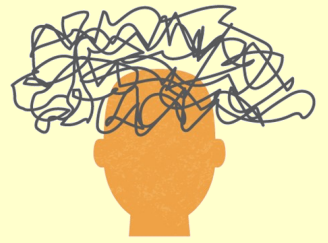


Feeling Worried



Feeling worried is a natural emotion. We all feel worried at times. Last week, we looked at two of the seven ways that the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families recommend for supporting our children to cope with their worries.

This week, we will look at strategy number 4 and 5.

Strategy 4: Introduce alternative perspectives and ways of thinking

What is a worry? A worry is a thought. It is not necessarily a fact. It could be purely someone's perception or opinion. Listen to your child's worry. What exactly are they concerned about? Try to understand what they are worried about and are their worries likely to happen. If they are, what would it mean if they did? Exploring alternative ways of looking at things, might help to put worries into perspective and in turn result in less anxiety-provoking conclusions.



Strategy 5: Reduce environmental stress



Our environment and surroundings can greatly contribute to our worries. Help your child to consider and recognise what makes anxiety worse. For example, constant exposure to stressful stimuli such as too much social media/news/screen time, family arguments/disharmony, eating or drinking things with caffeine/E-numbers/sugar, changes in their bodies, problems with peers, or the withdrawal of daily activities which may have previously provided support.

Try to keep to a routine, with activities throughout the day e.g. schoolwork, going to school, exercise, relaxing, keeping in touch with friends and sleep. However, do not add pressure if your child seems overwhelmed. Instead, emphasise the importance of self-care and being kind to themselves.

Over the next week, try and practice strategies 4 and 5. Try thinking about your own worries and whether they are fact or your perception/opinion of the situation. Try thinking about what would it mean to you if your worries happened? This insight will

help you to empathise with your child and help validate their feelings whilst helping them to deal with their worries pragmatically. Talk to your child about your own worries and how you deal with them and what works for you. Also, try to identify if there are any triggers to the anxiety i.e. what happened before the anxiety episode? Was there something that has happened in the past that might be contributing to the anxiety? Use the sentence starter 'I wonder if ... is making you feel worried. That is ok. Let's see if we can work this out together.'

Next week we will look at 'Problem Solving and Coping' and 'Check-in and Monitor Progress.' Until then, have a safe and happy weekend.



Working together to keep our children safe and happy.

Halina Rooney

Deputy Head of Inclusion/SENCo