

# Community Wellbeing Newsletter



Hungerford Primary Academy  
learn to love and love to learn

**Issue 2 Autumn 2021**

## Introduction

Welcome to this term's community Wellbeing Newsletter.

This term has been a challenging one for everyone as we all try and navigate our way through post-lockdown life. We are aware of how difficult that has been for some of our parents and carers as well as our children.

This edition of the newsletter includes:

- What is Anxiety?
- Mindfulness
- Conversations with your child
- Grounding techniques for children

As always we welcome any feedback or suggestions as to how we can offer further support for our families. Please email [admin@hungerfordacademy.org](mailto:admin@hungerfordacademy.org).



## Signpost to support

Bupa are committed to improving mental health and so now offer free information, advice and sources of support on subjects such as depression, anxiety, stress, addiction and OCD. Click on the image below to find their page with a wide range of topics featuring articles, tools and tips. And they're all free. There's also help with coping with grief, becoming a new parent, difficulty sleeping, and more, including mental health for teenagers and children.

Click on the image below to find out more



### **In-school support:**

Senior Family Support worker—Ms J Atkinson

Family Support Worker—Mrs M Carman

Principal—Mrs A Weaver

Vice Principal—Mrs A Bean

Vice Principal—Mrs C Blackburn

# Anxiety and Mindfulness



## What is Anxiety?

Feeling anxious is our bodies normal response to situations that can be worrying or stressful. When we feel under threat our bodies react by releasing certain hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol, which can be helpful. These hormones: make us feel more alert, so we can act faster and make our hearts beat faster, quickly sending blood to where it's needed most.

After we feel the threat has passed, our bodies release other hormones to help our muscles relax. This can sometimes cause us to shake.

Anxiety can become a mental health problem if it impacts your ability to live your life as fully as you want to. For example, it may be a problem if:

- your feelings of anxiety are very strong or last for a long time
- your fears or worries are out of proportion to the situation
- you avoid situations that might cause you to feel anxious
- your worries feel very distressing or are hard to control
- you find it hard to go about your everyday life or do things you enjoy.

### Thing we can do to reduce our anxieties:

1. Make time for your worries. If your worries feel overwhelming, try setting aside 'worry time' to go through your concerns each day. Try talking about them or writing them down.
2. Don't avoid difficult situations. This can keep anxiety going or make it worse, instead slowly build up time in worrying situations.
3. Make a list of worries. Separate them into 3 lists: Not important, Important and can be solved, Important and cannot be solved.



## Mindful Hand Awareness

The mindful hand awareness exercise is a really simple way to draw your attention away from your thoughts and into your physical awareness.

- Start by clenching your fists tightly for five seconds, and then release and notice how your hands feel.
- Try to attend to this feeling for as long as possible.
- Continue with the same technique, clenching, and if you feel like you want to do it for longer, you can.

Really focus on the feeling of your hands after you release them.

# Supporting your Child's Wellbeing

## Questions to ask your child



Conversations are key to building connections with our children; when they feel connected to their parent, or guardian, they are more likely to feel well and be cooperative. We all want to know about our children's thoughts, dreams and worries, and it is important for them to feel heard. However, this can be difficult when questions are met with shrugs, simple answers or simply silence. We have compiled a list of questions below that will support your child to open up and initiate conversation. Some questions are perfect for the end of the school day and others can be asked at any time. Give them a try and see if they help your child to express themselves and open up to you.

- If you drew everything that came into your head, what you be drawing right now?
- Who made you smile today?
- Who in your class is most likely to become a teachers, police officer, doctor, spy...etc?
- What is your favourite thing about being \_\_\_\_ years old?
- If you could design a t-shirt, what would you draw or write on it?
- How would you describe your perfect day?
- How do you think animals communicate?
- What was the easiest thing you did today?
- If you could live today again, what would you change/do differently?
- If you could be invisible for one day, what would you do?
- What would you do if you made the rules at home?



## 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Grounding



Try this simple grounding technique for when you rchild is feeling particularly anxious or stressed. It not only helps to refocus the mind but also regulate the breathing, supporting them to feel calm again.

Speaking calmly to your child, encourage them to do the following,

Think of 5 things you can see

Think of 4 things you can touch

Think of 3 things you can hear

Think of 2 things you can smell

Think of 1 thing you can taste