

Identifying worry – Activities for your primary aged child

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARENTS / CARERS (duration: 30/40 mins)

Resources required:

- Pen and paper
- Internet access and a device to watch a video
- 'Where do I feel worry?' worksheet
- 'What does my worry look like?' worksheet

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WHAT WORRY FEELS LIKE



Explain that we need to have some level of worry to keep us safe

It's normal to worry about things. Worries can help us to make sensible choices and decisions. In this way, they help keep us safe and manage danger. Unfortunately, some worries can get stuck in our thoughts and we think about them all the time. This means they can get in the way of us doing things and they aren't so helpful any more.



You might be worried about something in particular, like a test, or you might not know why you feel worried; both are normal



Play a short video about anxiety - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfSbWc3O_5M

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WHAT KIND OF THINGS DO WE WORRY ABOUT?



Ask for examples and write them on a piece of paper, they can include the following categories:

- **School work** – We all learn in different ways. We are all good at different things. Some people find things more difficult than others. Do you think you will be able to learn if you are worried?
- **Friendships** – You might feel you don't have any friends or fall out with the ones you do have. You might think someone is not being very nice to you or saying things about you. It's important to be kind to each other
- **Appearance** – You may worry about being different, you may need to wear glasses. You may feel too small, too big, too short or too tall
- **Parents and family** – Your family may say or do things without realising how it makes you feel. Some things they say might make you feel worried

- **The dark** – *Being afraid of the dark, even though we know there's nothing there*
- **Things at home** - *When you are ill you can sometimes become worried or if your family member is ill this can make you worry*
- **Getting in to trouble or being told off**
- **Being ill yourself or a member of your family being ill**

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WHAT DOES WORRY FEEL LIKE?

- ✓ Like many emotions, worry can make our bodies feel a certain way. Ask your child to complete the '*where do I feel worry?*' worksheet. This activity can help your child to explore how worry can impact their body. It can be used to help them share what worry feels like for them
- ✓ Invite ideas and suggestions of what their worry feels like for them and write them on the paper
- ✓ You could ask your child to raise their hands if they identify with the physical and emotional experiences such as:

feeling weak, sad, tearful, unhappy, sick, lonely, confused, hot, angry, frustrated, worn out, headache, dizzy, scared, racing heart, butterflies in your stomach, sweaty, irritable, having difficulty sleeping, bad dreams, wanting to be on your own, muscle aches and pains, feeling shaky etc.

- ✓ Explain that everyone experiences worry differently and the important thing is for us to be able to identify when we are worried instead of just acting on how it makes us feel
- ✓ Invite your child to complete the '*What does my worry look like?*' worksheet so that they can see how worries are communicated by facial expressions which will enable them to not only recognise this in themselves but also in others
- ✓ Explain that worry (which is a thought) can develop into anxiety (which is an emotion) if it is not recognised and that it is therefore useful to talk to someone when we are feeling worried. Play the Childline video - <https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/videos/managing-stress-anxiety>



The 'Where do I feel worry' worksheet looks like this.

WHERE DO I FEEL WORRY?

Draw, write or colour in the outline below where you feel worry. Think from the top of your head to the bottom of your toes - and everywhere in between - both inside and out!



WHAT DOES MY WORRY LOOK LIKE?

Now that we have explored what our worry feels like and what worries us, it's important to know what worry looks like. Below are some common expressions children and adults make when they are worried.



In this box draw what your worried face looks like.

This will help other people know you are worried or having a hard time, if you aren't able to tell them with words.