



# ANXIETY INFORMATION PACK



## WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety isn't fun but it's very common. We all feel a little anxious sometimes. Anxiety is when our worries try and take control of how we're feeling. Children can worry about a lot of different things such as starting a new school year, making friends or understanding their school work. Sometimes they can worry about things that adults might say are 'little' things such as who they will play with at break time or even what they're eating for lunch. Please remember there is no such thing as a 'little' thing for a child to worry about. They are learning all of the time and often need our reassurance to work through feelings that might be complicated or overwhelming for them.

Children who struggle with anxiety will have these difficult feelings regularly and may not know how to tell anyone else that they are finding things hard. Hopefully this activity pack and information will help to make things a little easier for your child if they are experiencing these feelings.

As a school, we're always here to help you. If you need any additional support for your child if they appear to be struggling with anxiety, please do ask and we'll be more than happy to work with them on this.

# 8 WAYS A CHILD'S ANXIETY SHOWS UP AS SOMETHING ELSE

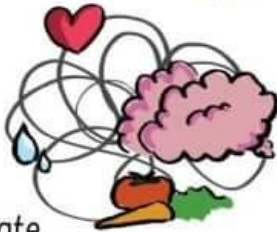
## 1. Anger

The perception of danger, stress or opposition is enough to trigger the fight or flight response leaving your child angry and without a way to communicate why.



## 2. Difficulty Sleeping

In children, having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep is one of the hallmark characteristics of anxiety.



## 3. Defiance

Unable to communicate what is really going on, it is easy to interpret the child's defiance as a lack of discipline instead of an attempt to control a situation where they feel anxious and helpless.

## 5. Lack of Focus

Children with anxiety are often so caught up in their own thoughts that they do not pay attention to what is going on around them.

# FOCUS

## 6. Avoidance

Children who are trying to avoid a particular person, place or task often end up experiencing more of whatever it is they are avoiding.



## 7. Negativity

People with anxiety tend to experience negative thoughts at a much greater intensity than positive ones.

## 8. Overplanning

Overplanning and defiance go hand in hand in their root cause. Where anxiety can cause some children to try to take back control through defiant behavior, it can cause others to overplan for situations where planning is minimal or unnecessary.

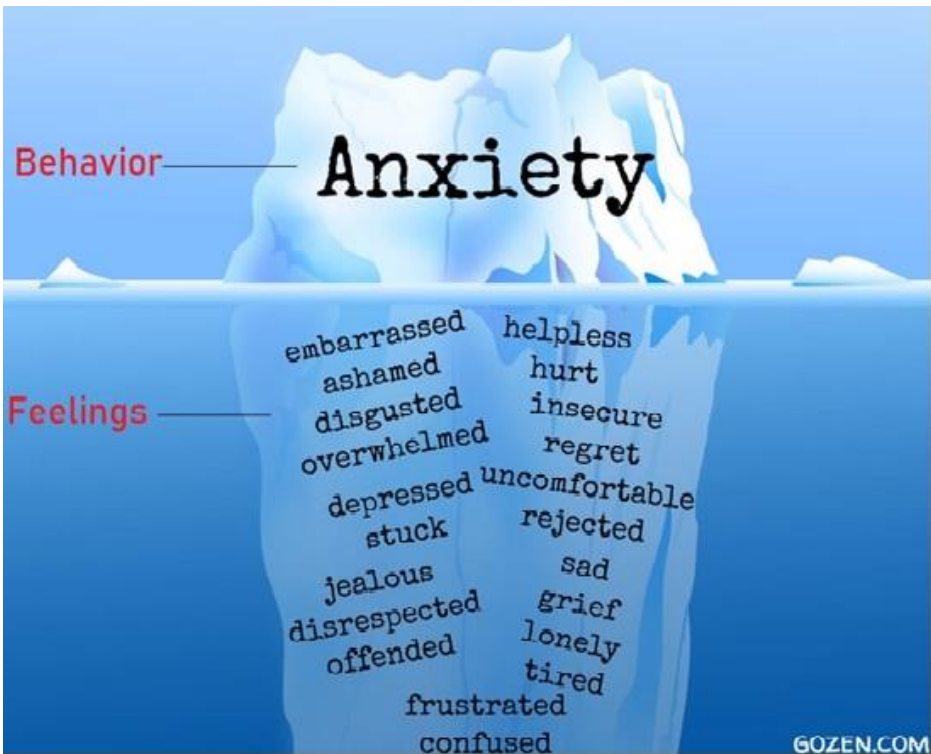


## 4. Chandeliering

Chandeliering is when a seemingly calm person suddenly flies off the handle for no reason. They have pushed hurt and anxiety so deep for so long that a seemingly innocent comment or event suddenly sends them straight through the chandelier.



Please remember that for children who struggle with difficult feelings, anxiety can be the tip of the iceberg. This illustration shows that there may be a range of different feelings underneath the surface which need care and attention.



### 7 Surprising Things Kids Say That Can Mean "I'm anxious."



Children can't always find the ways to express how they're feeling. They may not have developed the vocabulary at this stage in their life, or they may worry about what other people will think. Sometimes they choose other words or phrases such as these in order to communicate their anxiety.

## Anxiety Releasing Activities

### 1 "JUST ONE BREATH" BREATHING ACTIVITY

- Find a relaxing place, sit comfortably, and set a timer for one minute.
- Breathe deeply in and out while paying attention to any sensations you notice or sounds you hear.
- Take another slow deep breath, imagine the air moving down into the lungs and back up.
- Take one more deep breath and hold for a moment, then release it.



### 2 CREATE A GLITTER JAR

- Finding a jar or plastic bottle and allow your child to decorate it however they like.
- Fill the bottle up 3/4 of the way with water. Next, add clear glue, food coloring, and glitter then shake.
- Seal the lid and you are ready to go.



### 3 HEARTBEAT EXERCISE

- Ask your child to stand up and either jump up and down or do jumping jacks for one minute.
- At the end of that minute, have them place their hand on their heart and pay attention to how their heartbeat and their breathing feels.



## 4 GOING ON A SAFARI

- Go outside on an exciting adventure, try picking up a small rock or touching a plant or flower.
- Notice the bugs or the birds. Take a moment to kneel down and touch the earth.
- Walk mindfully paying close attention to everything. Make sure you walk in silence because you want to notice all those little details.



## 5 TENSE AND RELEASE MUSCLE RELAXATION

- Starting at the feet, gently squeeze the muscles in the feet by tightening them, then slowly releasing.
- Next, squeeze the large muscles in the calves for 5 seconds, then gently release. Working your way up the body, squeeze the thigh muscles for 5 seconds then gently release.
- Continue moving up the body for more relaxation.



Big Life Journal - [biglifejournal.com](http://biglifejournal.com)

managing our new reality

## Apps for Kids

Stress and changed routines may impact young kids, whether or not they understand the cause. Here are some free apps you can download to help children manage stress and build coping skills. To learn more about these apps and find others, visit [www.psyberguide.org](http://www.psyberguide.org).



### Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame

Help your Sesame Street monster friend calm down and overcome everyday challenges by learning the Breathe, Think, Do strategy for problem solving.



### Booster Buddy

Follow your Buddy through a series of daily quests to start and keep positive habits, learn new coping skills, and check in with emotions.



### Positive Penguins

Four cute penguins bring you on an interactive journey to help you understand feelings and thoughts and build mindfulness & relaxation skills.



# WORRY JAR

A Worry Jar is a helpful way to decrease your anxious thoughts and worries. Placing your thoughts in the jar will help get them off your mind, at least for a little while. What are some things that you'd like to stop worrying about for now? Write them in the jar below!

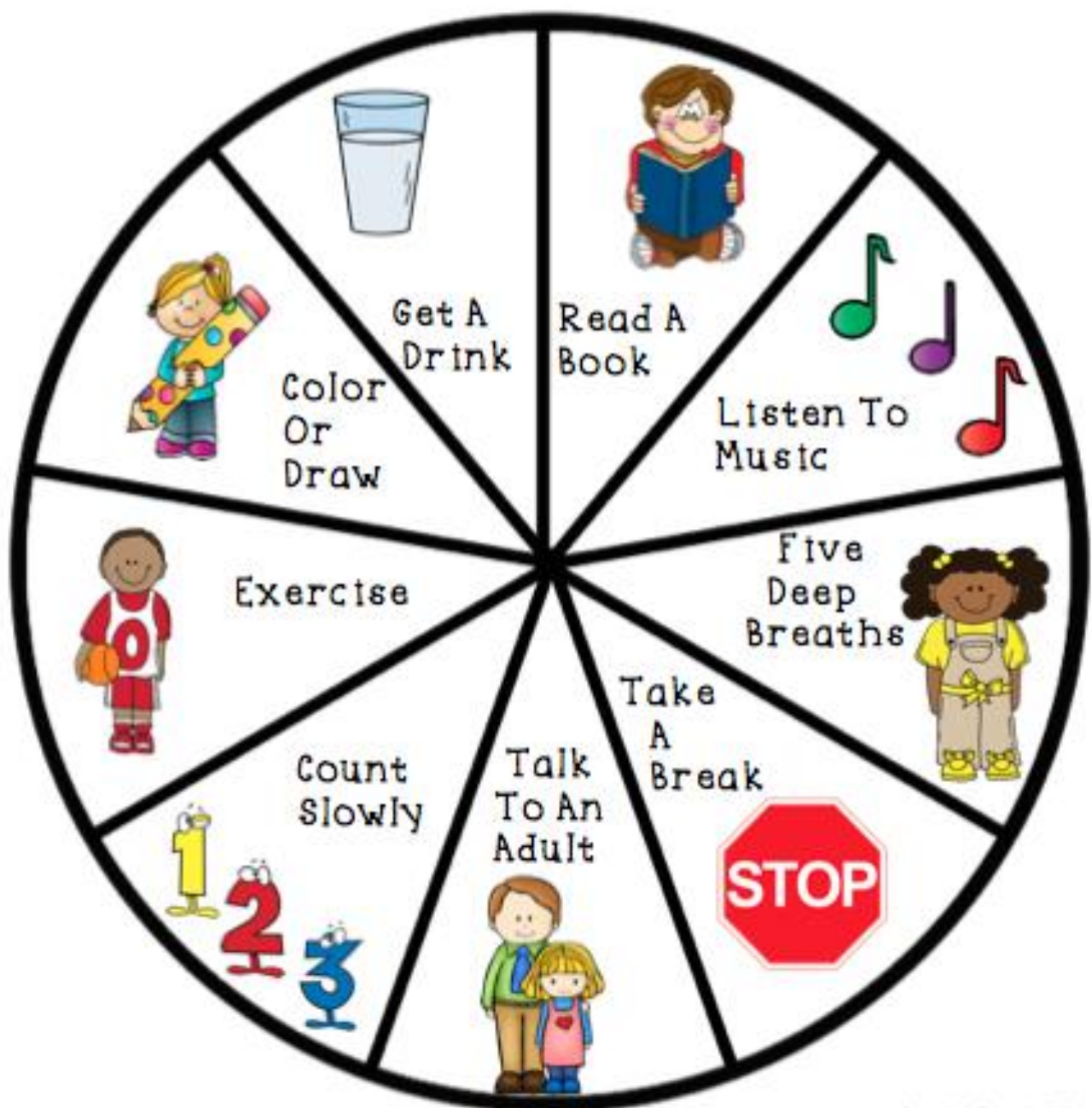
**It can  
helpful to  
pick a time  
during the  
day – and  
only that  
time – where  
you are  
allowed to  
go back into  
the jar and  
worry about  
these  
thoughts.**



© 2018 Mylemarks LLC. All Rights Reserved.  
For more resources, visit [www.mylemarks.com](http://www.mylemarks.com)

# Coping Skills Wheel

9 Ways to Handle Big Emotions



---

---

# My Fears

What are some things  
that make you feel  
nervous or scared?

---

---

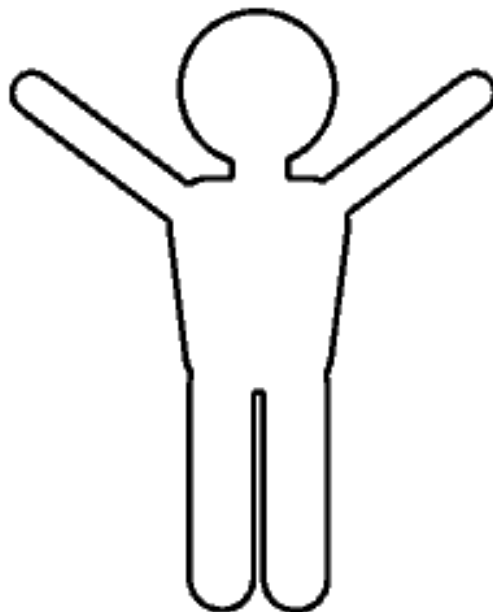
---

What do you think about when you are nervous or scared?

---

---

How does your body feel when you are nervous or scared? Color the areas  
where you can sense these feelings.



What's something you can do to feel better next time you are afraid?

---



# The Anxiety Respond-er!

If there was a person who could respond perfectly whenever you're feeling anxious, what would they say or do to help you calm down?

