

# Have you noticed a student feeling low, anxious or stressed?

## Concerned about their emotional or mental health?

The MindMate Support Team is a new service for education settings to support the emotional and mental health of their students. We work alongside existing services to help young people with mild to moderate mental health needs using evidence-based interventions via one-to-one, group work, or workshops.

If you'd like to know more about our service, or discuss a concern you may have about a young person (consent required), please contact the MindMate Support Team on [Lcht.mmsupportteam@nhs.net](mailto:Lcht.mmsupportteam@nhs.net)



# Mental Health Awareness



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**Team Practitioner**



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**EMHP**

## Support offered by the MMST

- Consultations with staff in school to agree support plans
- ‘Whole School’ approach work including workshops, assemblies, staff training, sessions for parents/carers
- Offer low-intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) based interventions with an Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) - for recent mild to moderate presentations of common emotional wellbeing difficulties such as low mood and worry
- Group work

# Understanding anxiety, fears and worries

MindMate Support Team

What comes to  
mind when you  
think of anxiety,  
fears and  
worries?

# What is anxiety?

**Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can range from mild to severe.**

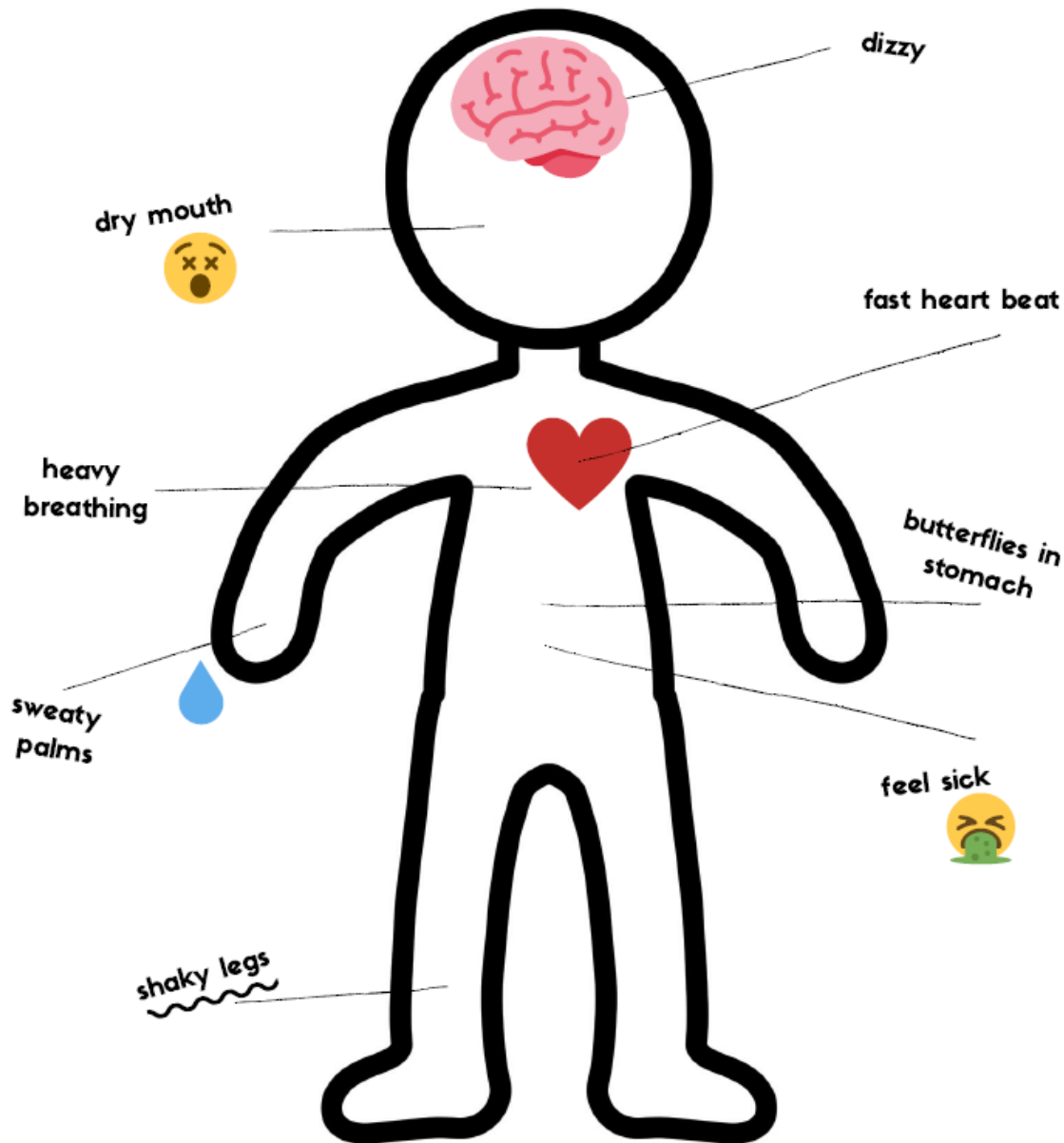
Feeling anxious is perfectly normal. For some people though, it is difficult to control their worries and their feelings of anxiety are more constant and pervasive. It can often affect their daily lives.

Anxiety is the most prevalent mental health concern in childhood and adolescence.

## Some common signs:



- Concentration difficulties
- Not eating properly
- Anger or irritability
- Seeming 'on edge' or nervous
- Expressing negative thoughts
- Fidgeting
- Using toilet often
- Tearful
- Physical symptoms e.g. tummy aches and feeling sick
- Avoidance of certain situations
- Extremely compliant



## The Fight, Flight or Freeze response

- Automatic response
- Prepares body to react when danger or threat is perceived
- Causes lots of unpleasant physical symptoms



# Common fears/worries

Name of the anxiety term	Example of fear/worries	Named example in your handout
<u>Specific phobia</u>	Dogs, Spiders, Balloon, etc.	Sarah
<u>Social anxiety</u>	Going to school, cafes, parties, play centres, extra curricular activities	Layla
<u>Generalised anxiety</u>	Things going on in the world (such as terrorism), doing well at school, friendships, getting things right, and the health of ourselves and others	Ben
<u>Separation anxiety</u>	Harm will come to them or their carer if they are apart/ they will not cope without their carer	Muhammed

# What maintains anxiety?

(or what keeps worries  
going?)

## Situation:

Doesn't understand new learning in class

### Thoughts:

- I am stupid.
- Other people think I am stupid.
- People will laugh at me.
- I will get told off/the teacher will be annoyed at me

### Physical sensations:

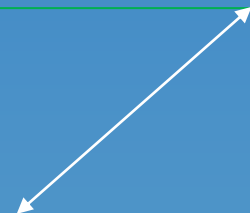
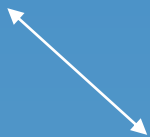
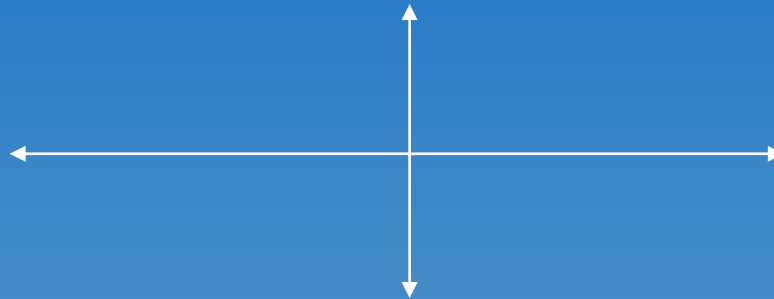
- Sick
- Difficult to breathe
- Heart races
- Teary eyes
- Warm
- Shaky

### Emotions:

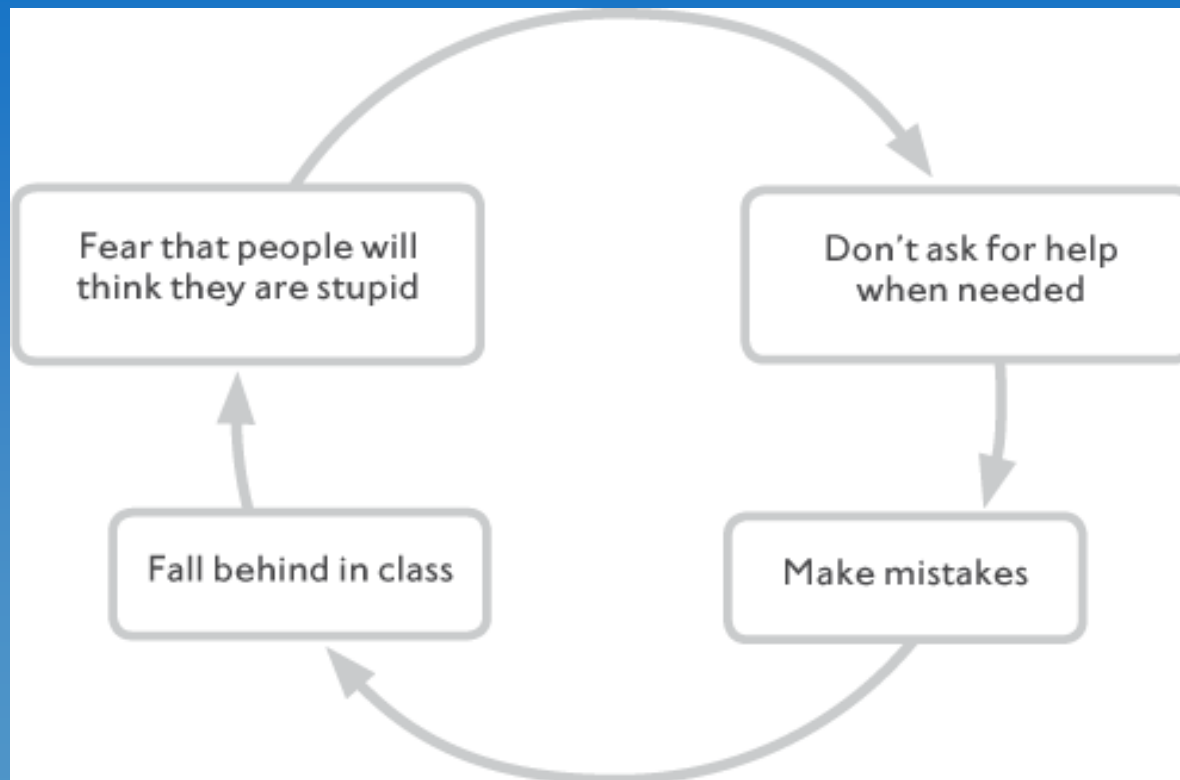
- Worried/Scared/  
Nervous
- Embarrassed
- Frustrated

### Behaviours (what does or doesn't do):

- Doesn't ask for help
- Doesn't do the work/looks for distraction
- Tries to do it and gets it wrong.



# The vicious cycle



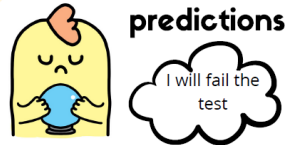
# Where could anxiety come from?

## “One part genes and two parts experience”

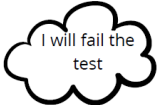
- **Genetics:** Explains roughly one third of general anxiety. Psychological **characteristics are inherited** e.g. how easily your body reacts to threat (just like physical characteristics)
- **Environment:**
  - Adverse experiences: Stressful life events can heighten pre-existing fears and worries OR seem to be where the child's fears and worries began
  - Learning by example: Watching those around them to understand how they should respond to information when it is their turn for the experience
  - Learning from others' reactions: the way others respond when the child appears anxious
  - Coping experiences : is the child always given the opportunity to see what happens?



# Helpful Strategies



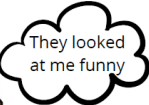
## predictions



I make negative predictions about what might happen in the future even though I have no way of knowing this.



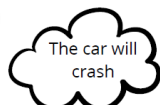
## judgements



I make judgements about things even though there is no evidence or facts to back this up.



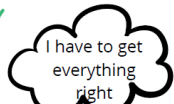
## catastrophising



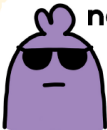
I always think that the worst thing or that something really bad is going to happen.



## perfectionist



I put a lot of pressure on myself to do well and set unrealistically high expectations for myself.



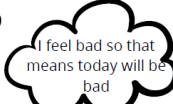
## negative glasses



When I have my negative glasses on, I only see the bad things and don't notice any of the good things.



## feelings

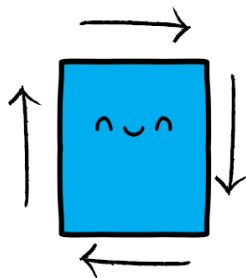


If I notice negative feelings in myself or by body, I automatically think that it means something bad is happening.



## Square Breathing

- Imagine you're drawing a square with your finger in the air.
- Breath in while counting 1, 2, 3, 4 as you draw the top line and then pause.
- Breath out while counting 1, 2, 3, 4 as you draw the line down the side and then pause.
- Breath in while counting 1, 2, 3, 4 as you draw the bottom line and then pause.
- Breath out while counting 1, 2, 3, 4 as you draw the line up the side to make the square.



## Finger Breathing



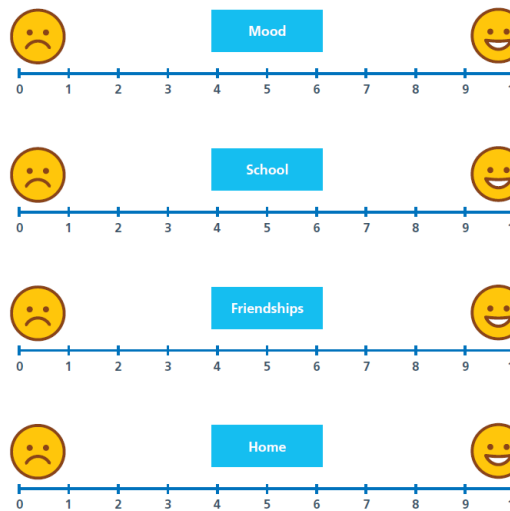
- Use your index finger to trace around the edges of the fingers on your opposite hand.
- Count 1, 2, 3, 4 and breath in as you go up the first finger.
- Count 1, 2, 3, 4 and breath out as you go down the finger.
- Repeat until you have traced up and down all five fingers, breathing 1, 2, 3, 4 in and 1, 2, 3, 4 out each time.

## HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?



## How am I feeling today?

Out of 10 (10 being very happy and 0 being not happy at all) rate your mood and how you are feeling about school/college, friendships and home.

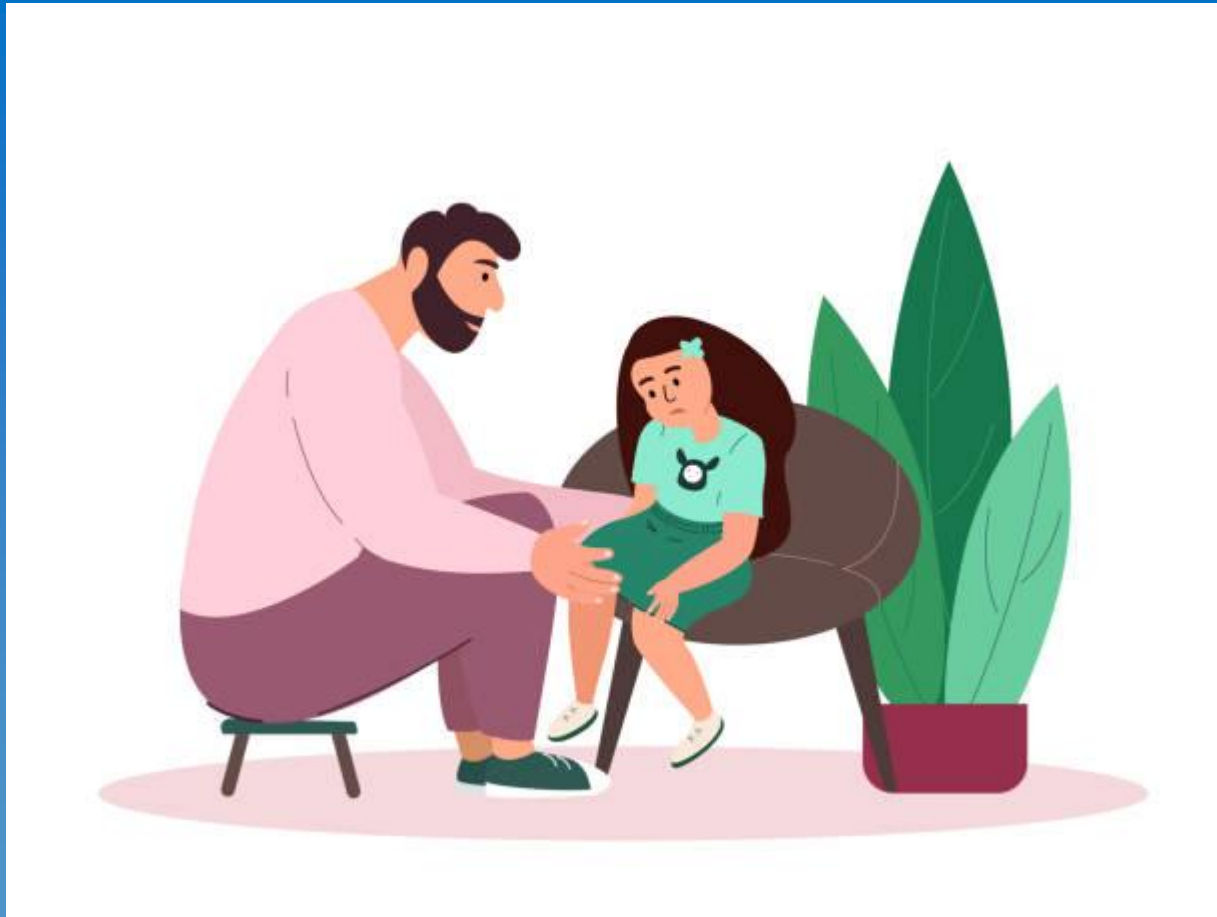




# Supporting your child with their emotional wellbeing:



Evidence demonstrates that by spending quality time together and talking even if it's just for a little while, you can help your child take their mind off their worries by having fun, relaxing and laughing. Activities like playing a sport, drawing or playing music and dancing are great for focusing the mind on the moment.



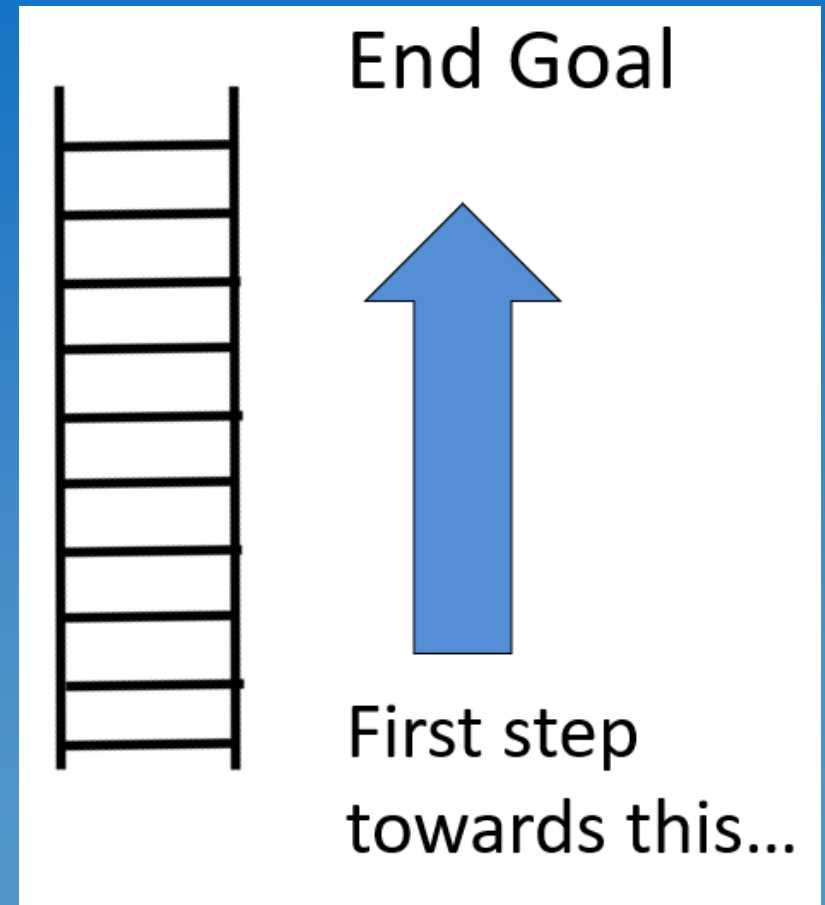
## Some helpful responses:

- Being curious - asking questions (instead of reassurance/giving answers)
- Normalising and validating their feelings
- Making suggestions
- Checking your understanding
- Labelling emotions

## Strategy: Step by step approach

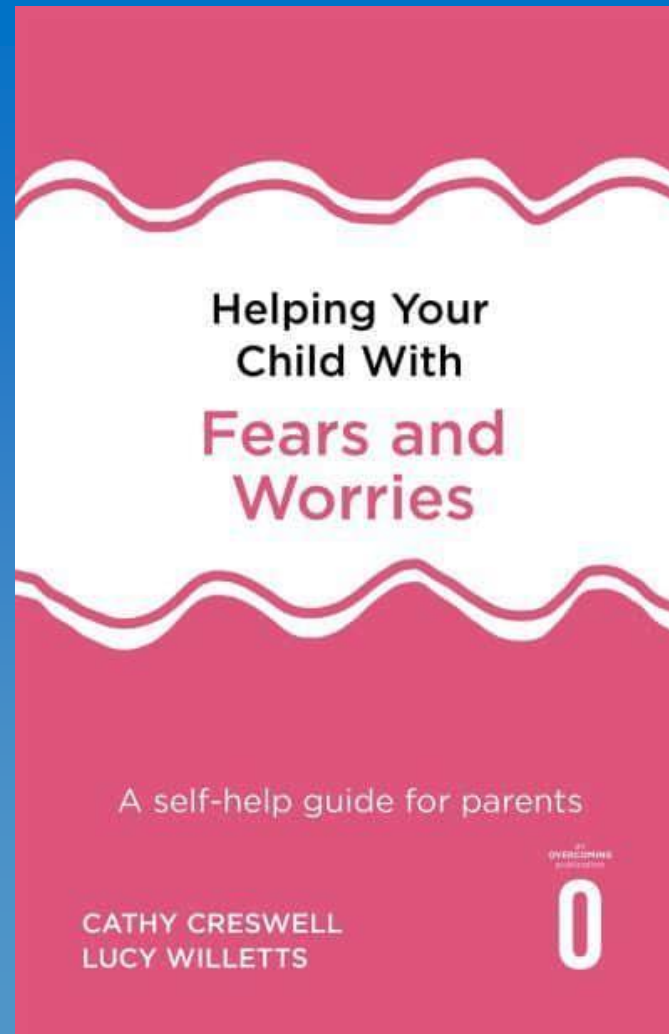
When someone is clearly feeling anxious, often the response from people around them is to try their best to make sure the person doesn't become more distressed.

A step by step approach helps with gradual exposure to a feared situation – working towards an “ultimate” goal



## An example

Step	Anxiety rating 0-10
Practice asking the teacher a question when nobody else is in the room	3/10
Answer a pre-planned question asked by the teacher during a lesson	5/10
Ask the teacher a question in a small group task	6/10
Answer an unplanned question asked by the teacher in a small group task	7/10
Answer an unplanned question asked by the teacher in front of the whole class	9/10



**Any questions?**