

SOME HELPFUL PHRASES, TIPS AND EXERCISES

I love you, you are safe

This feeling will pass, let's get
comfortable until it does

Close your eyes and picture
something nice

I get scared/anxious/nervous too at times,
I know it's no fun

Remember when...
(recall something positive)

It may help to ask your child to rate their
anxiety from 1 - 10 (10 being very anxious),
ask them where they would like to be on
the scale, and ask them how you could help
them to get to that number.

Exercise can really help with anxiety.

Encourage your child to relax:
Ask your child to make all the muscles
in their bodies tense, then release them

Distraction sometimes helps - eg Name
5 things you can see; 4 things you can
feel/touch; 3 things you can hear;
2 things you can smell; 1 thing you can taste.

Breathe deeply and count to 10



WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

- Your Family Doctor
- Your Doctor may decide a referral to Child Psychology or Child and Adolescent Mental Health would be helpful
- Tusla Family Support Services 094 90 42510
- Foróige Youth and Family Support Services 096 22012
- Mindspace Mayo (Age 15-25 yrs) 094 9067001
- Family Resource Centres www.tusla.ie
- Your local library has useful resources

**Useful information can
be found here...**

www.tusla.ie/parenting-24-seven

www.mindspacemayo.ie

www.aware.ie

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

www.mayobewell.ie

www.cypsc.ie



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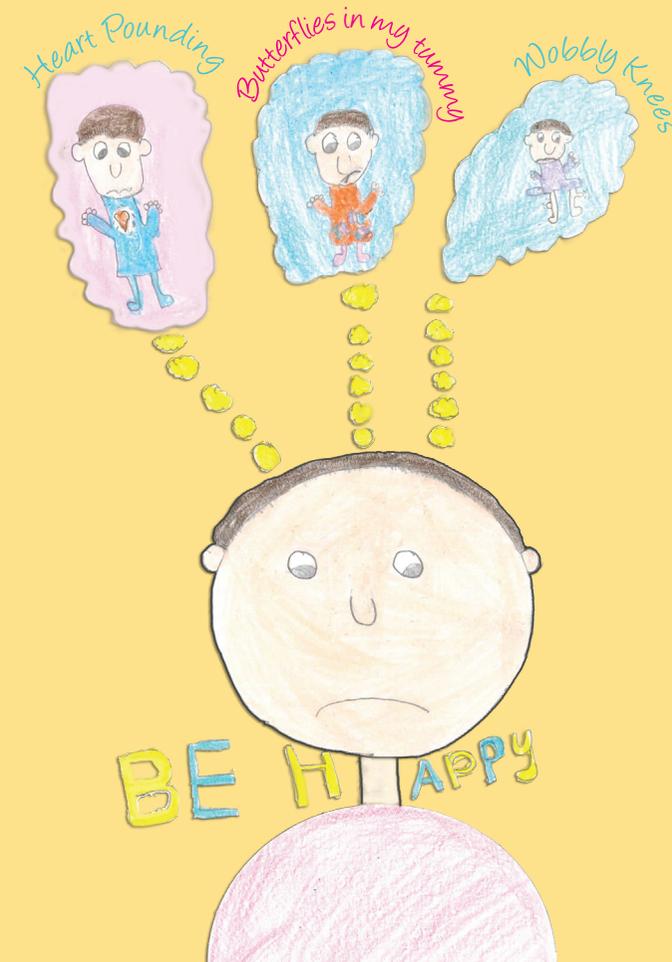
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TUSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Supporting Families in Mayo

IS YOUR CHILD ANXIOUS?



Understanding Anxiety in your Child

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is the body's way of responding to danger. Adrenaline is rushed into the blood-stream to enable us to run away or fight (fight or flight response). This can happen whether the danger is real or not. It is the body's way of dealing with threat and it can be useful at times. Anxiety becomes a problem when this response is triggered, when it is not needed.

Anxiety related to an event, which happens from time to time is quite different to ongoing chronic anxiety.

Children and Adults who get anxious tend to go into scanning mode-that is, constantly on the lookout for danger, which keeps the anxious feelings alive in our body.

It is important to know that this is a common problem. Be patient with your child. If anxiety is accompanied by changes in appetite and/or in your child's mood and is affecting their lives, talk to a professional to share your concerns.



excited



COMMON BEHAVIOURS ASSOCIATED WITH ANXIETY

Behaviours people engage in, to help them cope with Anxiety are varied, here are some examples;

- Avoiding people or places
- Only able to go out in the company of specific people
- Fidgeting with clothes/items
- Avoiding eye contact
- Having an escape plan
- Complaining about illnesses to avoid situations
- Taking medication
- Spending a lot of time on phone/ screen time to escape.
- Smoking/ Alcohol/Drug Use

It is important for parents to check with teachers to see if the anxious behaviours are happening in school as well. Try to remember that our children observe how we behave, so keep an eye on your own anxiety levels and try to remain calm around your child.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

It's important to acknowledge that these feelings are real for your child. Listen to what they are saying and remember that it is very important for your child that you remain calm. Children and young people can also get anxious about being anxious.

As a parent, you need to provide space and time for your child to express how they are feeling.

Face time is better than screen time. Talking to your child in a calm and understanding way is much better than a child or young person seeking support through a screen. Be there for your child. Notice your own time spent on screens too.

CYCLE OF ANXIETY:

- Thought - 'something bad will happen and I won't be able to cope'
- Feeling - Anxious, heart racing, rapid breathing, shakey, light-headed, sweaty
- Behaviour - avoid situation or escape

