



Parent/Carer Support –Anxiety In Children.

Do you think your child may be experiencing a degree of anxiety?

Does your child have a diagnosis related to anxiety?

What does this mean... and how can they be helped?



Our School aims to:

Be equipped to recognise the signs of anxiety in primary school aged children.

Have a better understanding of the causes of anxiety and its potential impact on primary school children's mental health and wellbeing.

Be able to support and respond to the needs of children with anxiety, including working collaboratively with health and community professionals.



Aims of this power point:

To ensure that parents who have a child with anxiety are aware of how the Federation will support their child.

For parents to gain knowledge on the many different types of stress.

For parents to be aware that we can give advice and signpost to external professionals/agencies.



What is Anxiety?

- **It is an emotion that can encompass lots of other emotions like worry, fear and uncertainty.**
- **It is your body's natural response to stress**
- **Everyone has anxiety at some point in their life.**



How does anxiety develop?

- **Anxiety is normal – a big event or a build up of smaller stressful life situations may trigger anxiety.**
- **Sometimes these stressful events trigger problems with anxiety and can cause an anxiety disorder.**
- **Adult's responses to the world can also contribute to the child's ideas about what is a dangerous/stressful situation or not.**



Types of Anxiety

- **Generalised anxiety disorder** – worrying about everything and anything, such as things that might happen, past behaviours, schoolwork or how popular they are. Often feeling on edge or restless.
- **Panic attacks**- intense and overwhelming feeling of panic, terror or fear. Lasts for a short time. Can have difficulty breathing, get heart palpitations, feel dizzy and faint and feel a loss of control.
- **Specific phobias**- an exaggerated feeling about the level of danger from a situation, thing or object. Common phobias for children- needles, water, the dark, being ill or vomiting, certain animals and insects.



Types of Anxiety

- **Complex phobias e.g. Social phobia** – extreme shyness and fear of being seen in a negative light or judged. Fear of making a fool of themselves.
- **Separation anxiety** – fear and distress at being away from a member of the family. Commonly a fear that something bad will happen to a loved one when they are separated. The child may refuse to go to school and not want to sleep alone.
- **Health anxiety**- focusing obsessively on their health, body and symptoms, worrying about dying.
- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder** – repetitive, intrusive and unwanted thoughts. These can often be about dirt or germs, something bad happening, causing harm or failing to prevent harm happening to others. They may have compulsions or rituals they feel they need to do otherwise, something bad will happen.



Anxiety levels

Anxiety levels are typically classified by the level of distress and are split into four categories:

- **Mild Anxiety**
- **Moderate Anxiety**
- **Severe Anxiety**
- **Panic Level Anxiety**



When anxious, children may:



Worry about bad things happening

Always worry about the worst case scenario

Not be able to stop bad thoughts going round in their head

Feel out of control

Avoid situations they feel anxious in

Feel shaky, dizzy or sick

Have a racing heartbeat and find it difficult to breathe.



Some signs we look for in school.

The child may:

- **Want things to be perfect.**
- **Be reluctant to ask for help.**
- **Have difficulty joining in social activities with peers.**
- **Often have stomach pains and headaches.**
- **Be fearful of test situations or performing in front of others.**
- **Get upset when leaving parents.**
- **Behave differently to their usual behaviour.**
- **Develop a 'tick'.**



Protective Factors

Adults can help by:

- **Forming a good attachment, show affection and nurturing**
- **Paying attention** – listen carefully, show empathy and belief in what the child is saying.
- **Having a positive thinking style** – encourage a ‘growth mindset’ - ‘If I practise I’ll get better,’ rather than, ‘I give up!’ Slide 13 & 14
- **Teaching resilience** – It’s ok for things to go wrong, we can just try again next time. Understand that mistakes can be a learning opportunity! Slide 12
- **Having good support networks** – Family, school, extended family, community, friendships and external agencies.
- **Being aware of and practice good health factors** - sleep, daily physical activity, healthy eating, breathing techniques and time out.
- **Trying to use emotion coaching** - Connections can be grown and strengthened by emotion coaching. Slide 15, 16 & 17.



Help Your Child With Their Route To Resilience.

<p>More than just Me</p> <p>Friendship</p> <p>Fairness</p> <p>Kindness</p> <p>Teamwork</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Cooperation</p>	<p>Aiming High</p> <p>Listening</p> <p>Concentration</p> <p>Imitation</p> <p>Patience</p> <p>Resilience</p>	<p>Thinking for myself</p> <p>Independence</p> <p>Reasoning</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Confidence</p> <p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Resourceful</p>
<p>I can do it!</p> <p>Enthusiasm</p> <p>Determination</p> <p>Perseverance</p> <p>Self-esteem</p> <p>Optimism</p>	<p>Daring to be different</p> <p>Curiosity</p> <p>Creativity</p> <p>Imagination</p> <p>Courage</p> <p>Risk taking</p>	<p>How well did I do?</p> <p>Honesty</p> <p>Communication/Communicating</p> <p>Making links</p> <p>Reflecting</p> <p>Reviewing</p>



Growth and Fixed Mindset

Growth mindset

A person showing growth mindset attributes, embraces challenge and difficulty as an opportunity to grow. They believe their talents can be developed by hard work and determination; getting things incorrect is a trigger to try something a different way or try harder and therefore much more likely to succeed in the end.

Fixed mindset

A person showing fixed mindset tendencies, feels the need to look smart in the eyes of others. Wants to be seen as successful and even perfect. They tend to believe their talents are innate gifts which can mean they will avoid engaging with tasks they find hard in case they go wrong.



Encouraging Growth Mindset

Unhelpful thoughts.

I am going to make a fool of myself

Why do I even bother?

I give up

What if I make a mistake?

It's just good enough

Helpful Thoughts.

I'm sure everyone finds this challenging

I'm going to give this a try

Let me try it a different way

Mistakes help me learn

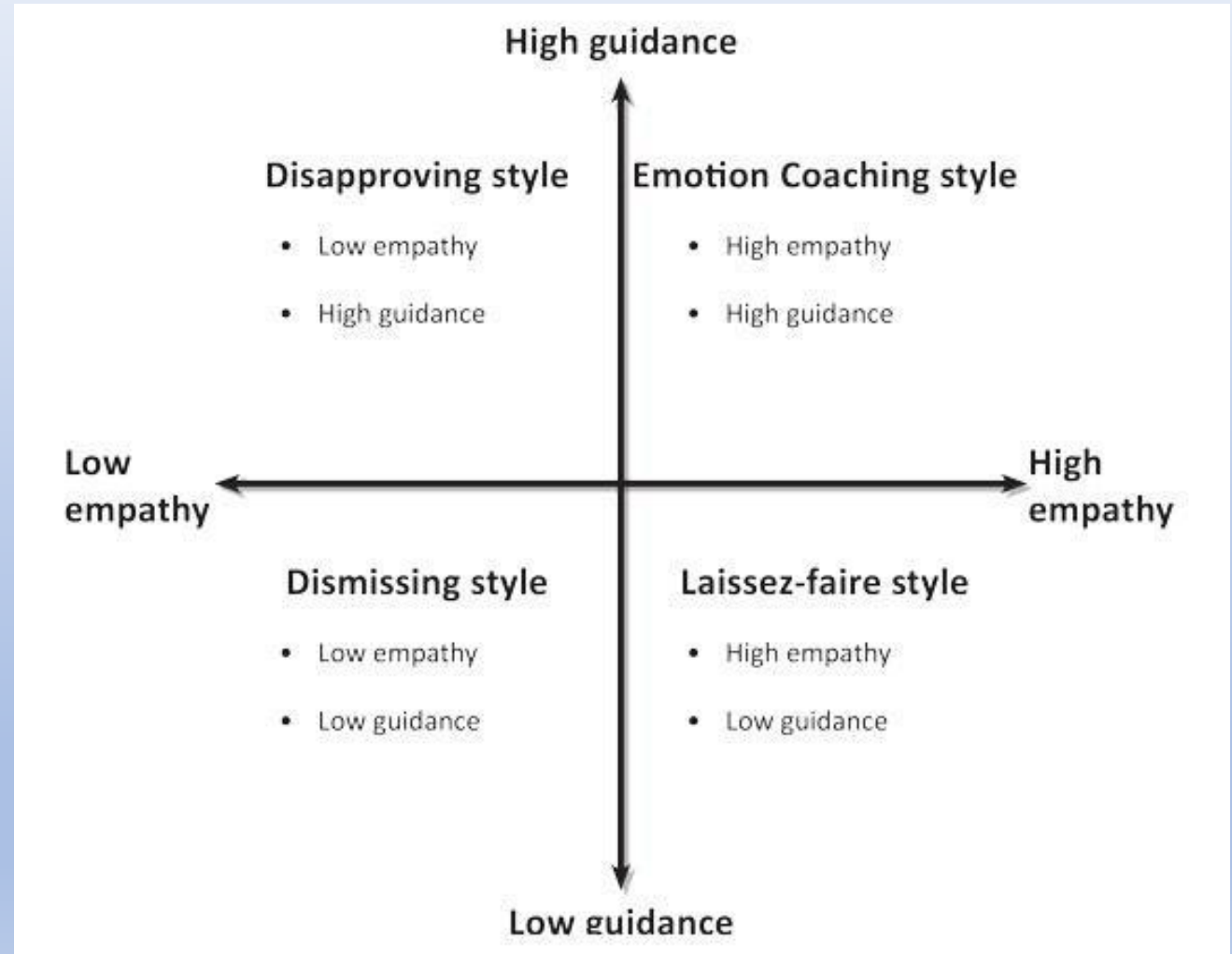
Is this my best work?



Emotion Coaching

Emotion coaching enables children to self regulate their emotions and manage their stress responses - emotions aren't good or bad, they are signals to us.

Look at the diagram to see which 'style' you use. Think about what you could do to practise Emotion Coaching.





Emotion Coaching



Step 1

Recognise, empathise then label feelings

Step 2

Set appropriate limits on behaviour

Step 3

Problem-solve together



Parents...

Be Your Child's Emotion-Coach With These 9 Powerful Parenting Phrases

1. It's okay to be upset — it's good to let it out.
2. I hear you — I'm here for you — I'll stay with you.
3. It's okay to feel how you feel but it is not okay to ...
4. How you feel right now won't last forever. It's okay to feel how you are feeling - It will pass and you will feel better again soon.
5. Let's take a breath, take a break, sit down and pause for a minute...
6. You are good and kind.
7. I'll be over here when you need me.
8. What can we learn from this?
9. Lets try to remember this for next time.



Finally, please
remember...

When little
people are
overwhelmed by
big emotions,
it's our job to
share our calm,
not join their
chaos.

L.R. Knost



Nurture  Thrive

Dawn Lovatt - Pastoral Manager, The Winterton Federation