

## What is Anxiety?

'Anxiety is a normal emotion that everyone feels at some point in their life. This is because of something in our brains called the Fight, Flight or Freeze response. It can be difficult to control and can impact our lives by making it difficult to do certain things.' (WeHeartCBT, 2025).

Video to explain anxiety: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O\\_5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O_5M)

## Tips for Supporting with Anxiety

- Talk to your child about how they are feeling. Use curious questioning to discover their thoughts, feelings and body sensations. For example:
  - What is worrying you?
  - What do you think might happen?
  - How does it feel in your body?
- Keep a note of behaviours that you notice in your child to help you to spot patterns as to what they could be worried about.
- Create a worry box/monster with your child so that they can draw their worry and place it in the box/ give it to the monster to let go of it.
- Problem solve with your child: Identify the problem together, talk about as many possible solutions as you can think of, choose one to try, if it doesn't work go back and choose a different solution together. This will help your child to develop their problem-solving skills.
- Encourage your child to be brave and have a go!
- If the action feels too challenging straight away, break it down into small steps to work towards the end goal of facing your fear/worry. You could create a ladder of small steps to work towards your goal. You could start by doing a new step on the ladder together and only move up once your child has completed it on their own. <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Worry-ladder.pdf>
- You could reward your child for their brave behaviour and trying to complete each step. For example, your child chooses a game to play with you or a special movie to watch.
- Notice and encourage your child when they are showing brave behaviour. This could be a smile, high five or thumbs up.



## Books and Videos to Support EYFS and KS1 with Anxiety

### Books:



The Huge Bag of Worries – By Virginia Ironside

The Worrysaurus – By Rachel Bright

The Invisible String – By Patricia Karst

Helping Your Child With Fears and Worries: A Self-Help Guide for Parents – By Cathy Creswell and Lucy Willetts.

The Very Hungry Worry Monster – Lara Ede and Rosie Greening

A Little Bit Brave – By Nicola Kinnear

### Zen Den Videos:

The Owl and the Guard Dog

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=so8QN9an3t8&list=PL8snGkhBF7ngDp1oJtx5VciwatxZn8xLK&index=4>

Whirly Burly Snow Storm

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqQN4ugzi\\_g&list=PL8snGkhBF7ngDp1oJtx5VciwatxZn8xLK&index=27](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqQN4ugzi_g&list=PL8snGkhBF7ngDp1oJtx5VciwatxZn8xLK&index=27)

The Bye Bye Boat

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0kaS7jny\\_I&list=PL8snGkhBF7ngDp1oJtx5VciwatxZn8xLK&index=17](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0kaS7jny_I&list=PL8snGkhBF7ngDp1oJtx5VciwatxZn8xLK&index=17)

How to beat nerves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJNOsvTnR1k&list=PL8snGkhBF7ngDp1oJtx5VciwatxZn8xLK&index=19>

## Breathing and Calming Techniques

Practice these techniques with your child when they are calm so that they can use the technique when they are feeling worried.

- Finger breathing – take 5 slow breaths as you trace up and down each finger. Breathe in as you trace up your finger and breathe out as you trace down your finger.
- Room search – think of a category and search the room for it. For example, spot everything that is red or spot everything that is a circle.

## References

Creswell, C., & Willetts, L. (2019). *Helping your child with fears and worries: a self-help guide for parents*. Robinson.

Palphreyman, D. (2023, September 15). *Worry Ladder - Elsa Support*. Elsa Support. <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/worry-ladder/>

WeHeartCBT. (2024). *Anxiety: Young Person's Fact Sheet*. WeHeartCBT. <https://weheartcbt.com/anxiety>