

# Support and advice from the Powys Early Help Team

## TOP TIPS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S AND YOUR ANXIETY



Anxiety affects not only our emotional state but also our daily life. COVID 19 is a huge strain on everyone's mental health and returning to school can be daunting for both the student and the parents. Know you are not alone and it is completely normal for these transitions to make you both feel anxious.

There are lots of practical tips and support available to help you below, however the most important thing is to reassure yourself and your child that anxiety is a normal reaction to a perceived threat.

**Understanding the symptoms of anxiety, it can manifest itself in a variety of ways and can be varying in severity. Some may get nausea, others may feel extremely tired/irritable or you may notice a change in behaviour such as avoiding places that are a cause of anxiety. Understanding how anxiety can manifest itself will help you be able to pick up if your child is feeling anxious and implement some coping strategies. To read more about symptoms of anxiety in children please visit [www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/anxiety-disorders-in-children/](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/anxiety-disorders-in-children/)**

### Top Ten Tips for coping with anxiety around school

1

Routine is key, Children thrive off routine, talk about it with your children ahead of making any huge changes, making sure to be consistent with their wake up times, morning routine before school and bedtime. Even get them to help plan what they're having in their pack lunch or after school snacks!

2

Try some self help activities, if you're feeling anxious yourself take 5 minutes to ground yourself. Focus on all your senses, find 3 things you can hear, 3 things you can smell, 3 things you can touch etc. or perhaps print off some of the 'unworry' mindfulness activities opposite by scanning the QR code.



3

Talking is key try reaching out to a friend or family member to talk about your own anxieties, or if your child is struggling with transitioning back into school please talk to their teacher or member of the pastoral team at the school, so they can support you to support your child

4

Spending time in nature is a proven way to reduce anxiety, if you can't be outside try listening to some calming nature sounds such as rain, or the ocean while getting ready for the day

5

For anxious children, plenty of detail can be calming. Talk through the steps of getting to their classroom: "And then we hang up our bag on our hook; we say hi to our friends; we find our seat...etc"

6

Help your child pack their bag the night before. A visual checklist can help them remember what they need to take. Lay out their clothes so everything's ready for the morning.

7

Allow some extra time to get ready on day one so you're not rushing to get ready in the mornings.

8

Talk about any worries, listen and empathise. Reassure your child and help them talk through their concerns. If they don't want to talk that's ok too. But where possible create safe environments for conversation perhaps while doing an activity together, colouring, baking or when out for a walk one to one. That way it will take the pressure off talking and allow conversation to come more easily.

9

Reinforce the positives behind why you are following through with actions. i.e. 'I'm sticking with the morning routine to create a sense of stability, to help calm my anxious child' even if you're feeling a bit anxious yourself reaffirming why you're doing these actions will really help you in following through.

10

Practice some calming breathing techniques together or some yoga. Not sure where to start check out this amazing yoga routine from Change4Life by scanning the QR code to the right.



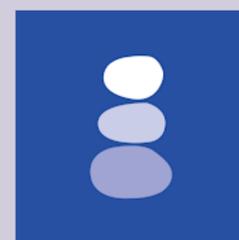
### Apps for to support your mental wellbeing



**What's up** is a fantastic free app utilising some of the best CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) and ACT (Acceptance Commitment Therapy) methods



**A soft murmur**  
Find the perfect mix of background noise to help you relax, study, work or sleep. A Soft Murmur is the perfect productivity app to help you wash away distractions, helping you feel calm and relaxed.



**Iona mind**  
guided mental health check-ins and smart journalling, Helps you manage difficult feelings by reflecting on your experiences &/ or enhance positive emotions



**Calm** is the perfect mindfulness app for beginners. Guided meditation sessions are available in lengths of 3, 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25 minutes so you can choose the perfect length to fit with your schedule, on a whole host of topics



**3 minute mindfulness**  
This is a timer that lets you focus on and beware of your own breathing which is a very basic technique of mindfulness meditation.



**Headspace** is your guide to mindfulness for your everyday life. Learn meditation and mindfulness skills and develop tools to help you focus, breathe, stay calm, and create balance in your life — whether you need stress relief or help to get restful sleep.

# SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOU

**SAMARITANS**

**Samaritans** on

116 123

or a chat function via the website  
[www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan](http://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan)



**Mind** 020 8215 2243

[www.mind.org.uk/about-us/contact-us](http://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/contact-us)

## **C.A.L.L. Mental Health Helpline for Wales**

Community Advice and Listening  
line 0800 123 737  
or visit their website to find  
support services in your area by  
using their agency search.  
[callhelpline.org.uk](http://callhelpline.org.uk)



If you want more tips to help you support your child with anxiety please read the parents guide to supporting your child with school anxiety and refusal by scanning the QR code to the left.

# SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUR CHILD

**childline**

Childline help for children and young people under 19 years with emotional support and advice

0800 11111

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

It is important for the child who is feeling anxious to have a teacher or person of trust in school who is aware of their anxieties, they will become their go to person when they are feeling on edge, this will help them to feel supported. Talk directly to your child's teacher or a member of the pastoral team

If your child has anxiety and self help isn't working you may wish to speak with your doctor, they can refer your child on to CAHMS. Powys CAMHS offers assessment and treatment for children and young people, up until their 18th birthday, who have or are thought to have mental health problems or emotional health difficulties.

# SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Early help team can also help if your child needs extra support but your not sure how to get it. You can contact the Family Information Service by emailing [fis@powys.gov.uk](mailto:fis@powys.gov.uk)

## SELF-SOOTHE BOXES/BAGS

**A self-soothe box of bag is a collection of items that help you feel calm, so when you or your child if feeling anxious you can go to get the box, then pic some items out. These items will bring reassurance and help pull them away from the anxious feelings.**

**Below are some ideas of different things that you could include:**

**Lavender-** Essential oils (please keep out of reach of children) or a lavender plant can offer lovely soothing and calming scents to aid relaxation.

**Fidget toys-** Sometimes keeping your hands busy can really help calm an anxious mind.

**Pictures of things that make you happy-** Whether its a family photo or a picture of a pet or something funny, pictures are a great way to take your mind away from anxious thoughts to memories or encourage you to smile/laugh (both of which have positive effects on anxiety)

**Items for self care-** whether this is some face masks, a couple of hot chocolate sachets or your child's favourite teddy this is a great go to when anxiety bubbles up.

**Magic painting-** this is just one idea which takes focus and listening to the brush strokes and water magically making the paint appear can be very therapeutic.

**Activity sheets-** Why not print some of our Unworry sheets using the QR code overleaf, keeping them handy will be a great distraction when you really need it.

**Quotes to remind you of inner strength-** having or reading a quote that resonated with you or your child can be a great thing to repeat over and over when you or you're child are feeling uneasy.

**Colouring books-** are a great way to focus and distract the mind from negative thoughts

**Yoga essentials-** put your yoga mat in! so it's ready when you need to let go physically on negative energies and thoughts.

**Bubbles-** are a great distraction for younger children, and concentrating on blowing bubble for a few minutes will also bring breathing back to a normal pace. This is especially good when feeling overwhelmed and breathing speeds up

**Other-** Your self-soothe bag or box can contain anything that cheers you up or puts a smile on your face, so put in whatever provides you and your child with those feel good vibes.

