



HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD THROUGH ANXIETY

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COURSE AIMS

- 1 To understand what anxiety is.
- 2 To know what happens to the brain and the body.
- 3 To understand some strategies we can use to support our children at home.



DEFINING ANXIETY

Activity:
What is anxiety?

Challenge:
When do we (as adults) have feelings of anxiety, worry or fear?



DEFINING ANXIETY

- An 'uncontrollable' worry or fear.
- Ongoing
- Prevents the someone living how they would choose
- It can appear irrational
- Affects 10% of children



DEFINING ANXIETY

Over-estimate:

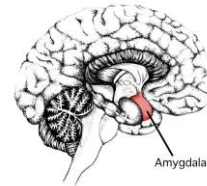
- the level of the perceived threat/ fear

Under-estimate:

- the ability to cope



HOW OUR BRAINS WORK



Amygdala

Survival brain state



HOW OUR BRAINS WORK



Fight - shouting, hitting, pushing, saying 'no'

ANGER response

Flight - running away, hiding, shutting down, not talking

ANXIETY response

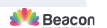


***Freeze**

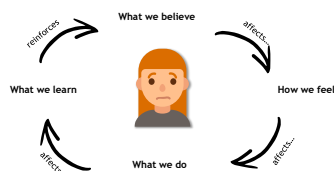


SIGNS OF ANXIETY

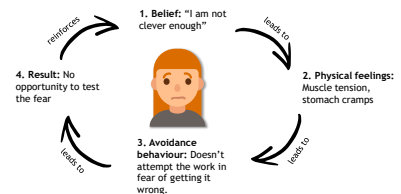
Crying	Clingy	Tummy aches/ feeling sick
Constantly worrying/ negative thoughts	Lack of concentration	Lack of sleep
Not eating properly	Fidgety/ restless	Using the toilet often



VICIOUS CYCLE



VICIOUS CYCLE



QUICK ACTIVITY

What **re-occurring** situation might be at the heart of a child's anxiety?

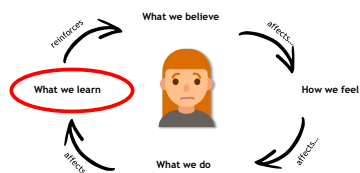


RE-OCCURRING SITUATIONS

- Separation anxiety
- School-related
- Performance
- Social anxiety
- Change and uncertainty
- Sensory overload
- Health and safety worries



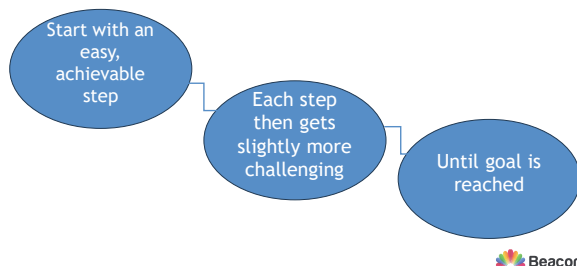
WHAT CAN WE DO?



STRATEGY: STEPPING STONES



STEPPING STONES

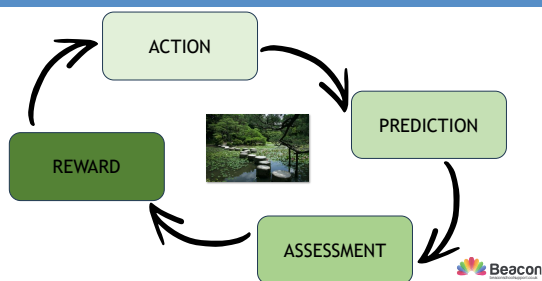


DESIGNING STEPPING STONES

- Start with an **achievable end goal** in mind
- Write down lots of ideas together that **build up to that goal** (preferably ideas come from the child)
- Then **sort** them from **easy to difficult**
- Give older children **more input** and control over the process

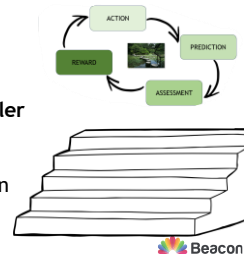


STEPPING STONES - 4 STEPS



WORKING THROUGH STEPPING STONES

- Repeat the same stone to gain confidence
- Break stepping stones into smaller stones
- Each stone is **proof** the child can manage their fears



SUPPORT: STAY CALM YOURSELF

- Model
- Tone of voice
- Body language
- Plan ahead



SUPPORT: REASSURANCE

- Use simple supportive phrases such as 'You've got this', or 'I know you can do it'
- Non verbal reassurance



SUPPORT: MINDFULNESS

Intentionally paying attention in the present moment

↓

Distraction - reduces the stress reaction

↓

Enables clarity of thought



SUPPORT: MINDFULNESS

- Starfish breathing
- Belly breathing
- Pay attention to only the things around you that are **green**
- 5 senses grounding tool - 5 see, 4 feel, 3 hear, 2 smell, 1 taste



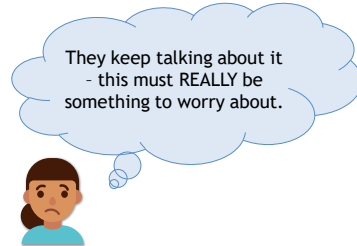
5 THINGS NOT TO SAY



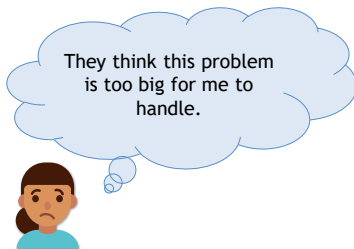
What **NOT** to say
and do when
supporting
someone who is
anxious



1. AVOID GIVING EXCESSIVE REASSURANCE



2. AVOID SAVING OR RESCUING



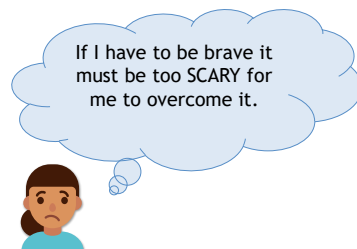
3. AVOID THREATENING CONSEQUENCES



4. AVOID FOCUSING ON THE NEGATIVES



5. AVOID PRAISING BEING BRAVE



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THANK YOU!



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