

Advice and Tips for Parents and Pupils

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Everyone experiences anxiety from time to time. Anxiety is a term used to describe the thoughts and feelings we get when we are frightened, worried or stressed. Feeling anxious causes the body to produce adrenaline, which leads to physical responses such as a dry mouth, a pounding heart, butterflies in the tummy, sweating, dizziness and tense muscles. Children and young people can feel anxious about different things at different ages.

WHY MIGHT I BE ANXIOUS?

Young people may worry about anything in their world at any point in time. For example, moving up to secondary school, overhearing arguing at home or falling out with friends. Many children and young people will experience anxiety and this is a normal part of growing up. However, anxiety can become a problem when it impacts on a child or young person's day-to-day life.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

This leaflet is designed with both pupils and parents in mind. It provides some information on warning signs of when a young person's anxiety may become unhelpful. There are a number of useful tips and practices to help young people understand and manage stress. Of course, Guidance Teachers are always available to help pupils in school, but there is also a list of other helpful websites and resources included.

Warning Signs



Although many of the below signs are common in adolescence, if a young person is suffering from a number of these on a regular basis there may be a cause for concern. Young people may:

- *lack the confidence to try new things/seem unable to face everyday challenges*
- *find it hard to concentrate*
- *have problems with sleeping or eating*
- *be prone to angry outbursts*
- *have negative thoughts going round and round their head/or keep thinking that bad things are going to happen*
- *start avoiding everyday activities, such as seeing friends, going out in public or attending school*

Useful links relating to anxiety for pupils:

Mind: <https://tinyurl.com/vstefk5>

SAMH: <https://tinyurl.com/t5eqee8>



Helpful Advice

Talk to someone you trust - sharing your anxiety is very helpful. Talk to a trusted friend or adult, such as parent, guidance teacher or Wellbeing Ambassador

Try breathing exercises - simple exercises can help to calm you down quickly

Take care of your mind! Take walks, play sport, take breaks and talk to your friends. It is important to create balance

Remember that anxiety is normal and is experienced by everyone

A full guide to anxiety and its management can be found on the SAMH website @

<https://tinyurl.com/qmcuf5x>

More information for parents and carers can be found on the Hands on Scotland website @

<https://www.handsonscotland.co.uk/anxiety>