

An illustration of three young men in school uniforms walking on a green path. The man on the left has dark hair and is wearing a black jacket with orange accents and a striped tie. The man in the middle has red hair and is wearing a grey suit with a striped tie. The man on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a black suit with a striped tie. They are all looking towards the right. The background is a stylized blue sky with white clouds and a green landscape.

Anxiety Parent Workshop

**West Hampshire Mental Health
Support Teams**

Emily Snushall and Kate Munday

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Agenda

1. Welcome
2. What is anxiety?
3. When & why does anxiety become a problem?
4. Anxiety disorders
5. Causes of anxiety
6. Maintenance of anxiety
7. How to help your child
8. Helpful resources



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Please Remember...



- Be kind to yourself
- Confidentiality - this is a safe space
- No question is a silly question
- We show respect to everyone
- Non-judgemental

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*What are you hoping
to take away from
today's workshop?*



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What is anxiety?

- A natural evolutionary response
 - Fight/Flight/Freeze
- Experienced by everyone
- It is meant to be helpful
- Causes cognitive, physical, emotional, and behavioural responses to anxiety-provoking stimuli



Common Symptoms

Physical

Headache
Tummy ache
Sweaty palms
Heart beating faster
Dry mouth
Feeling sick

Behavioural

Avoidance
Being quiet/withdrawn
Being more chatty
“Acting up”
Crying

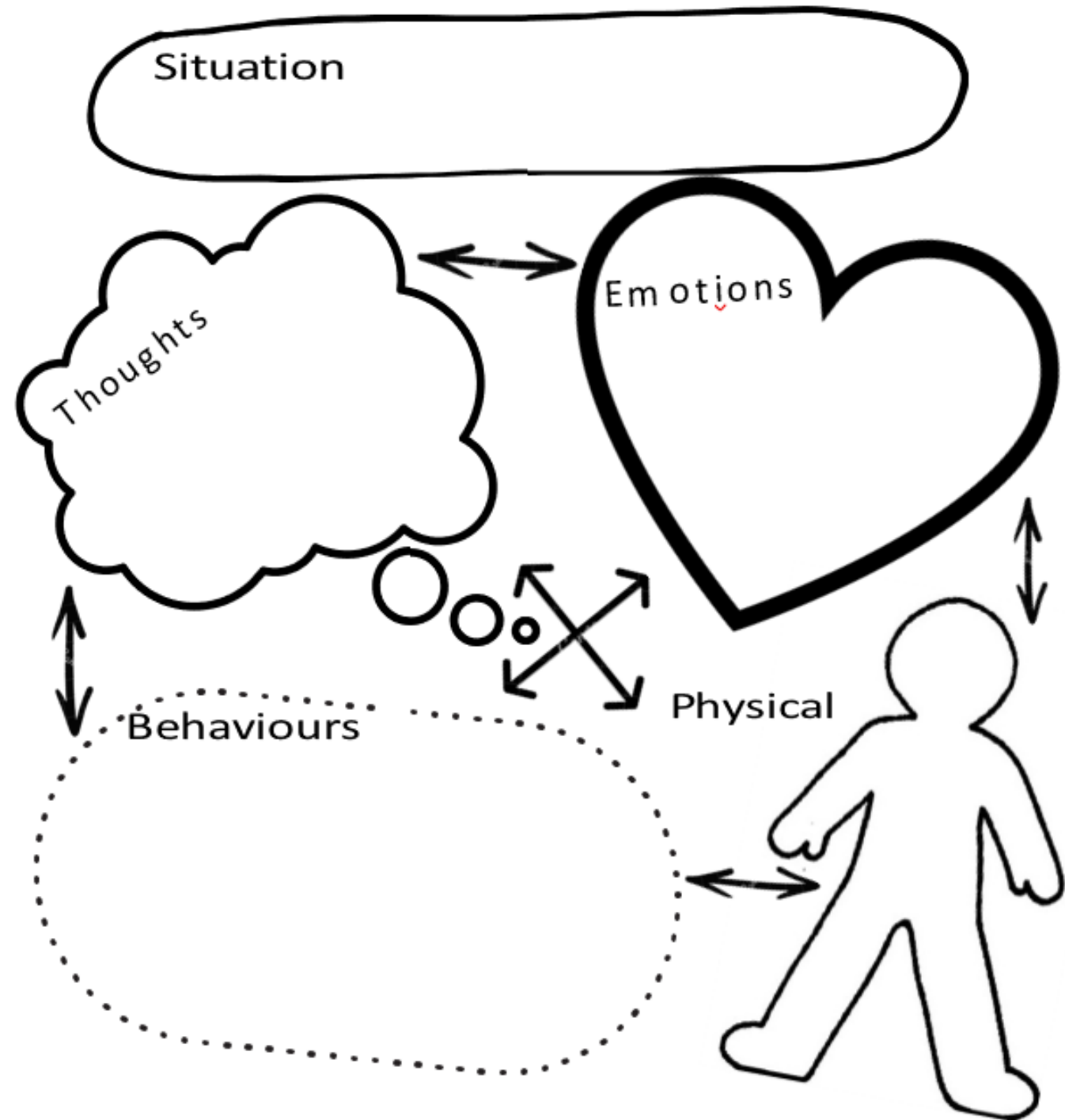
Emotional

Worried
Upset
Stressed
Angry
Numb
Confused

Cognitive

Worries or negative thoughts about the anxiety-provoking situation, about their ability to cope, or about other peoples' perceptions





If anxiety is so useful then why does it become a problem?

Why?

- The cognitive, physical, emotional, and behavioural responses to anxiety make the anxiety feel worse, and we feel unable to cope.
- Anxiety has not evolved as fast as the world around us.

When?

- When it is affecting daily functioning, and self-management has not helped
- When social life, school attainment, and overall wellbeing is being impacted



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Different Types of Anxiety

Anxiety doesn't come in one shape or form.

- People have individual differences or experiences
- There can be different or interacting causes
- Anxiety can vary in intensity or severity
- People may have different maintenance factors
- There are 7 main types of anxiety disorder...

Specific Phobia

Separation Anxiety

Panic Disorder

Social Anxiety

**Obsessive
Compulsive
Disorder (OCD)**

**Post Traumatic
Stress Disorder
(PTSD)**

**Generalised
Anxiety Disorder
(GAD)**



What makes a child vulnerable to anxiety?

- Life events or experiences
- Genes
- Learned behaviour
- Temporary circumstances

- Or a combination of these

What keeps the anxiety going?

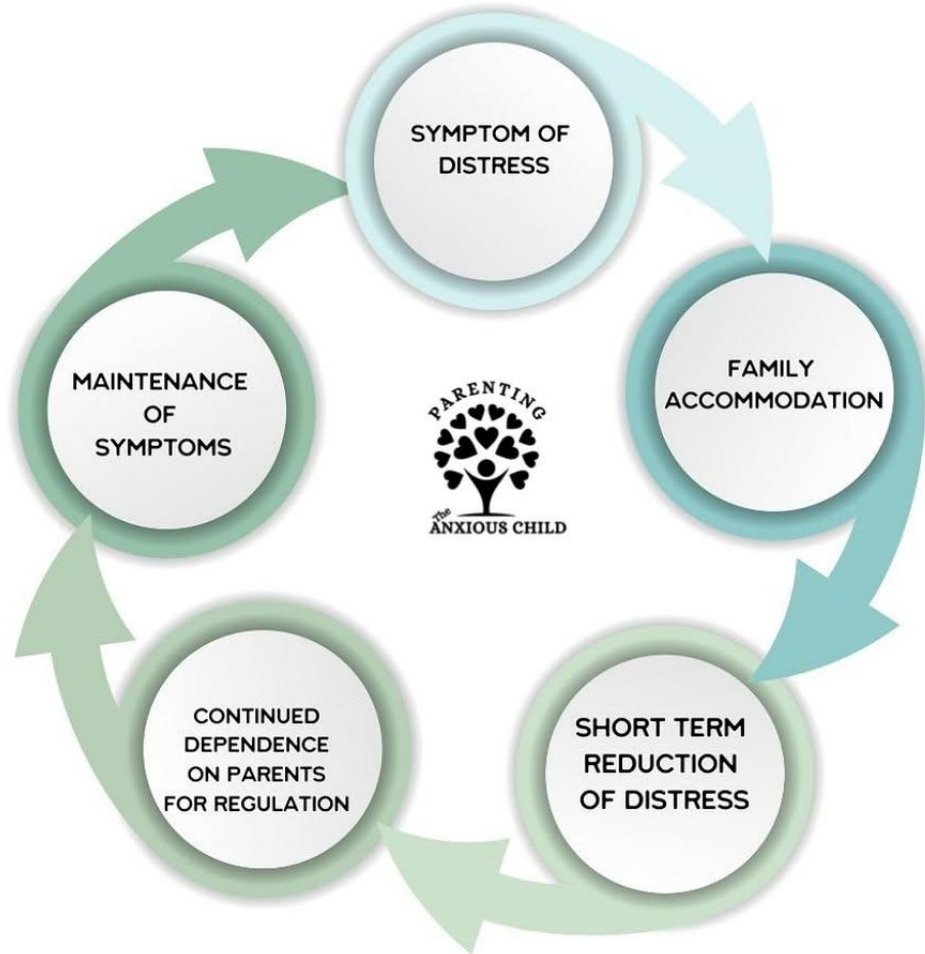
- Avoidance
- Safety behaviours
- Reassurance
- Missed opportunities for coping
- Other people's reactions / responses
- Lack of confidence – specifically in their ability to cope
- Lack of independence
- Worries becoming stuck



The Cycle of Avoidance



This is the anxiety accommodation cycle.





*How can I help
my child?*

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Educate Your Child

- Educating them about anxiety helps them to understand what is happening and why they feel that way
- Educating them lets them know that you understand
- Educating them about what you can do to help them overcome anxiety helps them to know what they can expect

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Monitor Your Responses

- Be curious about their worries
- Normalise and empathise
- Reduce the reassurance that you give to encourage independent thinking
- Be a role model

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Take Steps to Improve Confidence and Resilience

- Encourage independent behaviour
- Encourage them to try new or challenging things
- Use praise and rewards when they are brave or try new things
- Try to encourage brave behaviour instead of avoidance where possible

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Problem Solving

- We write down all the ways we can think of to help solve a worry
- Think about possible pros and cons to each idea – are they possible?
- Rate the ideas from best to worst
- Pick the best solution to try
- Plan how we can do this and what or who we may need to help us
- If this solution does not work, we can go back to your list and try another!





Even if you don't think your child is anxious now, you can begin using these strategies to prevent the onset of anxiety and promote their confidence and resilience.

Helpful Resources

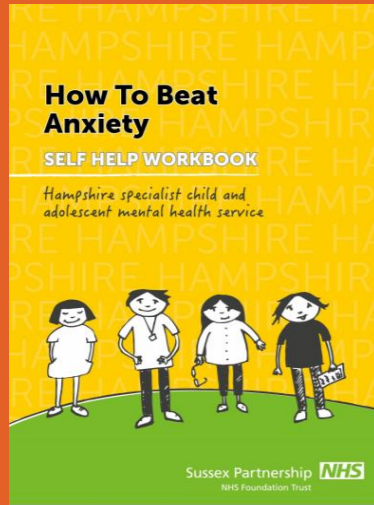
Apps:

Mindshift

Headspace

Self help for anxiety management (SAM)

Worry Box



Hampshire CAMHS How To Beat Anxiety Workbook – www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk

Books:

Helping Your Child with Fears and Worries by Cathy Cresswell and Lucy Willetts

What To Do When You Worry Too Much by Dawn Huebener



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If you need further help...

You can speak to your school's Mental Health Lead about a potential referral to the Mental Health Support Team.



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Questions...



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What will you take away from today's session?

Have we covered what you wanted to gain?

Is there anything that you will change as a result of your learning?

*Thank you
for listening*



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