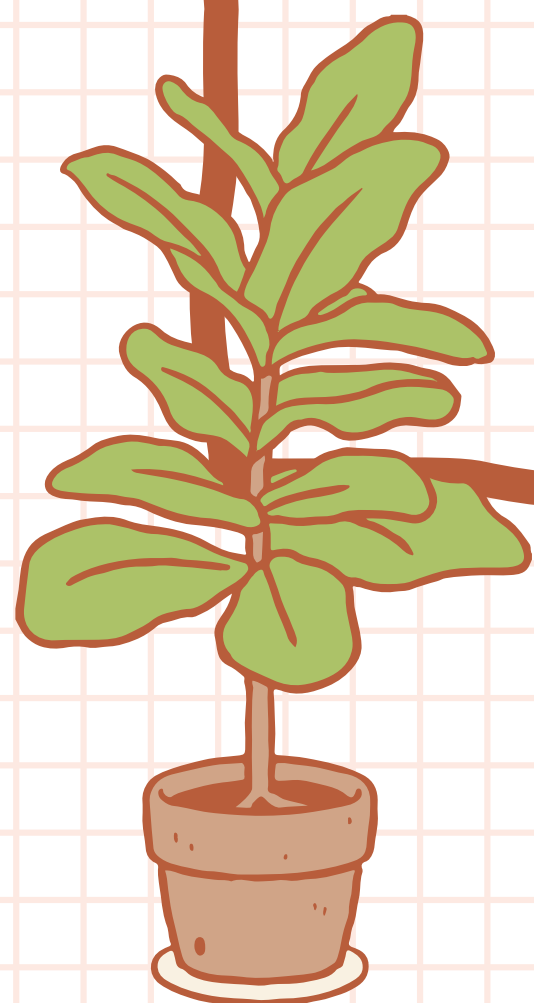
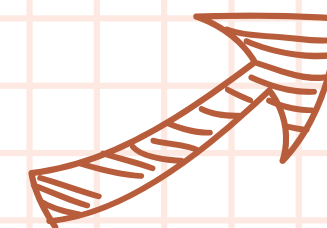


# HELPING YOUR CHILD RECOGNISE & MANAGE WORRIES



Hillingdon Mental Health  
Support Team



# WHO WE ARE



**I am a trainee Educational Mental Health Practitioner.**

**I am part of Hillingdon's Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and are responsible for delivering workshops and interventions around wellbeing and some common mental health difficulties at schools in the borough.**



**The MHST delivers interventions designed to help parents to support children with common childhood problems.**

**Sessions last for approx. 1 hour and are in person or online. The interventions involve our team working directly with parents.**

# PARENT-LED INTERVENTIONS

**Challenging Behaviour**

**Up to 7 sessions**

**Promoting positive relationships, attachment and pro-social behaviour through sensitive responding.**



**Child Anxiety**

**Up to 6 sessions**

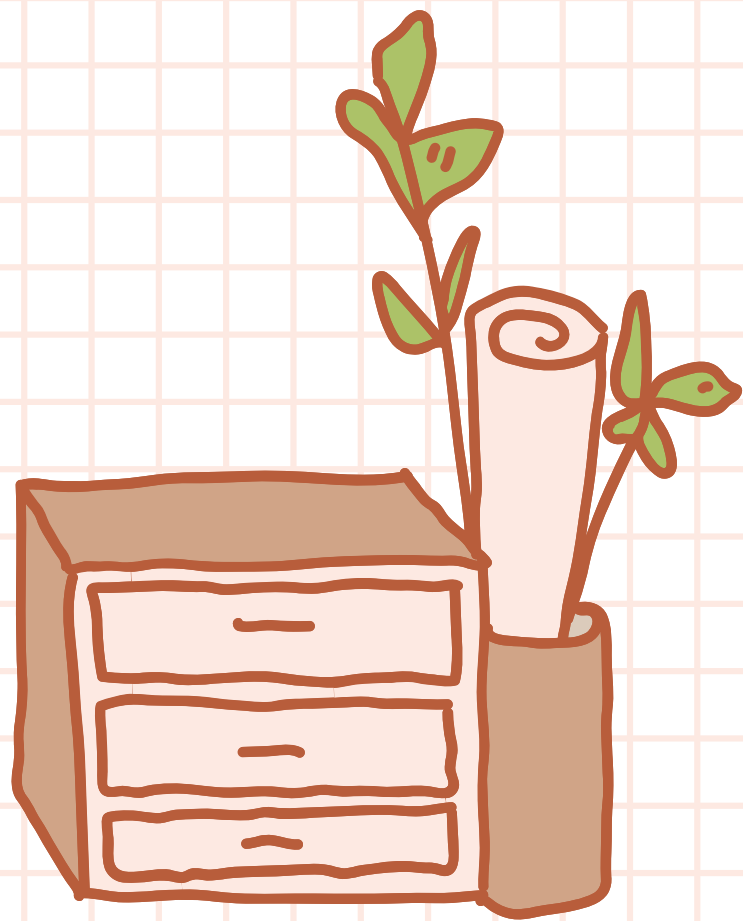
**Aiming to teach parents cognitive behavioural strategies and empowering them to use them with their child.**

# SESSION AIMS

What is anxiety?

What does worry and anxiety look like in young people?

What factors can maintain worries & anxiety in children?



# WHAT IS ANXIETY?

**Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as fear or worry and is the body's natural response to stress**

**Anxiety becomes a problem when it interferes with everyday life**



# FEARS AND WORRIES ARE A NORMAL PART OF DEVELOPMENT

Moore & Carr, 2000



<b>Age</b>	<b>Common fears and worries</b>
<b>0-6 months</b>	<b>Strong sensory stimuli (loud noises), loss of support</b>
<b>6-12 months</b>	<b>Strangers, separation from care givers</b>
<b>2-4 years</b>	<b>Imaginary creatures, potential burglars, the dark</b>
<b>5-7 years</b>	<b>Natural disasters, injury/illness/ death; animals, media-based fears</b>
<b>8-11 years</b>	<b>Poor academic and athletic performance</b>
<b>12-18 years</b>	<b>Peer rejection, world issues.</b>



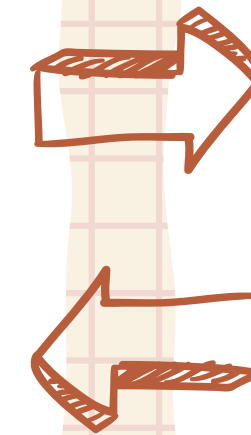
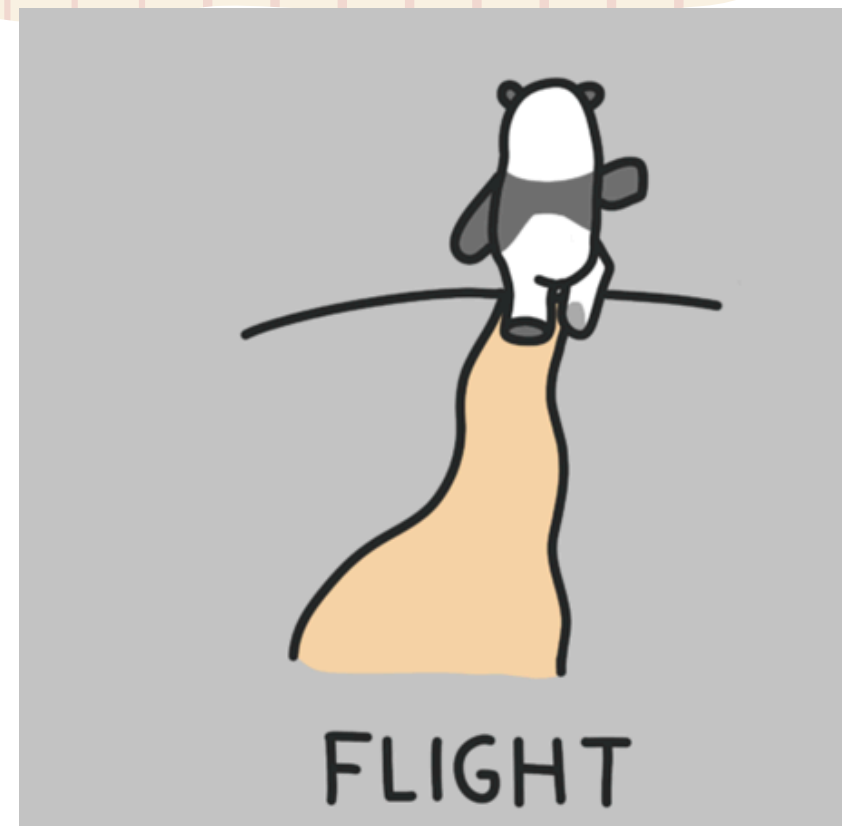
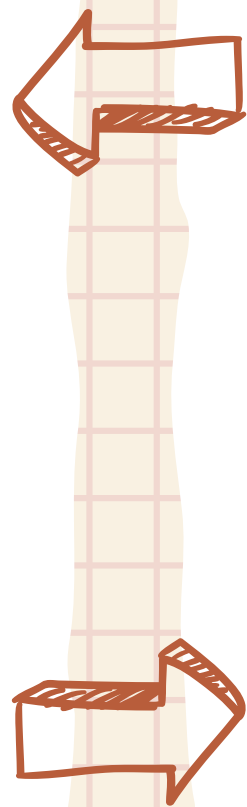
# FIGHT-FLIGHT-FREEZE



The fight-flight-freeze response is your body's response to any perceived stress.

This response keeps us safe (from an evolutionary perspective).

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O\\_5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O_5M)





# SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY



Worries and anxieties  
can affect us in many  
ways

**Behaviours**

**Body sensations**

**Feelings**

**Thoughts**



# HOW DO YOU SEE WORRIES & ANXIETY IN YOUR CHILDREN?

What are their thoughts and worries?

What emotions are they feeling?

How does the anxiety feel in their bodies?

How does their anxiety show in their behaviour?

What do they do?

What do they avoid doing?

# HOW WE CAN WORK OUT WHEN ANXIETY MAY BE A PROBLEM

**Things to  
consider:**

**Are the symptoms a 'normal' response to something happening in their lives (i.e: starting school)?**

**How strong is their worry? Is it becoming hard for them/you to manage?**

**Is the anxiety stopping them from doing what they want to/should be doing (social life, school, etc.)?**

**Is the anxiety stopping you (going out, working, etc.)?**

# HOW IS ANXIETY MAINTAINED?

While it can be helpful to understand your child's worries/anxieties, it is really important to understand what is keeping it going.

Think of a car that's stuck in the mud - now they are stuck, we need to figure out and sort what is stopping them moving on.

What might be keeping your child stuck?



# THINGS THAT CAN KEEP WORRIES GOING



## Children may:

- **avoid worrying situations**
- **seek frequent/constant reassurance**
- **Withdraw**

# AVOIDANCE & ANXIETY



**ANXIETY**  
Anxious thoughts  
or panic attacks create  
negative feelings  
and situations.



**AVOIDANCE**  
You start to avoid  
those negative  
situations or triggers.



**REINFORCEMENT**  
You've begun training  
your brain to avoid  
things that make  
you anxious.



**RELIEF**  
Canceling those plans  
you were anxious about  
brings immediate relief.



# THE IMPACT OF OTHER PEOPLE

**Sometimes other people can keep a child's anxiety going.**

**This may be unintentional - it is natural to want to protect your children.**

**How others can maintain anxiety:**

- **constantly asking the child if they are okay**
- **body language; stress, tone of voice, showing own anxiety?**
- **allowing avoidance**



**MANAGING  
WORRIES &  
ANXIETY  
CO-REGULATION**

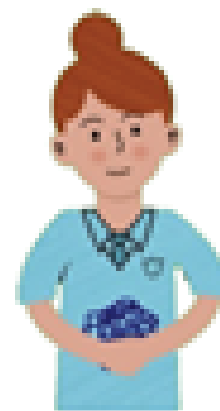
**Our children are always watching and learning from us!**

**When they are experiencing their own feelings of anxiety, we should try to model calm and coping behaviour.**

# MANAGING WORRIES & ANXIETY A FEW TIPS



## Positive self-talk



*Feel calmer and more confident*

Think of some negative thoughts you might sometimes have (e.g. "I can't do this!")

Think of three positive phrases you might try to use instead (e.g. "I can do it, I've done it before!")

Write these phrases down and reflect on when you might use them.

## Five senses



*Feel relaxed and more aware*

Take a deep breath. Look around. Try to notice:

five things you can see  
four things you can touch  
three things you can hear  
two things you can smell  
one thing you can taste.

## Thoughts in the sky

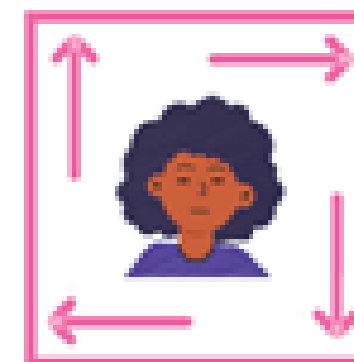


*Relax and let go of anxious thoughts*

Sit comfortably. Focus on breathing in and out.

As you breathe out, imagine any anxious thoughts floating away into the sky.

## Box breathing



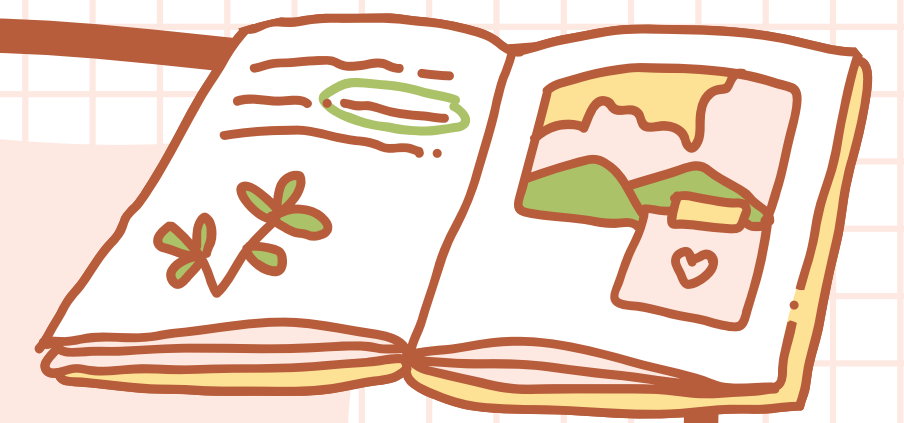
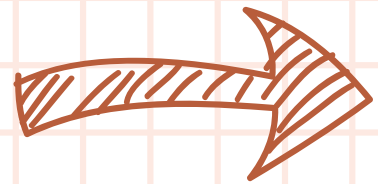
*Feel calmer and more relaxed*

Breathe in through your nose for 4 seconds.

Hold your breath for 4 more seconds. Feel the air fill your lungs.



**ANY QUESTIONS?**



**THANKYOU**

