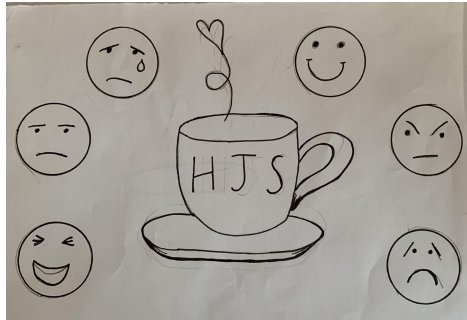


Wellbeing Hub focus coffee morning

How to support children with anxiety



ELSA support in school:

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

An ELSA is a specialist teaching assistant with a wealth of experience of working with children.

ELSAs are trained and regularly supervised by Educational Psychologists, and work closely with the Headteacher, the SENDCO and teaching staff in school. ELSA and Thrive compliment each other, and provide targeted support.

An ELSA is a warm and caring person who wants to help your child feel secure in school and reach their potential. Their aim is to remove the barriers to learning and to support children to be happy in school and at home.



ELSAs can support children with -

Loss/family change and bereavement

Social skills

Recognising and regulating strong emotions - Anger and

Anxiety

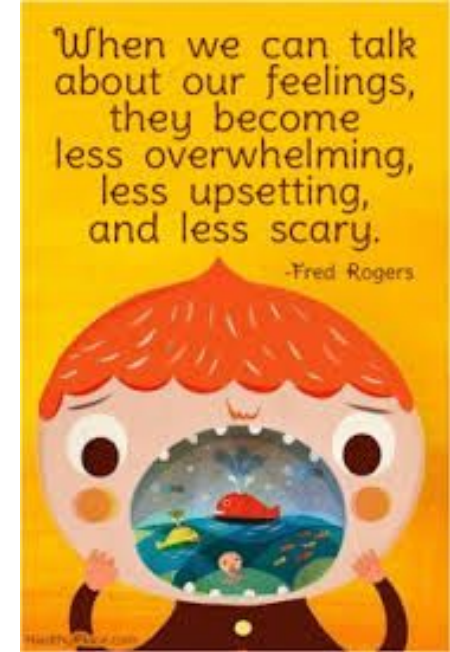
Friendship Issues

Behaviour - making good choices

Focus in class

Relaxation

Self esteem and assertiveness



ELSAs help children learn to understand and value their emotions and those of others through building a relationship of trust.

ELSAs provide the time and space for pupils to think and to talk about their personal circumstances and how they manage them. There is never any 'pressure to talk', it is an additional layer of nurturing support in school for children who are referred.

Children are usually referred by their class teacher, sometimes following communication from parents.

ELSAs can use art therapy, puppets, games and relaxation strategies to support children.



ELSA support is usually delivered in a 6 week 'block' which is then assessed with the class teacher and sometimes parents.

The ELSA isn't there to 'fix' the child; for pupils with complex or long-term needs it is unrealistic to expect ELSA support to resolve all their difficulties. Change is a long term process which needs everyone's help.



The Thrive Approach

- Is there to support and progress childhood development
- Thrive helps adults prepare children and young people for life's emotional ups and downs
- Thrive is rigorous, targeted and measured
- Thrive supports adults with how to be and what to do to help all children to engage with life and learning



What is Thrive based on?

**Established
research in
neuroscience**



**Attachment
research**



**Child
development
theory**



**Research
into the role
of creativity
and play**

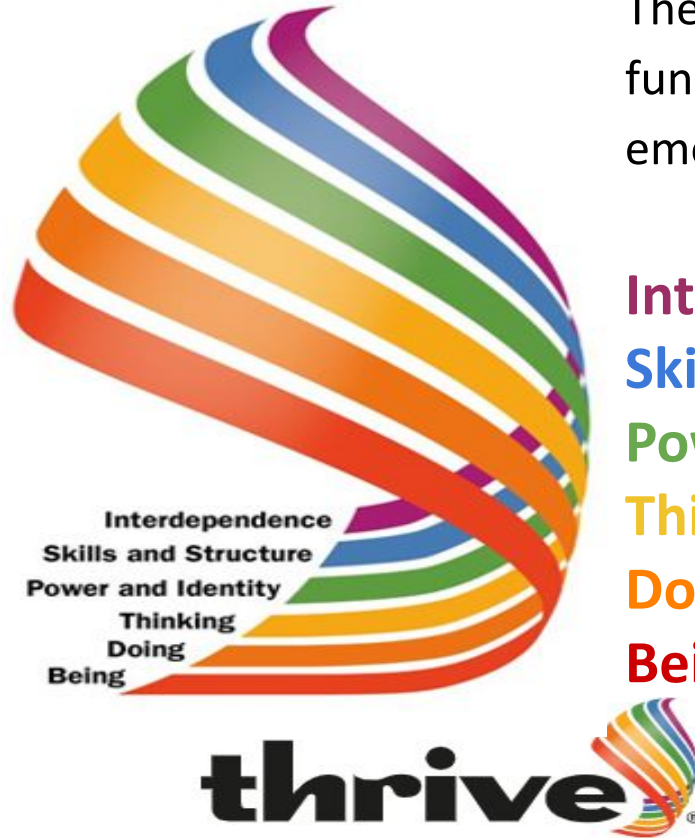


thrive 



Thrive developmental strands

- Thrive model is constructed in strands working from bottom to top
- Each strand comes online sequentially as we grow and remains in play throughout life
- Within each strand there are 3 developmental tasks that should be fulfilled at the right time to move on successfully to the next strand



The strands translate into six fundamental aspects of learning for emotional and social development:

Interdependence: 11-18 years

Skills & Structure: 7-11 years

Power & Identity: 3-7 years

Thinking: 18 months-3 years

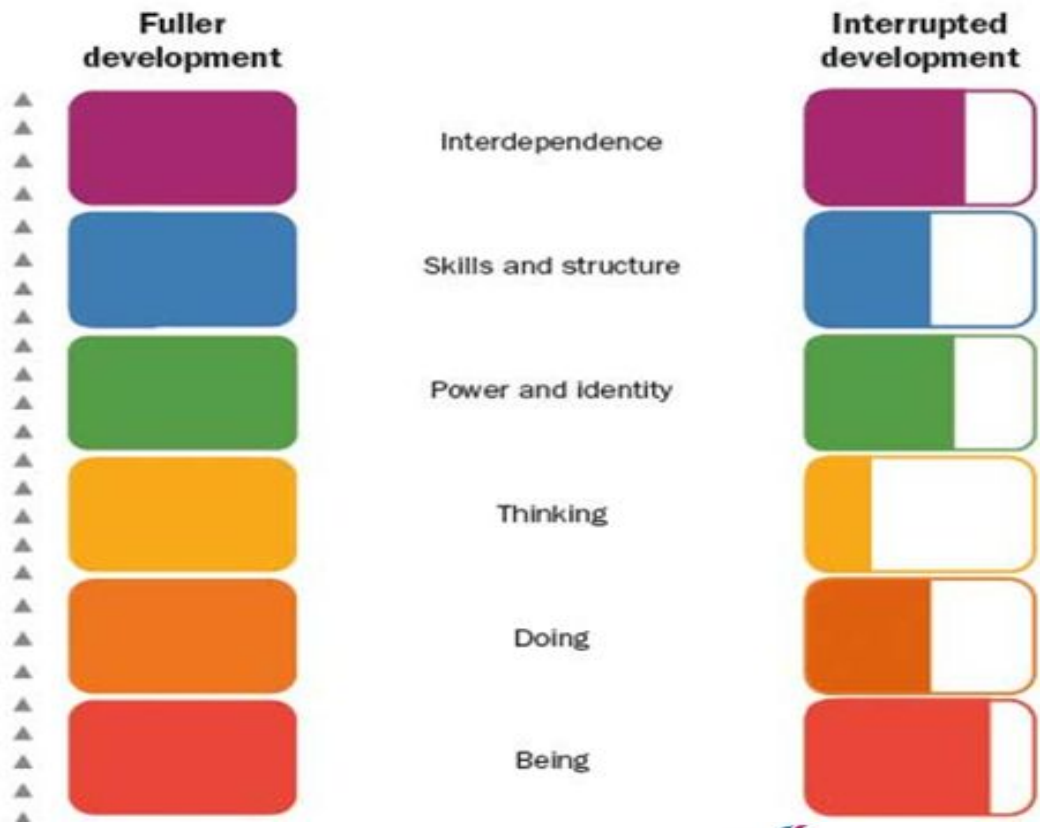
Doing: 6-18 months

Being: 0-6 months



The Building Blocks Model

Right time development-
Occuring at the relevant age and experienced successfully: solid and stable



Interrupted development-
Uncompleted development at the relevant stages: unstable structure to build upon - would need reparative practise to fulfill development



Thrive Licensed Practitioner

- Usually works in education, psychotherapy and/or in social work
- Supports healthy social, emotional and cognitive development in children as they grow
- Observes and interprets behaviour and determines how best to respond
- Uses their initial and continuous training to form relationships to help build resilience and enhance emotional wellbeing - leading to better mental health and an improved capacity for learning
- Uses the Thrive-Online tool for group and individual profiling, action-planning and progress monitoring



Thrive at Hiltingbury

- Beginning our journey
- Children are referred to Thrive in the same way as ELSA, by their class teacher, senior leadership and/or parents
- Currently running every afternoon which allows for individual and small group sessions
- Some children are receiving Thrive Action Plans adapted to be delivered by non-thrive trained school staff
- No strict time frame for Thrive sessions currently. At the moment session allocation is based on individual or small group needs
- Moving forward we're hoping to deliver not only Thrive for interrupted development but also for right time development to whole classes

UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY

All children experience some anxiety as part of typical development.

It becomes a problem when it stops your child from enjoying normal life by affecting their school work, family relationships, friendships or enjoyment of activities.

Anxiety can present itself in different ways. You may notice

Crying & difficulty managing emotions

Stomach aches & headaches

Feeling agitated or angry

Avoiding activities or events (including school)

Defiance & other challenging behaviours/self destructive habits

Feeling worried about situations or events, excessive need for security/parental contact

Desire to control people and events

Difficulty getting to sleep

Having perfectionist expectations for self, including school work and sports

Struggling to pay attention and focus

Intolerance of uncertainty

What is ANXIETY?

Anxiety is the body's way of responding to being in danger. The stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol are rushed into our bloodstream to enable us to cope with danger - The Fight! Flight! Freeze! response.

This happens to us when the threat is real **or when we perceive a threat** in exactly the same way.

It is the body's alarm and survival mechanism. Primitive humans would not have survived for long without this life saving response to danger.

This short video is how we have explained this process in school to the children.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZZ0dPVuWk-cX-5vyG06r8iBjLifs1qzS/view?usp=sharing>

When the 'guard dog' brain is unleashed, we have 'flipped our lids', and all rational, logical, reasonable thinking is currently 'off line'!



FIGHT! Response in children

Might look like -

Shouting, screaming, swearing
Hitting, kicking, biting, throwing, punching
Blaming, deflecting responsibility
Defensiveness
Demanding
Controlling
'Oppositional' 'Defiant'
'noncompliant'
Moving towards what feels threatening
Irritable, Angry
Furious, offended, Aggressive



FLIGHT! Response in

Children

Might look like -

Running away, wanting to escape
Unfocussed
Inattention
Fidgeting, restlessness
Hyperactivity
Preoccupied, busy with everything but the THING
Procrastinating, avoidant



FREEZE! Response in children

Might look like -

Shutting down, mind going black
Urge to hide
Isolating self
Verbally unresponsive- says 'I don't know' a lot
Difficulty with completing tasks
Zoned out /daydreaming
Unable to move, feeling stuck
Depressed
Numb
Bored/apathetic
Helpless

The 'Guard dog' brain is doing a vital job of keeping us safe, but sometimes it is not resting, and it is making us feel that we are under threat, even when we are perfectly safe. This is anxiety, and this is not helpful to us.

The Cycle of Anxiety

Physiological effects - body

Heart racing

Faster breathing

Muscles tense

Sweating

Pupils dilate

Digestive system slows -

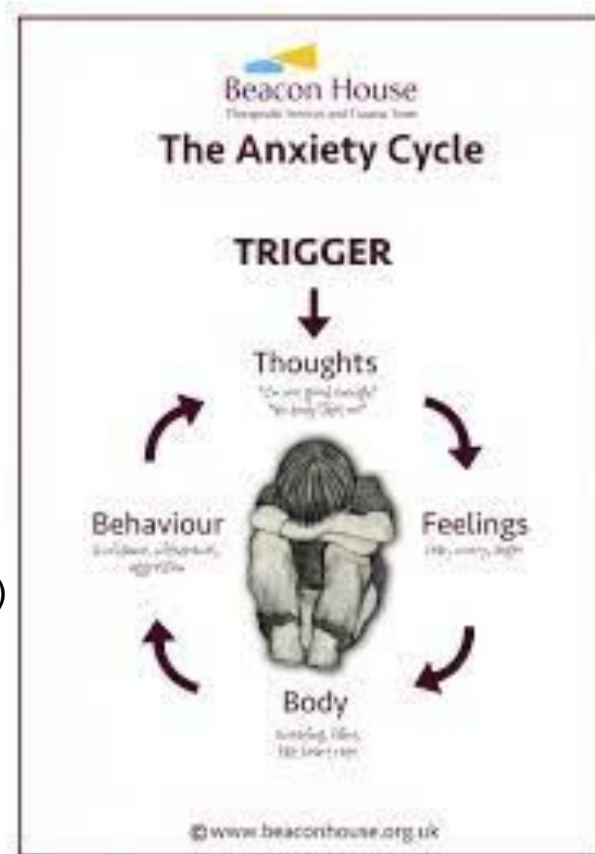
(nausea, butterflies, dry mouth)

More alert to danger

(less able to focus on anything else)

Light headed

Guilt/fear/anger/shame/upset/



Thoughts

'I won't be able to cope'

'The worst scenario/something bad is going to happen'

'I can't do this'

CBT!

Behaviour

Avoidance

Aggression

Disengage

Dependence on coping strategies
(both healthy and unhealthy)

Help your child to recognise where they are on the scale of anxiety (hand out), and ask them directly 'is there anything I can do to make you feel better?' This will encourage your child to start to think about how to find strategies to help themselves, while also knowing that you are there to support and love them, however they are feeling.

Remember that your child will only be able to access this rational discussion when they are NOT in a heightened state of anxiety!
'Strike while the iron is cold!'



Try to identify any

UNMET NEED

Which may be feeding a Child's feelings of anxiety.

Identify 'triggers' from previous page

There are many ways that we can help our child to 'Turn down the dial' of anxiety, so that these uncomfortable, unhelpful thoughts, feelings and behaviours can be more under control. Mrs Boden will be talking about some strategies you can use to support your child to do this in the next section.

Remember that learning to manage uncomfortable feelings, including anxiety is a life long journey and part of being a human being.

We all need to feel some anxiety in our lives:

It can help keep us safe

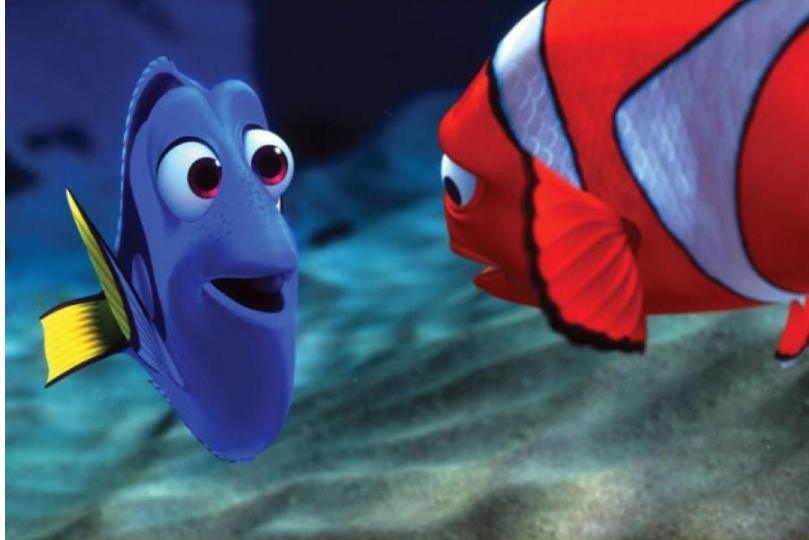
It can help us to **be ready** for important occasions and situations

A bit of worry makes us more careful, methodical and focused, and helps us to cope with reality. BUT if it becomes overwhelming and stops us enjoying life, feeling rested or connected with others, then we need to use strategies to help.

Our natural instinct as parents is to protect our children from all problems and difficulties. BUT this is unrealistic and ultimately unhelpful for them (obvious safeguarding needs aside)

We need to support our children to find solutions that work for them and help them develop confidence, resilience and a the tools to cope with life's difficulties, AND develop empathy with others who are also struggling.

Parental **SELF CARE** is VITAL to be able to do this. (Oxygen mask principle and modeling behaviour to children all the time)



Marlin: I promised I'd never let anything happen to him.

Dory: Hmm. That's a funny thing to promise.

Marlin: What?

Dory: Well, you can't never let anything happen to him. Then nothing would ever happen to him.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO VIEW ANXIETY...



- THIS IS A NORMAL HUMAN EMOTION
- THIS FEELING IS A SIGNAL TO SLOW DOWN & BREATHE
- THIS IS MY BODY TRYING TO KEEP ME SAFE
- MY MIND IS JUST TRYING TO PROTECT ME
- THIS FEELING IS TEMPORARY. IT WILL PASS.

@journey_to_wellness_

Perception of Anxiety

- Common to spiral into panic
- There's something seriously wrong
- There's nothing I can do about it
- I'm never going to be able to cope

Anxiety and Worry



Anxiety is another word for worry.

It is normal for people to worry and feel anxious sometimes.

But if the feelings of worry become too strong, or go on too long they can stop us from doing things we want to or make us angry:

Anxiety/worry can:

-  Make us feel tired
-  Make us have difficulty concentrating
-  Make us feel irritable or easily annoyed
-  Make it difficult to sleep well.
-  Make our heart beat quicker or unevenly
-  Make us sweat

Exploring and Coping with Certain Situations/Triggers

Social Stories - Create your own social story explaining what will happen on a specific day or at a certain event. Give a step by step guide, explanations, expectations, photos and pictures.

Welcome to Hiltingbury Junior School



This is your classroom

Our School Trip



On Thursday 4th November, my class will be going on a school trip to Hillier Gardens to learn about the Stone Age. It is a wonderful place to visit!

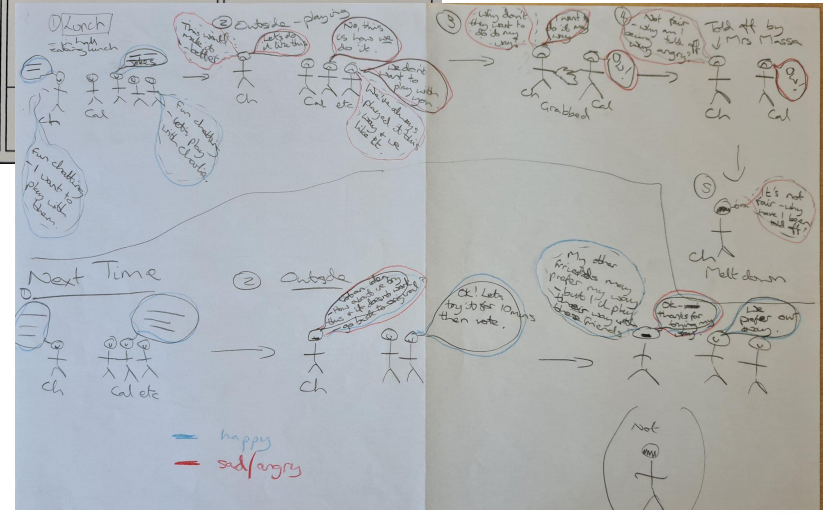
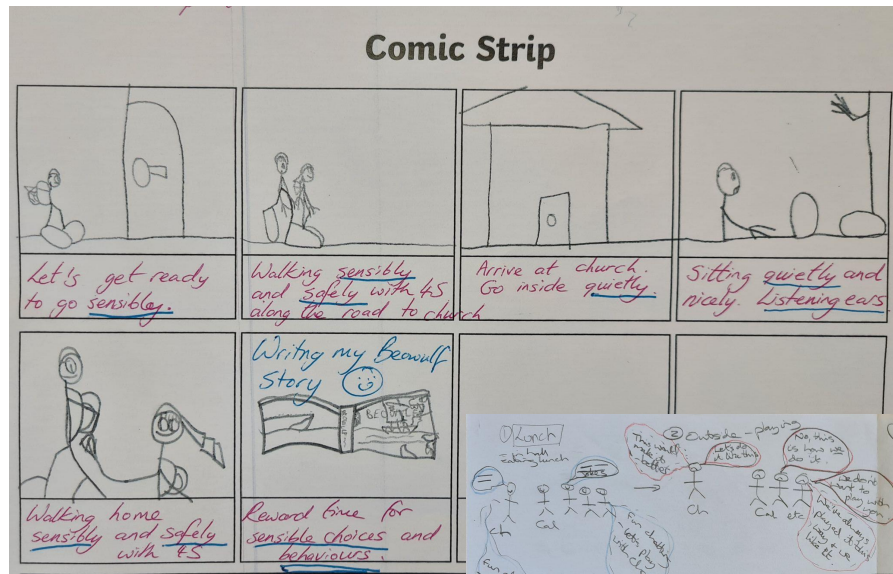


I will need to wear casual outdoor clothing and sensible walking shoes. As it might be wet, I will also need a warm **waterproof** coat.

I will need some snacks and a packed lunch as well as my water bottle. I will also need a big plastic bag to sit on at lunch time.



Comic Strips - Create your own comic strip. Use Narration written under simple drawings, you can also use speech and thought bubbles - colour code these e.g positive in blue and negative in red. Great for exploring alternative outcomes of the same scenario.

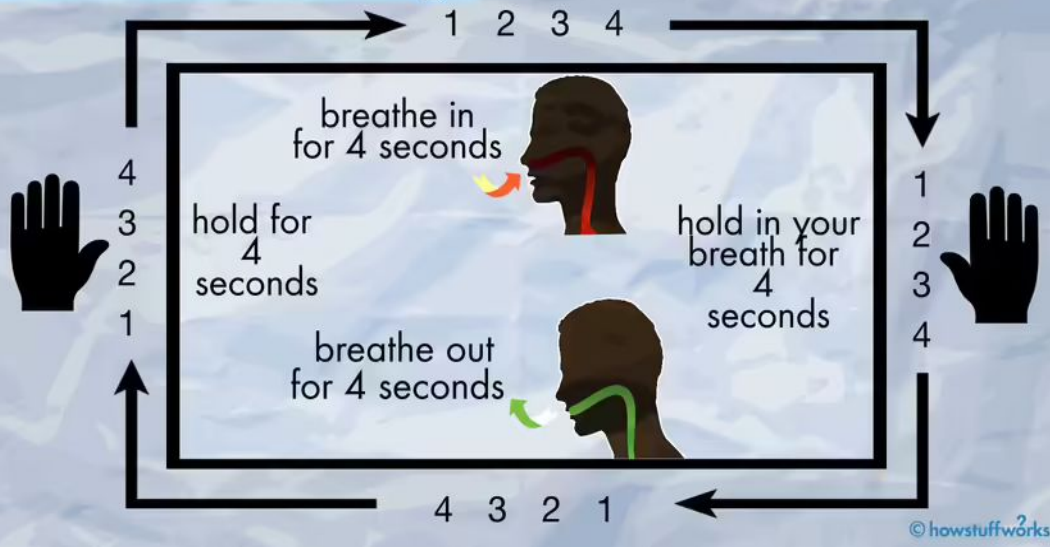


Coping with Anxiety: **Breathing** and **Grounding**

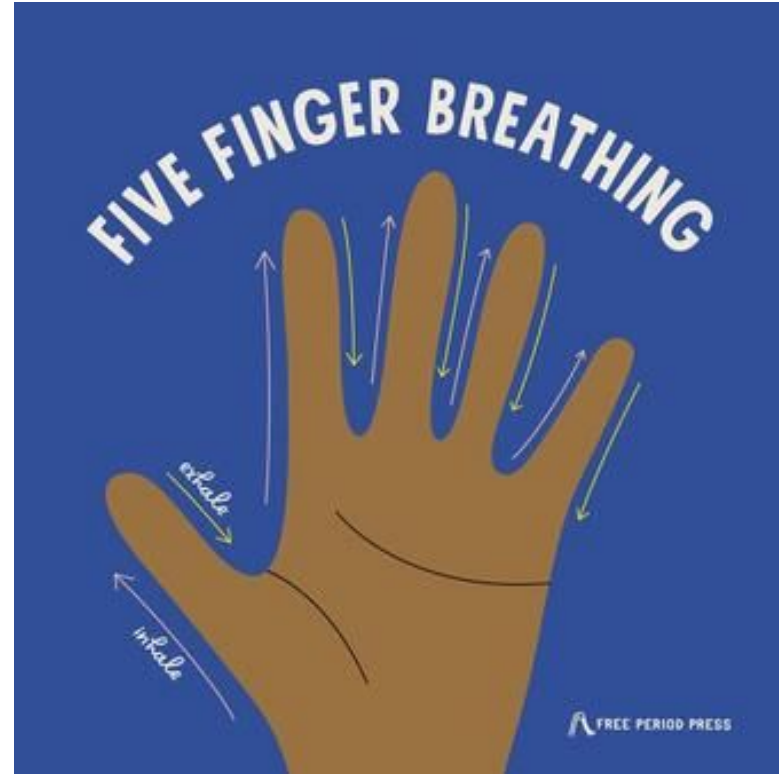
- **Breathing Techniques** are extremely useful when we are anxious or panicked. They help regulate and focus our breathing when the natural reaction is to quicken and shallow our intake of oxygen.
- **Grounding Techniques** are all about bringing our focus back to the 'here and now'. They are used to help refocus the mind, centre ourselves and reduce levels of distress.
- Both techniques may not work straight away. For them to become natural to use when we're anxious, they will take some time and practice. When learnt and used early enough they can help prevent extreme anxiety episodes and panic attacks.

Breathing Techniques

Box Breathing



FIVE FINGER BREATHING



Pace/Extended Exhale Breathing

In for 3, out for 4

Gradually increase:

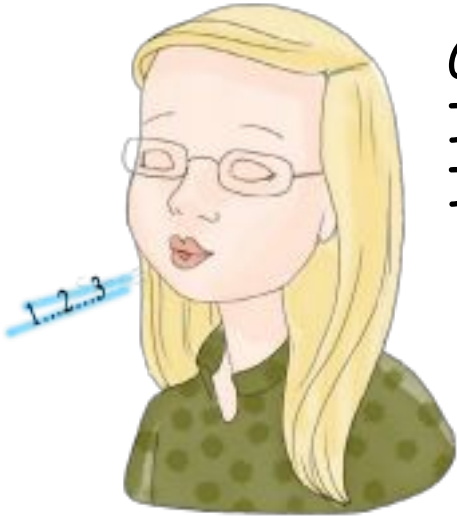
In for 3, out for 5

In for 3, out for 6

Eventually:

In for 4, out for 8

Add 'hold' if required



Balloon/Belly Breathing



Follow your breath as it goes into your nose, down your throat and into your belly.



Imagine your belly as a big balloon and fill it with air.

With your full balloon belly, let the air out. Pull your belly button in towards your back and squeeze the air out.

Add actions

Grounding Techniques

- Extremely useful at home or when out and about as some exercises you are able to use discreetly if needed
- All about using our senses, our 5 senses: taste, touch, smell, sound and sight but also:
 - Vestibular** - sense of body movement
 - Proprioception** - sense of where our body parts are at any given time
 - Interoception** - sense of our basic bodily functions like hunger and thirst
- Great for children as they naturally use their senses to explore the world and some games naturally feed into grounding e.g. ispy, counting the amount of red cars that pass you on the motorway, name something you can see that begins with the letter C, playing a ball game etc

GROUNDING WITH YOUR FIVE SENSES

What are

5

THINGS YOU CAN SEE



SUN
PICTURE ON THE WALL
PEOPLE WALKING

Wear

4

THINGS YOU CAN FEEL



WIND BLOWING
FEET ON THE FLOOR
PENCIL IN HAND

3

THINGS YOU CAN HEAR



BIRDS CHIRPING
CLOCK TICKING
CAR HORNS

2

THINGS YOU CAN SMELL



FOOD FROM THE CAFETERIA
LAUNDRY DETERGENT ON CLOTHES
FRESH CUT GRASS

1

THING YOU CAN TASTE

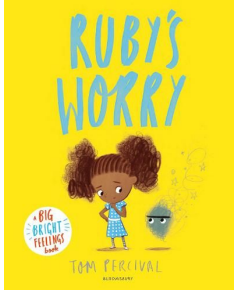


MINT
Breakfast
TOOTHPASTE

1... 2... 3... 4... 5...

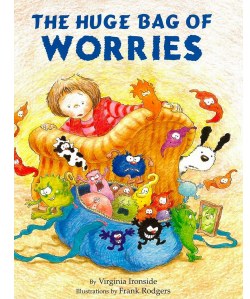


Books to Support Anxiety



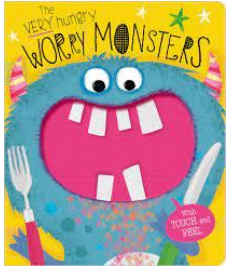
Ruby's Worry -

A reassuring story about why it's so important to share our feelings.



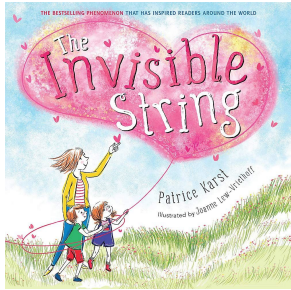
The Huge Bag of Worries -

A book exploring emotions and wellbeing.



The Very Hungry Worry Monsters -

A funny story featuring the friendly Worry Monsters, they eat your worries and make them disappear!

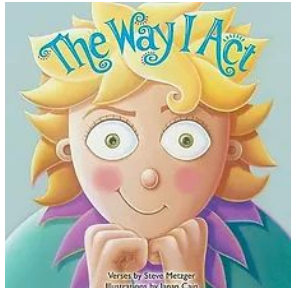
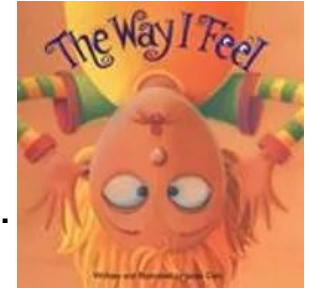


The Invisible String -

A heartwarming story that reassures children that even though they can't always be with a loved one they're always in each others hearts.

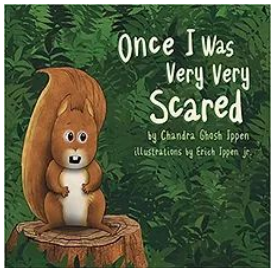
The Way I feel-

A story that allows children to identify and give language to different feelings. A way to normalise the emotions we often feel and to talk about them.



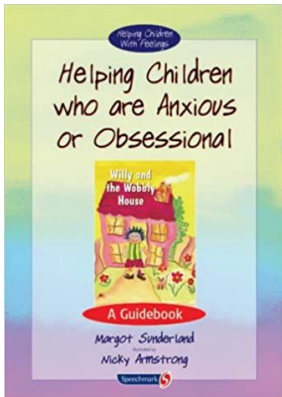
The Way I Act -

This book talks about behaviours that go along with feelings and helps teach children about the power they have to make choices about how they will respond when experiencing feelings.



Once I was Very Very Scared -

A group of friends who talk about things they do to feel better and manage their emotions. A great introduction to the idea of “fight, flight or freeze’ and the importance of learning strategies for how to cope.



Margot Sunderland - A range of highly credible therapeutic stories for children on a whole range of different emotions and how to cope.



YouTube - Read Aloud Books for Children

Other Useful Tips, Resources and Tools

- Sound - ear defenders/music/audiobook/radio
- Fiddle objects - movement/different textures
- Scent - spray/fabric conditioner/scent bags/item of clothing/ essential oils
- Taste - chewing gum/sucking sweets/hot or cold drinks
- Blankets - weighted/roll up in/texture
- Transitional object - to take with them, pocket sized item/keyring/photo/pebble
- Write down worries - worry diary/book/doll
- Spend time with your pet
- Ask yourself questions - what's the best/worst thing that can happen? Am I overreacting

Other Useful Tips, Resources and Tools

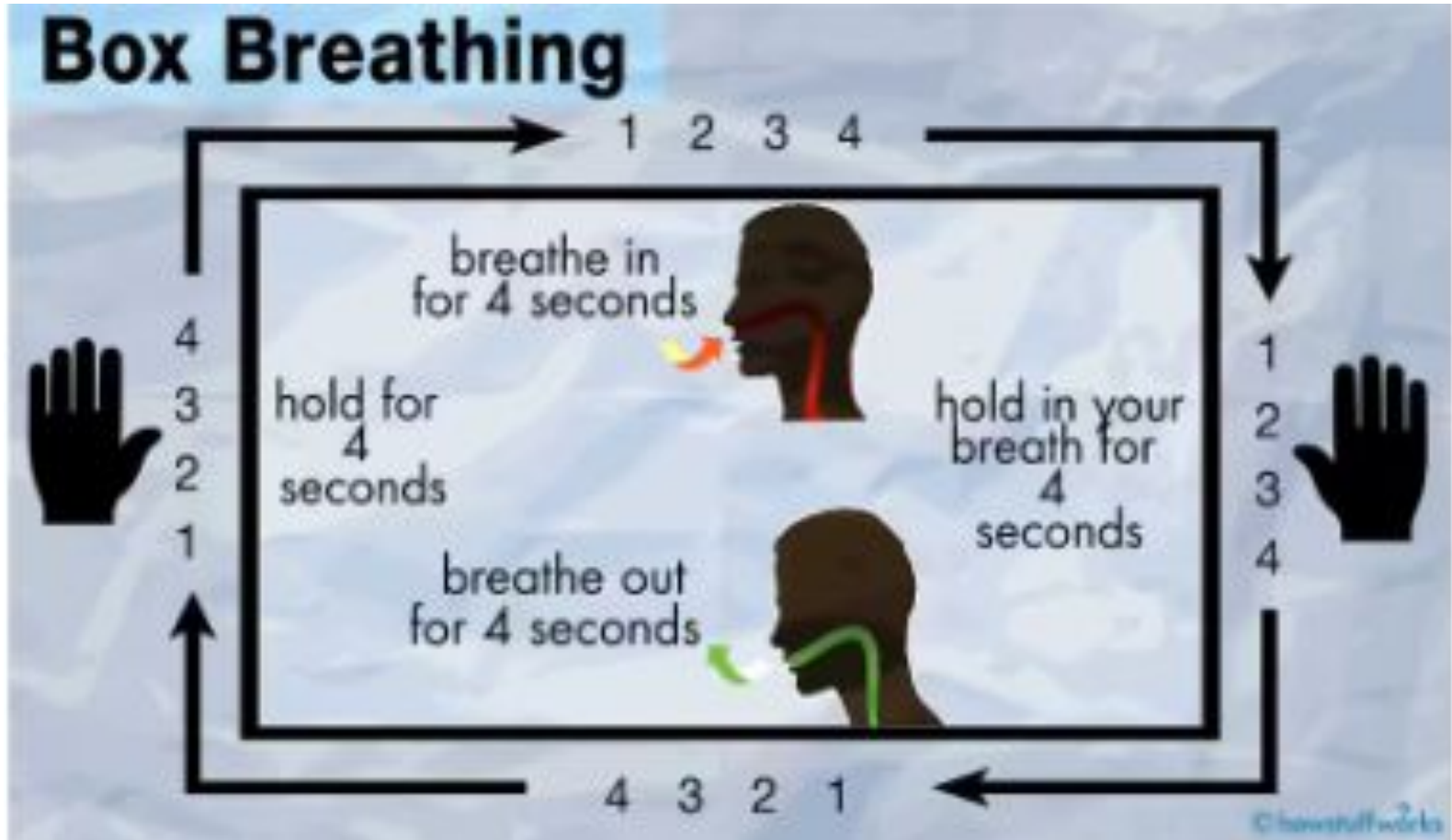
Websites:

- <https://www.gonoodle.com> - interactive activities, exercises and mindfulness
- <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health>
- <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/mentalwellbeinghampshire>
- <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk>
- www.KidsYogaStories.com - 30 breathing exercise cards for kids

Apps recommended by NHS, Hampshire and Education:

- **SAM** - Self-help for Anxiety Management – a self-help app to learn to manage anxiety
- **Mindshift** - Provides a variety of methods for young people to respond to anxiety
- **Headspace** - Short guided meditations and mindfulness to help children keep calm and focussed
- **Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame** - helps kids learn to deal with frustrating situations using the "breathe, think, do" method
- **Mindful Powers** - mindfulness app aimed at children aged between 7 and 10
- **The Zones of Regulation** - emotions as coloured zones - guides children through these emotions and how to deal with them

Calming Activity



Calming Activity

