



KCC Wellbeing Newsletter

Article 24 (health and health services)
Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy.

Welcome to the KCC wellbeing newsletter. We are all having to adapt to a new way of living, working, learning and being. We want to make sure we can continue to support your wellbeing while we are not at school. So each week we will select a wellbeing focus with some tips for how to take care of yourself. You will find a Power Point on SMHW that will have more information to support each focus. This week we will look at anxiety; what it is, how we might express it and we will give some suggestions for how we can try to manage our own anxieties.

What is anxiety?

We all get anxious and worried - especially during times of uncertainty. Anxiety is a natural way of dealing with the dangers around us and can impact the way we feel both emotionally and physically.

We might find we are struggling to sleep, being teary, feeling overwhelmed, getting headaches, getting into arguments and just generally feeling stressed.

If you are feeling any of these you are 100 % not alone! Just like you, other people may be feeling anxious or worried at the moment about all the changes and uncertainty that have arisen as a result of the coronavirus. They may be worried about their loved ones, or worrying about falling ill themselves, they may be concerned about what they are missing at school and generally missing their friends and family and every day life. These are unusual times for everyone and we still have all the everyday concerns on top of it all. It is no wonder that we might feel anxious!

The science behind anxiety!

So here is a little bit of science...

When we are exposed to a threat our brain springs into action. Specifically a bit of your brain buried behind your ear called the amygdala. This is the bit in our brain that is in charge when we are frightened.



Right now for many people this bit of our brain is working overtime. People react in different ways. Maybe through physical signs, stomach upsets, headaches, insomnia, changes to eating, changes to the way we talk. We can become bad at making decisions, absorbing information and generally thinking rationally. So we can see these are 'normal' reactions. So what can we do to manage our 'anxious' thoughts and feelings. Lets take a look at some suggestions

Practical things you can do if you are feeling anxious or stressed

- Remove yourself from the stressful situation or avoid known triggers
- Breathe in deeply and slowly; in through your nose and out through your mouth
- Squeeze blu- tac or a stress ball
- Stretch out
- Try guided meditations – try the Headspace app
- Sit or lay down somewhere comfortable and listen to your favourite music
- Do so some exercise



Top tips Summary

- Stay connected
- Distract and relax
- Stay active, nourish your mind and body
- Change your focus



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How can we try to manage anxiety ?

Here are some tips that might help to manage these feelings which are a very normal reaction to these circumstances. Recognising that it is not only ok but normal to feel this way is very important. We can all take care of our well being and use the tools we have to manage our anxiety.

Stay connected

Phone calls and messages are a great way to stay connected. Keeping in touch with others can lift your mood and make you feel less lonely. You're probably not the only person feeling worried, bored or frustrated. It's a good time for a catch up, so don't be afraid to make the first move and reach out to someone you haven't heard from in a while. They'll probably be very grateful to hear from you. Send them a message and let them know you care.



Distract and relax

Introduce activities/times to help you relax and reduce any anxiety/worry. Is there something you've always wanted to do but have never had the time – a project, baking, art, running, a home workout, having a bath, baking, organising areas of your house, watching TV, DIY projects, anything that you enjoy and find pleasure in. Make time for mindfulness. Apps like Headspace have brilliant meditation and relaxation guidance.



Stay active, nourish your mind and body

Want your mind and body to feel peaceful and strong enough to handle life's ups and downs? Get the right amount of sleep for your needs – not too much or too little. Eat well: Choose fruit, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains for long-term energy (instead of the short bursts that come from too much sugar or caffeine). And exercise to send oxygen to every cell in the body so your brain and body can operate at its best. Exercise helps to manage anxiety and releases some of the anxious energy in the body.



Change your focus

When we fixate on dangers, anxiety grows, and when we turn our attention elsewhere, it shrinks. Pay attention to the good things. A great way to keep our minds off the worry track is to focus our thoughts on things that are good, and positive. Appreciate the small, everyday blessings. Allow yourself to dream, wish, and imagine the best that could happen.



Accessing support

Anxiety UK - 0844 475 774

www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Childline - 0800 1111 24 hours a day. Confidential advice for children and young people.

www.childline.org.uk

Relate - 0300 100 1234

Relationship support for all ages.

<https://www.relate.org.uk/>

Samaritans - 116. Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

YoungMinds - 0808 802 5544

9.30am - 4pm Monday to Friday.

Committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

www.youngminds.org.uk

Kooth- provider of online mental health services for children, young people and adults

<https://www.kooth.com/>

