top, write a goal to do with a specific worry.
- Think with your child of steps they could take to reach the goal.
- Give each step a rating: 6 being the scariest and 1 the least scary. Step 1 (least scary) goes at the bottom of the ladder.
- Build up slowly and give them lots of encouragement. Once they feel comfortable at each step, celebrate their success and plan for the next one. If they are finding it tough, praise them for trying and don't pressure them.
- When they are ready, try the next step. And so on, until they reach the goal...
- Celebrate their achievement!

### MY GOAL...

When your child has overcome their worry, what will they be able to do?



# MAKE YOUR OWN WORRY LADDER



# POSITIVE PEBBLES

Have fun colouring in these **POSITIVE PEBBLES** and use the blank one to **DESIGN YOUR OWN!**



## WHY DON'T YOU...

Brighten someone's day by decorating some pebbles and leaving them out and about for anyone to find?

DESIGN YOUR OWN...

# THINGS TO SAY TO YOUR CHILD WHEN THEY'RE FEELING WORRIED

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR FEELINGS

“ I CAN SEE THAT YOU'RE FEELING WORRIED, AND THAT'S OKAY.

“ IT'S NORMAL TO FEEL ANXIOUS SOMETIMES, EVERYONE DOES.

“ YOUR FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT TO ME, AND I'M HERE TO LISTEN.

“ IT'S BRAVE OF YOU TO TELL ME HOW YOU'RE FEELING.

## 2. OFFER THEM REASSURANCE

“ I'M HERE FOR YOU, AND WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER.

“ I KNOW THIS FEELS BIG RIGHT NOW, BUT IT WON'T LAST FOREVER.

## 3. HELP THEM UNDERSTAND WORRY

“ IT'S OKAY TO FEEL WORRIED, BUT WE DON'T HAVE TO LET WORRY CONTROL US.

“ SOMETIMES OUR BRAINS PLAY TRICKS ON US AND MAKE US THINK THINGS ARE SCARIER THAN THEY REALLY ARE.

## 4. PROBLEM-SOLVE TOGETHER

“ WHAT'S MAKING YOU FEEL WORRIED?

“ LET'S THINK ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO TO MAKE THINGS BETTER.

“ SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO BREAK BIG PROBLEMS INTO SMALLER, EASIER STEPS.

“ HAVE YOU FELT LIKE THIS BEFORE? WHAT HELPED YOU THEN?

## 5. ENCOURAGE COPING STRATEGIES

“ LET'S TRY SOME COPING IDEAS LIKE DEEP BREATHING OR COUNTING

“ WOULD YOU LIKE TO DRAW A PICTURE OR WRITE ABOUT HOW YOU'RE FEELING?

“ SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST ABOUT YOUR WORRIES.

## 6. MODEL HEALTHY COPING

“ IT'S IMPORTANT TO TAKE CARE OF OUR MINDS AND BODIES.

“ I SOMETIMES FEEL WORRIED TOO, AND THIS IS WHAT I DO TO FEEL BETTER...

“ WE CAN TRY DOING SOMETHING FUN AND RELAXING TO TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THINGS.

“ LET'S PRACTICE SOME BREATHING IDEAS TOGETHER.

# PARENTAL ANXIETY

PARENTAL ANXIETY IS THE WORRY OF BEING A PARENT OR CARER.

It can mean worrying about your child's health, social life, and school. Parental anxiety might start at birth. But, it can affect parents of children of any age. It may be set off by a specific event or situation, or it might build up slowly over time.

**Parental anxiety can also affect children. They can pick up on your fears and start to worry.**

## WHAT TRIGGERS PARENTAL ANXIETY?

A range of worries can trigger parental anxiety. For example, a child's **illness**, serious or minor, can worry parents. Sometimes it can be hard not to imagine the worst, even with the smallest of ailments.

A child's **development** can also cause anxiety. Children's progress is not linear. Like a roller coaster, it can go slowly before a sudden burst.

Parents can also feel anxious about children's time at **school**. This could be due to a parent's own school experience. Or, they might worry about how their child compares to other pupils.

## TIPS TO MANAGE YOUR ANXIETY

### PLAN AHEAD

Plan how to handle triggering situations. For example, make a list of situations and coping strategies to use.

### PRACTICE COPING SKILLS

Find and use skills that work for you. When children see you using your strategies, they can learn to cope with stress.

### BE OPEN

It's OK to be open with children about coping with anxiety. For example, if you shout at your child during a stressful moment, explain how you felt. Tell them that shouting was a reaction.

### AVOID SENDING THE WRONG MESSAGES

When you're anxious, you might teach a child to fear situations you're afraid of. For example, if you're afraid of swimming, you may panic when your child is near water. This could send your fear to them.



### USE STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

The key is to find something you enjoy and works for you. Ideas include:

- Exercise
- Meditation
- Deep breathing exercises
- Mindfulness
- Yoga

### SEEK HELP

- Talk to a GP about ways to manage your anxiety.
- Support from friends and family can help.

**SELF CARE IDEAS FOR BUSY PARENTS & CARERS**



ChatHealth  
Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Parent Line 5-19

TEXT  
07312 263 499

www.cornwall.gov.uk/chathealth

Get confidential health and wellbeing advice and support

Keeping healthy and safe  
Immunisations  
Sleep  
Nutrition and a healthy lifestyle  
Toileting

Support with behaviour  
General health and wellbeing  
Support with medical conditions in school



## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### QWELL

Free (NHS funded) online wellbeing support for adults.

[www.qwell.io](http://www.qwell.io)



### ANXIETY UK

Information and advice for supporting your child.

[www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)



### WE HEART CBT ANXIETY RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & CHILDREN

Wellbeing resources based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) aimed at helping parents to support their child when struggling with anxiety.

<https://weheartcbt.com/for-parents>



### YOUNG MINDS UK

If your child is struggling with worry or anxiety, here are some ways you can support them and places you can get help.

**Young Minds Parents' Helpline**

Call: **0808 802 5544**

9:30am -4pm, Mon - Fri

[www.youngminds.org.uk/parents](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/parents)



### ANNA FREUD CENTRE

Supporting children and young people with anxiety. Information for parents and carers.

[www.annafreud.org](http://www.annafreud.org)



### HEADSTART KERNOW

**SPACE** (Supporting Parents And Children Emotionally)

Learning and courses.

Email: [space@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:space@cornwall.gov.uk) for dates of public courses or to ask about SPACE training for school staff.

### My Brilliant Place to be ME!

A wellbeing resource for children aged 8-11 years old.

[www.headstartkernow.org.uk/brilliant-me-parents](http://www.headstartkernow.org.uk/brilliant-me-parents)



### KIDSCAPE PARENTS HELPLINE

If bullying is contributing to your child's worries Kidscape provides confidential, expert advice.

Call: **0808 802 5544**

9:30am -2:30pm, Monday & Tuesday

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)



## BOOKS

THERE ARE MANY HELPFUL BOOKS FOR PARENTS AND FOR CHILDREN.

Including some wonderful picture books and story books for younger ones. **Here are a few of our favourites** (You may be able to find these and other helpful books at your local library):

### FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

#### Helping your Child with Fears and Worries

by Catherine Cresswell and Lucy Willetts

If your child has severe anxiety, this is an excellent guide for parents and carers. It explains what is happening and how to help.

### FOR READING TOGETHER

#### Help! I've Got an Alarm Bell Going Off in My Head! How Panic, Anxiety and Stress Affect Your Body

by K. L. Aspden

An excellent guide to the role of the amygdala in anxiety, for 9 - 12 year olds.

#### Hey Warrior! by Karen Young

A truly brilliant book to explain anxiety. Beautifully illustrated and hugely encouraging. For everyone.

Karen Young's website

[www.heysigmund.com](http://www.heysigmund.com) has some excellent articles and other resources.



#### The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside, illustrated by Frank Rodgers

An absolute classic. Jenny carries a huge bag of worries around that she can't get rid of... until the kind lady next door helps...

#### Ruby's Worry by Tom Percival

A story book for younger children. Ruby has a worry, it's getting bigger... how can Ruby get rid of it?

#### Facing Mighty Fears about...

a series of 10 mini books by psychologist Dr Dawn Huebner.

We like these because they are specific to a worry. They are short, to the point, and have ideas to try. They are based on CBT and full of reassurance, encouragement, and fun. Well worth a look.

Dr. Huebner also gives helpful advice for parents in each book.

### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

#### The Unworry Book by Alice James

Things to doodle, draw, write, scribble and scrunch...

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### CREATIVE EDUCATION WELLBEING PLATFORM FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Join the Headstart Kernow membership and get **full and free access** to information and advice about children's wellbeing for parents and carers, **including free access to:**

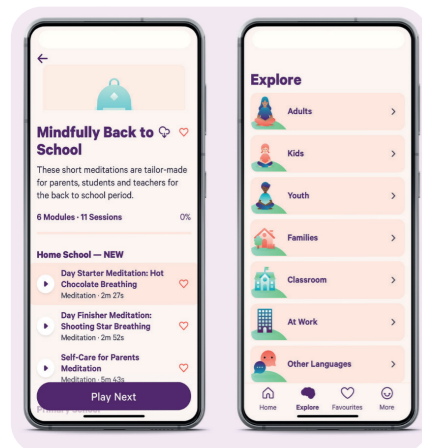
#### HELP ANXIOUS CHILDREN FEEL CALM & IN CONTROL

Webinar (30mins)

When faced with a child who is worried or anxious, it can be hard to know how best to help. In this short course, Dr Pooky Knightsmith helps you to understand the cycle of anxiety and the simple steps you can take to help your child feel like together you are taking control of their anxiety rather than letting their anxiety control them.



[www.creativeeducation.co.uk/headstart-kernow-parents](http://www.creativeeducation.co.uk/headstart-kernow-parents)



#### THE SMILING MIND APP

The **Smiling Mind** app was developed by psychologists and educators in Australia to help support wellbeing through simple mindfulness, breathing and meditation activities for children.

**Download it for free** on the App Store or Google Play.

#### THE SLEEP CHARITY

Worries and anxiety can affect sleep and a lack of sleep can affect anxiety. **The Sleep Charity** has an excellent ebook for parents & carers all about children's sleep.



[thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children](http://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children)

## RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

### CHILDLINE

How to cope with anxiety (video)



Ways to cope with anxiety

We all feel anxious sometimes. But if your anxiety feels overwhelming, Childline's got ways to help you cope.



**Find out more** online.

Did you know?

#### CHILDLINE HAS A SITE FOR UNDER 12'S

Compared with the main site (which is for anyone under 19) the under 12's site:

- has fewer pages, so it's easier to use
- is written for the under 12's, so the content is easier to understand
- has illustrations, rather than photos, because under 12's prefer these



[www.childline.org.uk/get-support/u12](http://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/u12)



#### START NOW

A website for young people

Created and run **by** young people in Cornwall **for** young people in Cornwall.

[www.startnowcornwall.org.uk](http://www.startnowcornwall.org.uk)

Including...



[www.headstartkernow.org.uk/brilliant-me](http://www.headstartkernow.org.uk/brilliant-me)



If you would like this information in another format or language please contact us:

Cornwall Council, County Hall,  
Treyew Road, Truro TR1 3AY

e: [customerservices@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@cornwall.gov.uk)

t: 0300 1234 100

[www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk)