

Let's Talk About... ANXIETY

FEELING ANXIOUS? YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Everyone feels worried sometimes—it's completely normal. However, when anxiety starts getting in the way of enjoying school, friends or fun stuff, it's helpful to understand what's going on and how to manage it.

WHY DO WE FEEL ANXIOUS?

Our brain has a 'safety alarm'—it's called a trauma response. It's there to protect us from danger. But sometimes, it goes off even when we're safe—like before a test, walking into a busy room or trying something new.

WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR BODY?

Everyone feels anxiety in different ways. You might notice:

- A racing heart
- Fast breathing
- Sweaty hands
- Feeling sick
- Dizziness or fuzzy head

These feelings can be scary if you don't know what they mean but they're just your body's way of trying to protect you—and you can train your brain to know when it's okay to calm down.

WHAT CAN HELP?

Finger Breathing

Hold up one hand like a star.

Use the other hand to slowly trace each finger.

- Breathe in through your nose as you trace up
- Breathe out through your mouth as you trace down

Keep going until your body feels calmer.

Thoughts on Trial

Is your brain saying something unkind like "I can't do this"?

Pause and ask:

- Is this 100% true?
- What would I say to a friend who felt this?
- Can I try a kinder thought instead?

Our Sense of Smell

Sometimes a familiar smell can help us feel safe.

For example, a spray of perfume from home on your sleeve can bring comfort when you're out and about or in school.

Know Your Team

Who can you talk to when things feel hard?

Make a list of people you trust at home and at school. Just knowing who's there for you can help you feel stronger.

Final Tip: Practise When You're Calm Too

These tools work best when you practise them often—not just when you feel anxious. Try one each day so your brain gets used to it. Keep this leaflet somewhere handy for when you need a reminder.

Muscle Relaxing

Tense a body part, then relax it.

Try clenching your fists, squeezing your shoulders or curling your toes—then relax.

Notice how your body feels softer and lighter.

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding

Use your senses to help calm your thoughts. To do this, go through this list and name:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can hear
- 3 things you can feel
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste



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