



How to help the  
worrying child and  
build emotional  
resilience



# The plan

- The scale of the problem
- Whose at risk
- How to help
- Understanding body clues
- Different strategies
- What to say to your child
- Questions?



# You are not alone

- 10% children 5-15 years suffer from a **significant** mental illnesses.





# Whose at risk?





# The over-thinker

I STRESS ABOUT STRESS  
BEFORE THERE'S EVEN  
STRESS TO STRESS  
ABOUT!





# The perfectionist





# The glass half full person





# How to help

- Normalise the worrying. Tell your child everyone worries, its part of life.







# Body clues



- Help them to understand what is happening inside of their body.
- Tell them these signs are your body's way of telling you how you are feeling.
- Talk to children about being 'Thought Detectives' - catch thoughts / collect evidence and challenge thoughts 'in court'.

# + Cognitive Behavioral therapy





**THE THINK - FEEL - DO SEQUENCE**

WHY DID HE SAY THAT? IT'S BECAUSE HE'S TRYING TO WIND ME UP AGAIN! I WON'T STAND FOR IT!



GRRR.....





# Thinking traps

- Blowing things up
- Expecting things to be perfect
- Jumping to conclusions
- Negative glasses
- Personalising what happens
- Positives don't count
- Snowballing



# + Helpful/unhelpful thoughts



# + Unhelpful thoughts

- I am going to fail that exam
- I have no friends
- I am worried someone in my family will get ill
- I wish I was someone else
- I am not going to like this
- I remember I can't talk in front of the class
- Everything goes wrong because of me.





# Challenging unhelpful thoughts

- Ask your child is this way of thinking helpful?
- Is this really true?
- Are you exaggerating?
- How can you make this unhelpful thought into a helpful one?
- Are you forgetting the positives?
- Did you fail last time?



# Challenging Unhelpful Beliefs

by @inner\_drive | [www.innerdrive.co.uk](http://www.innerdrive.co.uk)



**Look for proof that  
the belief is true.**



**Is there any evidence that  
could change your mind?**



**Examine the logic  
of your belief.**



**Are you thinking in extremes?  
(i.e. 'always', 'must', 'every time')**

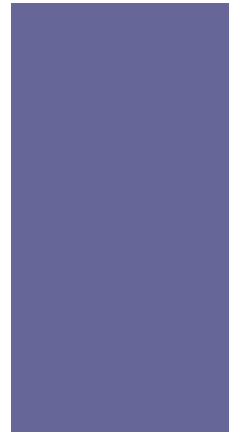


**Question whether that  
belief is helpful or not**





# strategies



There is no one fit.  
Need to experiment



# GIVE IT A NAME

- Bring the worry to life - give it a character, a name and then draw it (make it look silly).





# Top Tips

- Allow worry time for 15 minutes at the same time each day - as soon as it is scheduled many children find more interesting things to do.
- Avoid avoiding. Face fears rather than making changes to your life.



# + Milkshake breathing



- Get a plastic cup with a straw.
- Fill the cup 1/3rd full with water.  
Ensure child breathes in deeply through their nose and breathes out slowly through the straw. Encourage them to blow SMALL bubbles in the cup very gently.
- Have your child practice at least five times



# Tracing fingers

- Inhale through the nose and trace the outside of his thumb, then exhale through the mouth while tracing along the inside of the thumb. Inhale and trace the outside of his pointer finger, exhale while tracing the inside of his pointer finger...and so on and so forth until all of his fingers have been traced.





# Dingle Dangle Scarecrow Rhyme

Before putting on music, get them to lie on floor and make themselves feel really heavy, then lift up each limb in turn





# Make a worry box

- Kleeneze box, decorate it
- Write down worries put in box/ picture
- Everyday take out worries one by one
- Discuss them, problem solve.
- If still a worry go back into box
- If not rip it up and put it into a box





# Worry Dolls

- Guatemalan worry dolls were for children to tell their worries too. Children put them under their pillows at night and the doll, and their worries, were gone in the morning (removed by parents when they slept).







# Chunking

- Make a problem more manageable by breaking it down into smaller parts.
- Example; anxiety around dogs





**Step One** - Find an achievable 1st step, for example looking at a photo of a dog

**Step Two** - When the child is comfortable doing this, perhaps try looking at a toy dog

**Step Three** - Holding a toy dog

**Step Four** - Being in the same garden as a very small dog in a cage

**Step Five** - Moving closer to the cage

**Step Six** - Being in the same garden as a dog on a lead

**Step Seven** - Moving closer to the dog

**Step Eight** - Touching the dog for one second, etc, etc



# Other things that may work

- Getting active outside
- Hugging a friend
- Colouring
- Cloud watching
- Play with a pet
- Listening to music





# Books

Great way of getting to understand about emotional resilience.

I'm Worried. Wayland

Silly Billy. A Browne

Big Bag of worries

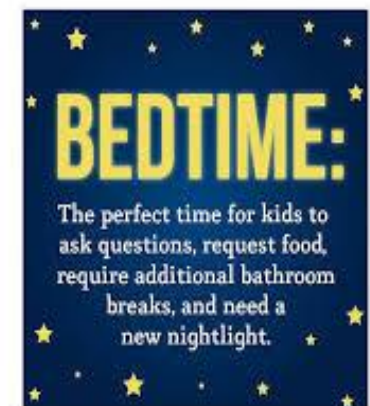
What to do when you worry too much. D Huebner

Have you filled a bucket today? C. Mc Cloud

# + Readdress the balance



- Wow Boards, evidence of being kind to yourself
- **At BEDTIME**
- The absence of prayers and confessions
- Introduce three good things that happened in the day or three things to be grateful for.
- Involve yourself in your child's world with a non-critical ear.





# Screens, linked to poor mental health

Not living for the moment

Can be divisive, feel like missing out.

Not accurate profiles

Continuous

Communication/connection





- Be a good role model
- Keep active and get outside
- Be thoughtful about it
- talk to them about what they are watching



# More advice

- Have screen-free time/areas at home
- Keep screen out of bedrooms
- And away from bedtime.







This can help a young person see if there is a pattern emerging and see there is a 'pinch point' in one part of the week

## Emotional diary

Write one good thing that has happened that day, something that has happened that makes you feel good, a compliment or particular achievement

How are you feeling today?

	HAPPY	SAD	SILLY	ANGRY	SICK	DISAPPOINTED	Frustrated	FULL OF PRIDE	Excited	Scared	SURPRISED	NERVOUS	WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE, WHEN
Mon.													
Tue.													
Wed.													
Thurs.													
Fri.													
Sat.													
Sun.													

[www.child-oh.com/wordguide.com](http://www.child-oh.com/wordguide.com)



# Model relaxation

- **Make a list of the things you can do to feel good and relax. When you notice yourself feeling stressed or worried, try out one of your strategies.**
- **Tell your child what you are doing to relax, and how much better you feel afterwards.**





# Role modeling

- Be honest about your feelings – you don't have to be perfect. We all get things wrong and shout or say unkind things from time to time. Say sorry to your child afterwards and explain why it happened.
- They will learn from you that it's OK to make mistakes and that it doesn't make you a bad person





# Look after Yourself

- Don't be too hard on yourself
- Don't assume they will replicate you.
- Recognise your limits, ask for help
- Take time out





# Be the Parent

- Own your own role
- Don't be afraid to take tough decisions.
- Don't be scared of their reaction. If you always give in to them, it can make them feel very powerful, which can be frightening. Children need to know that you are there to keep them safe.

## Picket Fence Parenting



[christianunschooling.com](http://christianunschooling.com)

Finding where to set boundaries.



# Resources

[www.anxiety.org.uk](http://www.anxiety.org.uk) Tel 08444 775 774

- [Minded website](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- There are two groups (term time only):
  - Tuesday 10am -12.30pm at 117 Newbridge Hill, Bath
  - Friday 9.30am -12.00pm at Keynsham Children's Centre Contact Ruby or Brenda on 01225 421686
- CAMhs



# ANXIETY GROUP

A friendly and informal group for  
13-18 year olds struggling with anxiety

This supportive environment will provide a chance to learn more about your anxiety and how to manage it

**If you are interested, please contact the office to arrange your initial appointment**

01225 330096

[office@focusbath.com](mailto:office@focusbath.com)

**Every other Wednesdays, 7:00 – 8:00 pm**  
**The Crypt at St. Michael's Church**

Led by two professional counsellors, we will meet every two weeks and explore more ways to understand and cope with anxiety. We hope that this safe space will offer a chance for you to support one another through your shared experience.

There is no charge to attend, but donations are welcome



# Questions?

