

Helping your child with fears and worries



What is anxiety?

- ❖ Anxiety is a normal emotion that everyone experiences.
- ❖ It is a physiological reaction that occurs in response to a perceived harmful event or threat to survival.
- ❖ A small amount of occasional anxiety in certain situations is normal and can actually be helpful.
- ❖ When anxiety becomes a problem with daily life.



What does anxiety look like in your child?



cdi You Talk,
We Listen
Croydon Drop In

 **Are you OK
Croydon?**

OFF THE RECORD
CELEBRATING *25* years

Needing lots
of
reassurance

Angry outbursts

Becoming very
clingy

Asking lots
of
questions

Complaining
of headaches
or stomach
aches

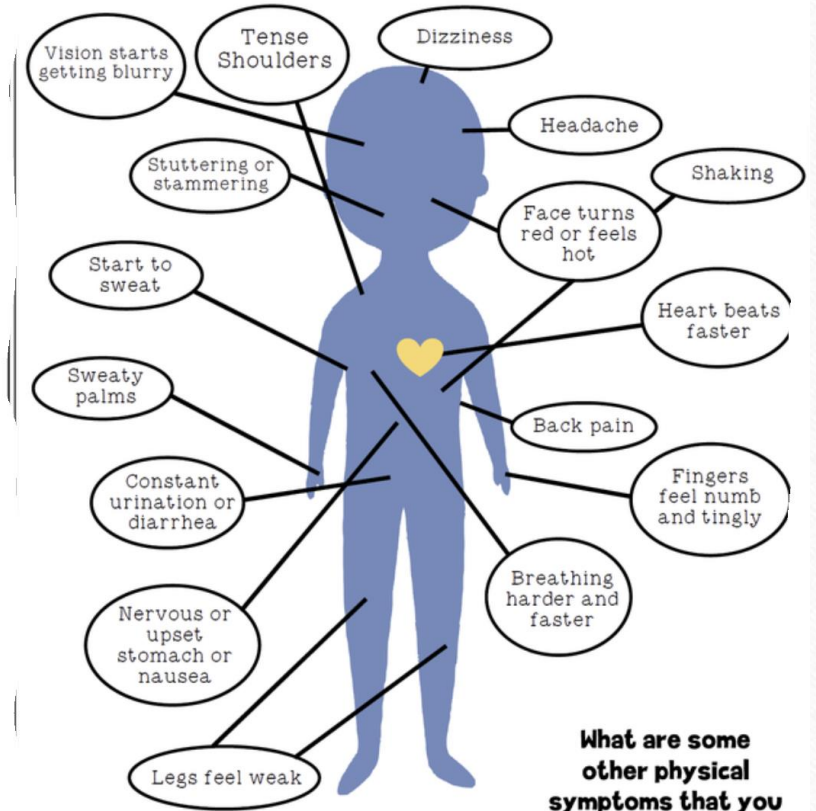
Reluctant to
engage in
activities
previously
enjoyed

Seeming quiet
and withdrawn



Anxiety and My Body

Color in the reactions that happen to your body when you start feeling anxious.

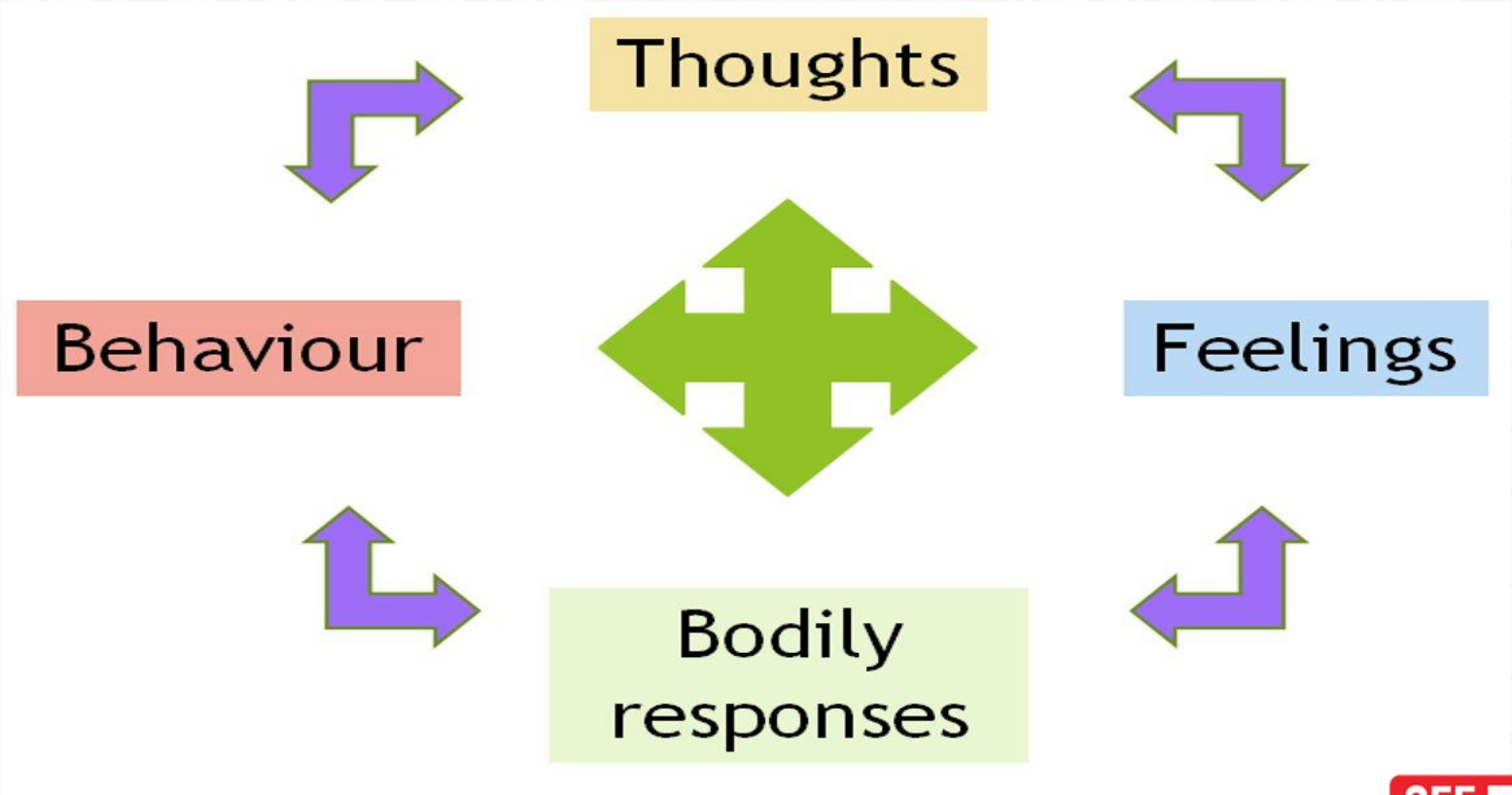


What are some other physical symptoms that you experience?

Fight, Flight or Freeze

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O_5M
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8do0Jiscgsk>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APvzoJtbGz4>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VQUOr-R3eA&t=7s>

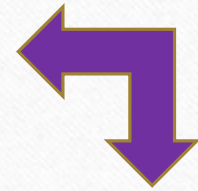
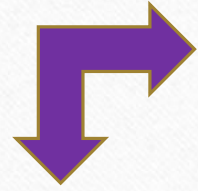




At school today Kadeem has to do a presentation.

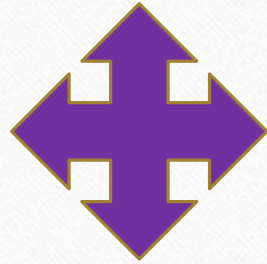
Anxious expectation

I won't be able to do it and everyone will think I am stupid.



Behaviour

Refuses to go to school



Feelings

Nervous
Scared



Physical response

Throat tightens
Feels shaky

Common parent responses to anxiety

Being drawn into giving too much reassurance

- Children can become reliant on reassurance and depend on adults saying what's ok to feel safe
 - Ask questions instead: try to help your child work out whether their worry is realistic or not for themselves.

Becoming over protective / colluding with avoidance

- Stepping in to protect children from all their fears means they never get the chance to learn they can cope and find out it's not as scary as they thought
 - Instead, notice and praise sensible or brave behaviour
 - Encourage them to face their fears in small, manageable steps

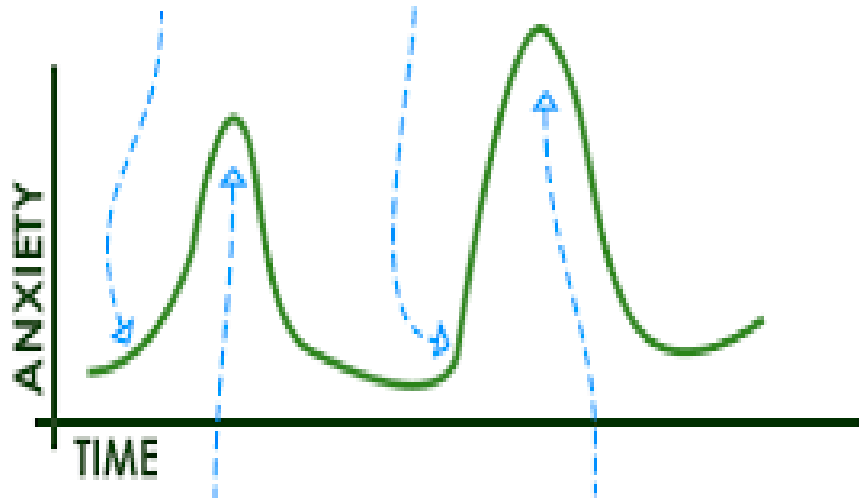
Building up brave behaviour

**BRAVE
STEPS**



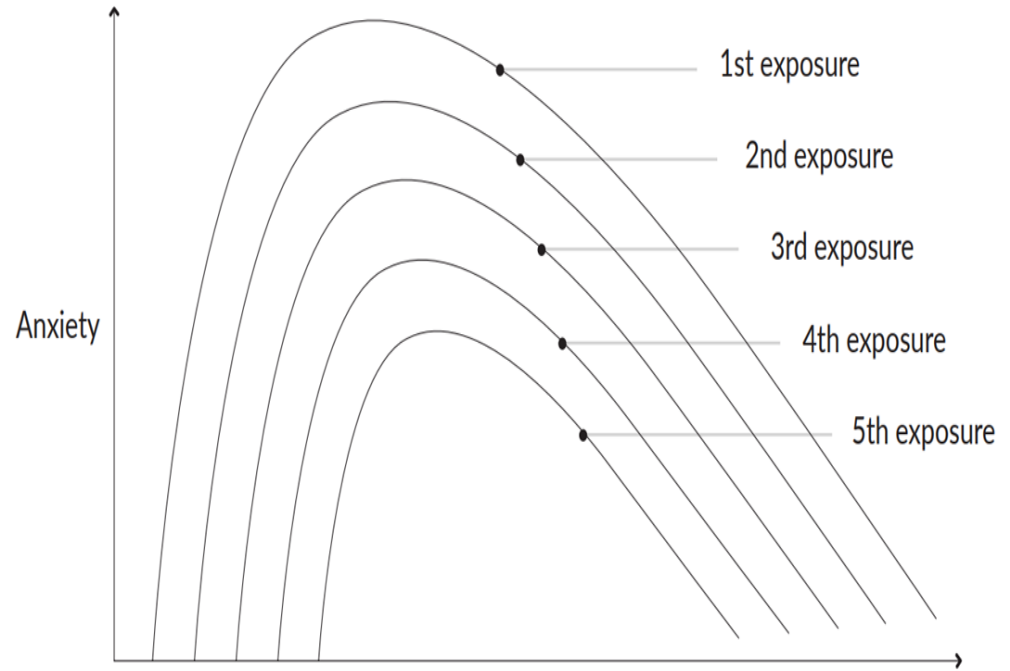
Are you **OK**
Croydon?

(A person is confronted with an anxiety-producing situation which leads to an uncomfortable sense of worry and agitation.)



(The anxiety-producing situation is avoided, and the person receives a feeling of relief. However, next time the anxiety will be worse.)

Overcoming avoidance by facing your fears



How to help your child build up brave behaviour

- Talk through the worry with your child
- Discuss different practical steps
- Make a list of the different steps, ideally with different difficulties
- Put the steps in order of difficulty
- Try out the steps that your child feels comfortable with aiming to build up to the ultimate goal

What currently helps your child when they are anxious?



The
**WORRY
TREE**



Breathing technique



Grounding technique

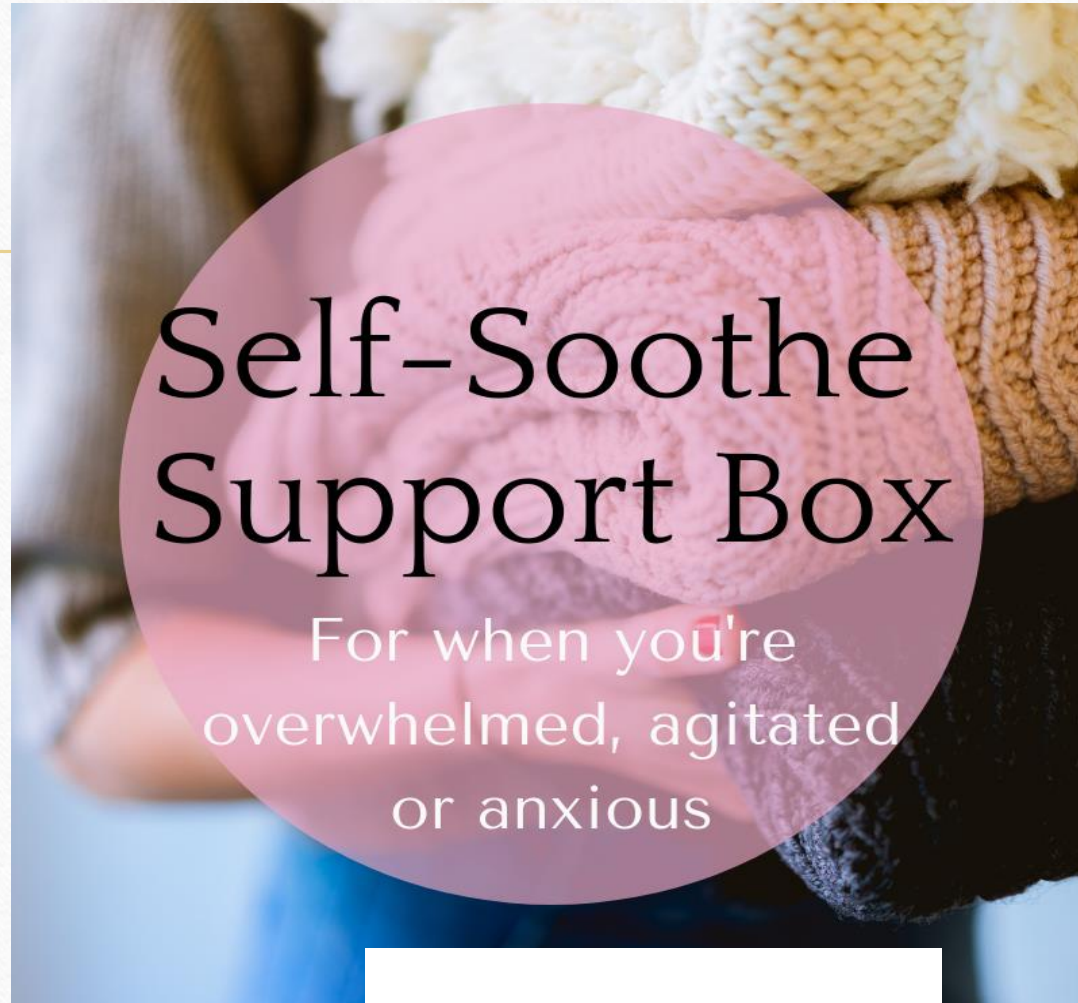
Simple grounding exercise:

- 5 Things you see
- 4 Things you feel
- 3 Things you hear
- 2 Things you smell
- 1 Thing you taste

Grounding helps with anxiety, anger, and focus.



Self-soothe box



Self-Soothe Support Box

For when you're
overwhelmed, agitated
or anxious



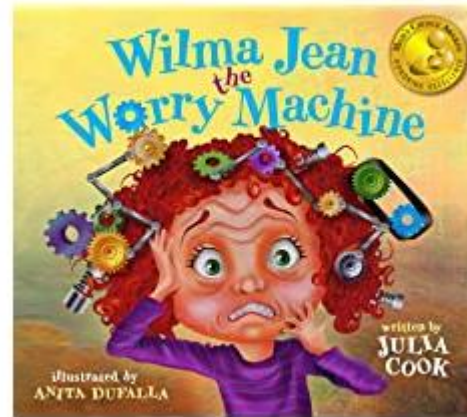
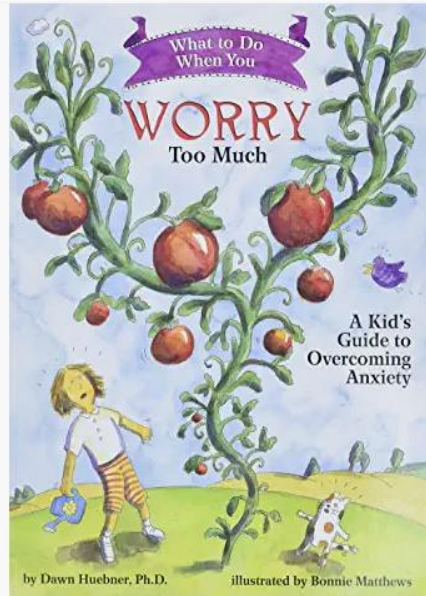
Set aside 'worry time'

This could be 15 minutes a day for your child to talk to you about anything that's on their mind.



Hello, I am your little worry monster,
My name is Wesley
I am here to eat all your worries!
And keep them safe in me.

Suggestions for further resources/reading





For more support email MHST@croydondropin.org.uk