



**If your child is feeling
anxious how can we
help them to feel more
resilient?**

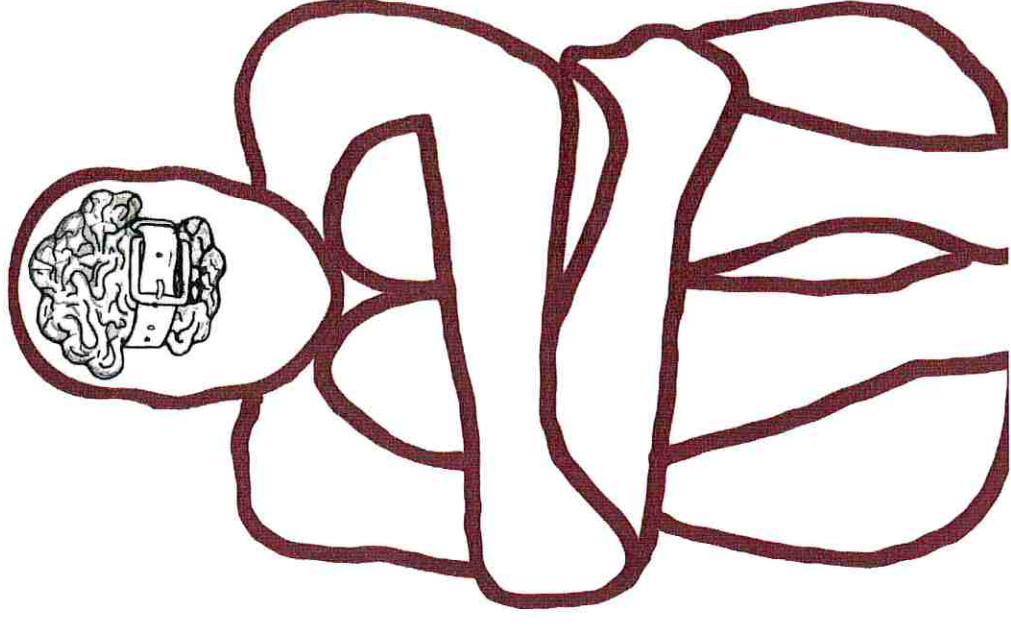
For more information please take a look at the page below:

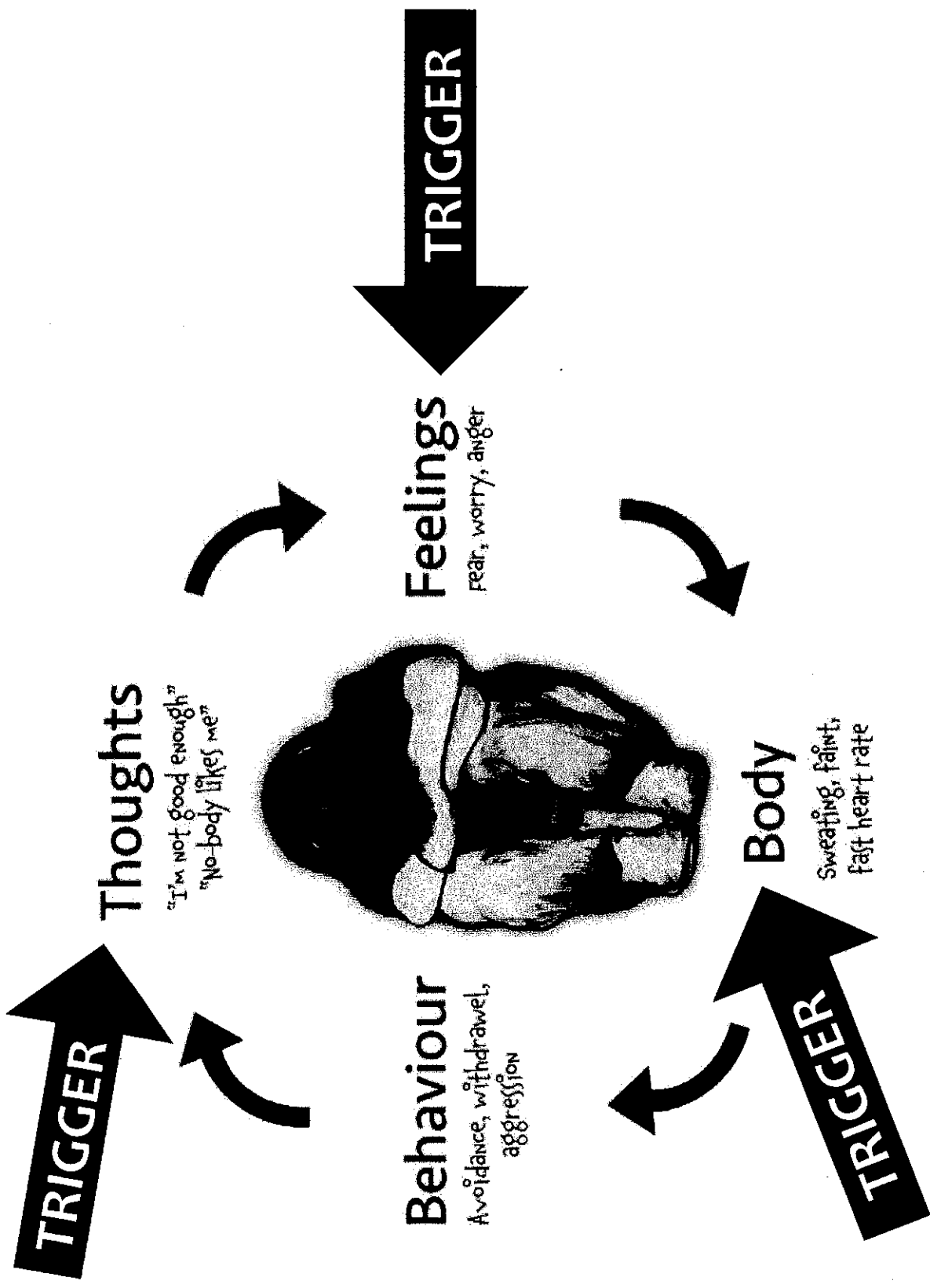
<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-anxiety/#what-is-anxiety?>

Anxiety is made up of four parts

- **Thoughts** (e.g. “I’m not safe”; “I’m not good enough”);
- **Emotions** (e.g. fear, worry, panic);
- **Body symptoms** (e.g. sweating, fast heart rate, feeling faint, sleep problems)
- **Behaviours** (e.g. high avoidance; clinging to parent; turning to risky behaviours to cope)

Anxiety tends to get stuck in a vicious cycle; the more the child avoids the feared ‘thing’, the scarier that ‘thing’ becomes.





What do children worry about?

- Studies repeated from 1930s to 2009 show similar trends
- Early on, the focus is survival
- At birth – falling (the Moro reflex)
- From about 8 months – separation anxiety



What do children commonly worry about?

3-6-years

- Disasters, monsters, imaginary creatures,
- Things under the bed,
- Things outside,
- Unfamiliar noises,
- Shapes of shadows; nightmares can start.
- Food and eating
- Toileting



What do children commonly worry about?

8-12 years

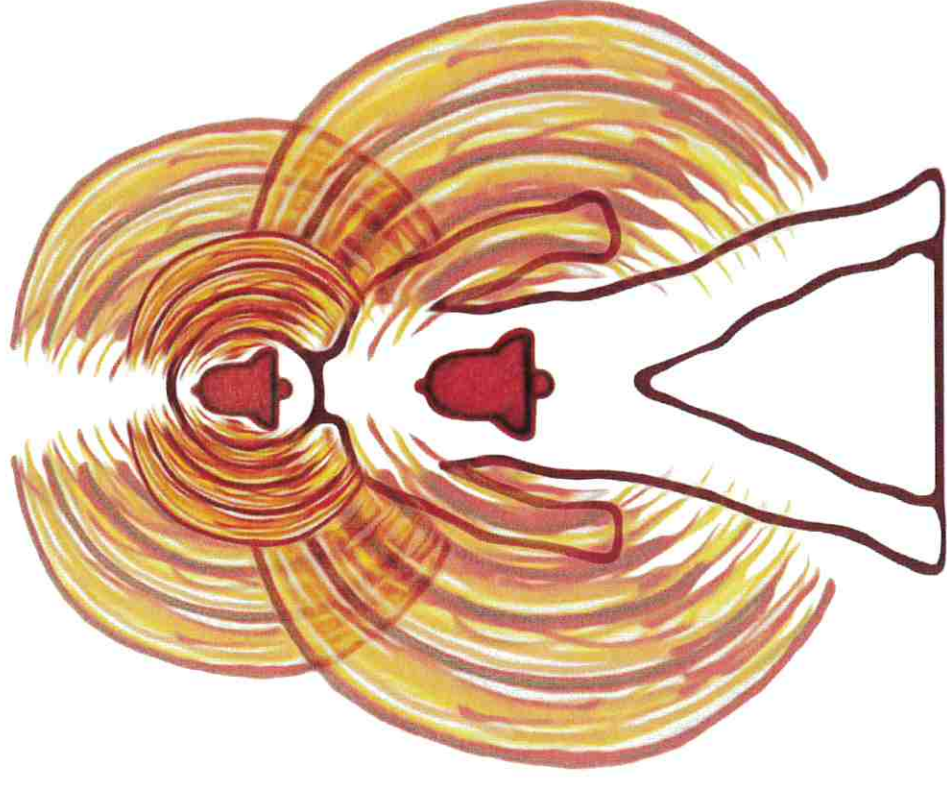
- School performance, especially around tests and being 'picked'
- Parents divorcing or a parent dying
- Crime, 'baddies', burglars
- Peer rejection or being excluded
- Being bullied
- Themes related to what's in the news



What you might see or hear...

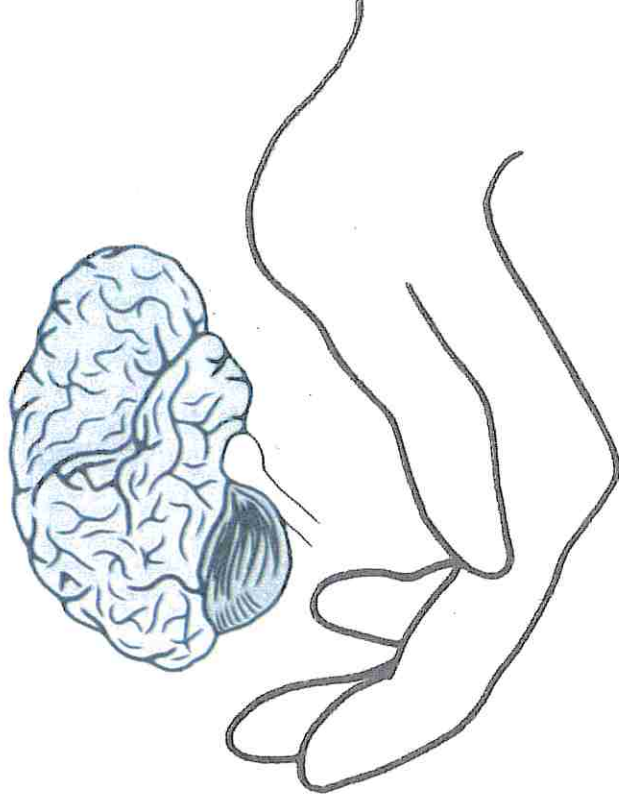
Anxiety doesn't always look like worry or fear; it might be **FIGHT AND FLIGHT AND FREEZE**

- My tummy hurts
- I need the loo (every 5 minutes)
- I'm hungry (all the time or at trigger times)
- Chewing cardigan, biting nails/fingers
- Aggressive/defensive talk
- Avoiding demands and withdrawing
- Patterns of reacting to or avoiding specific activities, lessons or people



Begin to calm the mind with distraction

- Tell me three animals beginning with A, B, C..
- What is 7 plus 7
- Have an elastic band around your wrist, when you feel stressed ping it on your arm and notice what it feels like.



50

POSITIVE PHRASES

to build
resilience in



Kids!

1. *I love you.*
2. You are loved.
3. I believe in you.
4. You are important.
5. I love watching you play.
6. I love being your _____.
7. *You make me smile.*
8. I'm grateful for you.
9. You are on the right track!
10. You worked really hard.
11. You are helpful.
12. You can do hard things!
13. You kept trying.
14. Your choices matter.
15. You are a good friend.
16. You can make a difference.
17. Good thinking.
18. *You are learning!*
19. You are confident!
20. Your ideas matter.
21. I am listening to you.
22. That was a good choice.
23. What you did was brave.
24. *You are enough.*
25. You're really improving.
26. I trust you.
27. You solved the problem.
28. *You figured it out!*
29. I knew you could do it.
30. I love hanging out with you.
31. Follow your dreams.
32. I appreciate you.
33. You are unique.
34. I love you for who you are!
35. You inspire me.
36. *I am here for you.*
37. You make my heart full.
38. It's OK. We all make mistakes.
39. That's your best effort yet!
40. I know I can count on you when _____.
41. You must have been practicing.
42. You mean so much to me.
43. You're so much fun to be around.
44. You can try again tomorrow.
45. Your efforts are paying off.
46. *Follow your heart.*
47. I see you enjoy trying new things!
48. You can learn from your mistakes.
49. That was a great accomplishment!
50. Your thoughts are unique & valuable.



new (and fun) ways for

KIDS to do

AFFIRMATIONS

Big Life Journal

1

START BY AFFIRMING THEM

- Take time daily or weekly to look into your children's eyes and affirm them. You can say, "You matter. You're loved. You're enough."
- End with a long hug to reap the benefits of neurochemicals, like oxytocin, that are released with physical touch.



2

CREATE AN AFFIRMATION BOARD

- Grab a poster board, cork board or small canvas. Together, draw or find pictures which describe their values, things they want to achieve, and/or who they want to become.
- Encourage your kids to include positive things they believe about themselves, their goals and things they can't do YET but want to learn.



3

DRAW AFFIRMATIONS ON THE MIRROR

Help your children use sticky notes or washable markers to place or draw affirmations on the mirror. When they look in the mirror, they will be reminded of all the ways they matter and make a difference in this world.



4

SING YOUR WAY INTO A BETTER MOOD AND BETTER HEALTH

Whether in the shower, the car, or getting ready in the morning, we use singing to lift our spirits and make things like household chores a lot more fun. Invite your children to turn their favorite affirmations into songs.



5

BUILD A TREASURE CHEST OF GOODNESS

1. Buy or build a small wooden treasure chest or, alternatively, use an empty tissue box.
2. Ask kids to paint and decorate the chest or box with the words "I am" on the top.
3. Make some coins out of thick card or cardboard that are big enough to write on.
4. Then, for each coin, children pick out "I am" affirmations and write one on the front side of a coin.



6

LEARN FROM THE GREATEST

- Use the stories from the Big Life Journal or the Famous Failures Kit to help children learn from others' experiences.
- Ask your child what they think these people told themselves or what affirmations they must have used to help them get back up and keep moving towards their goals.



7

ASK, "WHAT IF?"

- Find an adventure book where the main character has a goal and one or more obstacles to overcome.
- Discuss how the story might change depending on what the character chooses to say to him or herself.
- Discuss what happens when the character believes the affirmations versus the criticism.



7

WAYS TO TEACH KIDS FAILURE IS A GREAT THING

by Big Life Journal

1 FOCUS ON GROWTH MINDSET

After making a mistake, children with **growth mindset** show a larger brain response than those with fixed mindsets.



2 LET FAILURE HAPPEN

Challenging experiences are the only way we develop certain coping and **problem-solving skills**. If we shield children from adversity, key brain connections cannot develop.



3 EMBRACE (AND CELEBRATE) FAILURE

- Give kids an opportunity to brag about their mistakes
- Introduce "Failure Fridays"
- Give your child a high-five each time a mistake is made
- Use the "My Favorite No" activity.
- Discuss the acronym for FAIL (First Attempt At Learning)



4 EXPLAIN THE LEARNING PIT

Teach children the 'pit' metaphor, and make it part of their daily vocabulary. For example, during a challenging activity, ask, "**Who is in the pit? Who is out of the pit?**"



5 EXPLAIN THE BRAIN SCIENCE

Kids typically fear failure. But what if they knew **mistakes grew their brains**? When kids understand the brain science behind why mistakes improve learning, it's easy to get them excited about the prospect.



6 EMPHASIZE "FAILING FORWARD"

Failing forward simply means learning from your errors. Ask questions like, "**What did you learn from this?**" or "**What would you do differently next time?**" Shift focus onto the positive aspects of failure.



7 TEACH THE MINDFUL APPROACH

The link between mindfulness and resilience is very well documented. With practice, kids can learn to respond to strong feelings about failure rather than simply reacting.





activities to build

GRIT & RESILIENCE

in children



by Big Life Journal

1 DISCUSS THEIR DREAMS AND GOALS

Talk about the steps that would be required in order for your child to reach their goals. Encourage them to create a dream board and/or bucket list.

2 ENCOURAGE TO CONDUCT “GRIT INTERVIEWS”

Encourage your child to interview grandparents, neighbors, or other acquaintances who have worked hard toward a long-term goal.

3 SHARE STORIES OF GRITTY FAMOUS PEOPLE

Encourage your child to study famous people (and their failures) like Michael Jordan or J.K. Rowling. These examples will show them that perseverance through failure can lead to great success.

4 TEACH ABOUT GRIT THROUGH NATURE

Read together the Tupac Shakur poem “The Rose That Grew from Concrete.” Then discuss what represents the “concrete” in their life. What are their obstacles? Next, discuss how your child can “break through concrete” like the rose. What can they do to overcome obstacles and reach their dreams?

5 TEACH ABOUT GRIT THROUGH LITERATURE

Read classic stories of perseverance like “The Little Engine That Could” or Dr. Seuss’s “Oh, The Places You’ll Go.” Help your child form connections to their own life. Talk about their challenges, response to failures, and how to live with grit.

6 ASK, “WHAT’S THE HARD PART?”

When your child feels discouraged or tempted to give up, ask them, “What’s the hard part?” After the two of you have identified the challenge, ask your child what they could do to fix or overcome “the hard part.”

7 FOLLOW THE “HARD THING RULE”

The rule has three parts: 1) Each member of the family has to do something hard. 2) You must finish what you start. 3) No one gets to pick the “hard thing” for anyone else, so your child gets to choose his own challenge.

8 TRY THE “GRIT PIE” EXERCISE

The pie represents an obstacle your child is facing. Each slice of pie symbolizes a cause of the problem. For each slice, analyze whether their thoughts about the problem are permanent or temporary and whether they blame themselves or others.

9 SHARE YOUR PASSIONS

Show your child your excitement about activities outside of working and parenting, and devote time to developing these passions.

5

WAYS TO FOSTER A HEALTHY COMPETITIVE MINDSET

in Young Athletes

by Big Life Journal

1 CONNECT WINNING WITH EFFORT

- Explain that positive outcomes are the result of lots of **EFFORT**.
- Discuss how the best players **practice** the most and **work** the hardest.
- Help kids notice what went **WELL** in each game or practice, and note how effort created even their smallest gains.



2 RE-DEFINE SUCCESS

- Explain that accomplishment does not always mean winning.
- Athletes with a growth mindset see success in **learning** and **improving**, not just winning.
- **Bouncing back** after a loss can also be viewed as an achievement.
- Failure is necessary for building resilience!



3 LEARN FROM THE COMPETITION

- Kids can learn to be inspired by their competitors. Say, "I bet he practiced so much to get that good. What do you think?"
- Teach kids to compete against their **own past** performance. Explain that their most important competitor is their self.
- Explain that comparisons are **relative**.



4 CREATE A HEALTHY TEAM CULTURE

- Reflect on performances and value the **lessons learned**.
- Openly discuss challenges and create environments where mistakes are **encouraged**.
- Teach to humbly accept wins and graciously accept losses. **Model** good sportsmanship.
- Ask kids what kind of team they'd like to build.



5 PRACTICE AT HOME

- Consider family games or activities that kids can potentially win, and keep it **fair**.
- Choose **cooperative** board games to add the element of teamwork.
- Brainstorm with kids about what will happen *after* they win or lose. Winning feels good and losing feels bad, but neither state is permanent.

