

# Anxiety information for Parent/Careers

Mental Health Support Team

A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide, featuring a green background with a series of colored circles (blue, orange, purple, blue, orange) and a large green shape that curves around the word 'Overview'.

# Overview

Who are the MHST?

What is Anxiety ?

What does it look like?

What can we do to help?

# MHST in Schools



- A government initiative combining the Department of Education and the NHS - teams based in schools.
- Provide preventative early intervention support for schools, families and children in mental health and well being - focus on mild to moderate anxiety and low mood,
- 1-1 therapy using CBT techniques, workshops for parents and children, training for staff
- In Dorset - Teams in North & East, BCP, Weymouth & Portland



# What Is Anxiety?



- Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future.
- Anxiety is a natural human response when we feel that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations ~ **Mind**

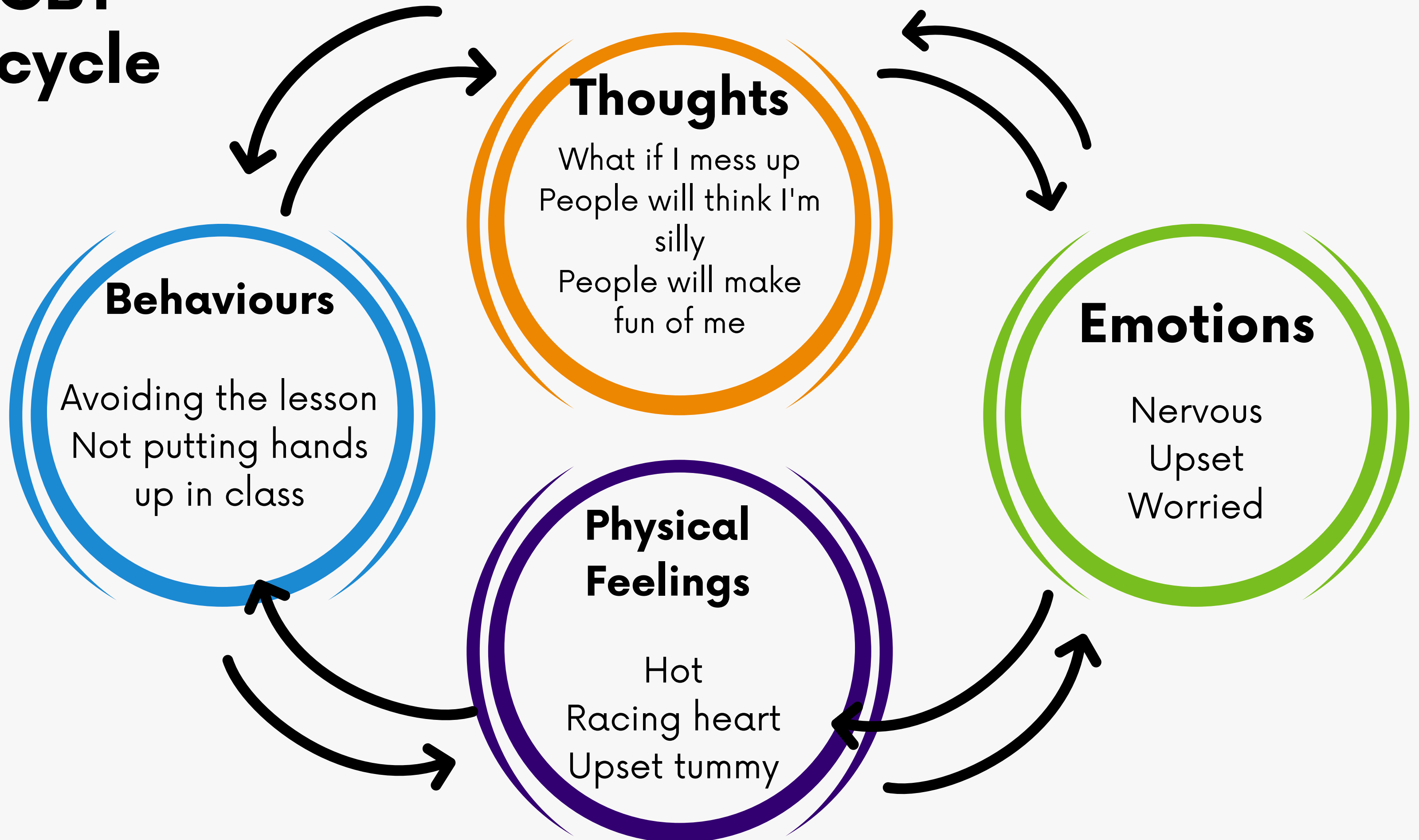


# What Is Anxiety?



- Anxiety is normal
- Everyone feels anxiety some of the time.
- A small amount of anxiety is a good thing as it can help us prepare our bodies for perceived dangers.
- It helps us get things done (like preparing for test or exams/ getting to work on time) and it helps our memory and focus.
- **BUT** Too much anxiety means you can't think properly and can make you worry about things that aren't real and start to impact your day to day life

# CBT cycle



# What does it look like ?

- Not wanting to go to school /lessons
- Tearful/Upset about leaving parent/carer
- Not wanting to go to bed/sleep on their own
- Not wanting to join in new activities/ games
- Reluctance to go out/go to new places
- Worry about being asked a question in class
- Not wanting to put their hand up
- Getting angry and frustrated



# What does it feel like ?

- Feeling sick
- Headaches
- Stomach aches
- Butterflies
- Heart racing
- Difficulty breathing
- Dizziness
- Clammy hands
- Shaky legs
- Crying/Tearful
- Needing the toilet





# What maintains Anxiety in children?

- **Avoidance** - Avoiding situations
- **Safety Seeking** - Behaviours that you develop in response to feeling threatened
- **Reassurance** - Reassurance can prevent children from learning that they can cope without the help/support of others



**Avoidance:** Not going on a school trip.

**Safety seeking behaviour:** Going on my phone, so I am distracted from the uncomfortable situation.

**Reassurance:** "Don't worry it will be fine, as I will sort it out".



**What  
can we  
do?**



A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide, featuring a green background with a series of colored circles (blue, orange, purple, blue, orange) arranged vertically.

# Asking questions not giving answers

- Can you explain what it is that is happening?
- How is it making you feel?
- What is it about this situation that is making you feel worried?
- What are you expecting will happen?
- Has this happened before?
- Is there another way of looking at this?
- What would you tell a friend if this happened to them?



# Reassure, Normalise and Validate

You have done it  
before and it went  
really well -  
remember?

I really think you can do  
it. I was so proud when  
you asked a question in  
class

That sounds like it is/ was a  
difficult situation

I can see/ tell that you are  
feeling worried about this

I feel worried/anxious  
about things sometimes too

Use a personal example



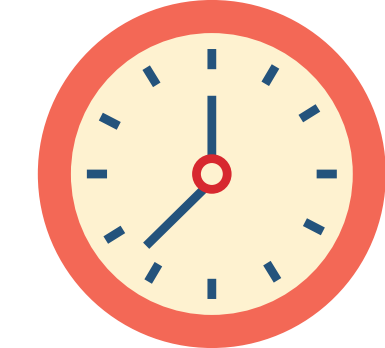
## **What not to do.....**

You'll be fine, don't worry - i'll sort it out for you"

"it's okay, Mummy/Daddy's here"

"Don't worry, it will all be okay"

# Worry time/Box



Worry boxes are containers into which children can post their anxious thoughts.

## Step 1:

Explain the worry box to your child:

- The worry box is where they can put their worries so they don't have to carry them around anymore.

## Step 2:

Make the box together:

- Choose a box or container.
- Decorate it!

## Step 3:

Using the worry box:

- Your child will write down their worries during the day.
- Agree a set time (like 15 minutes before dinner) when you will talk about the worries in the worry box.
- Close the box.
- Spend a few moments thinking about something positive.



# Grounding techniques.

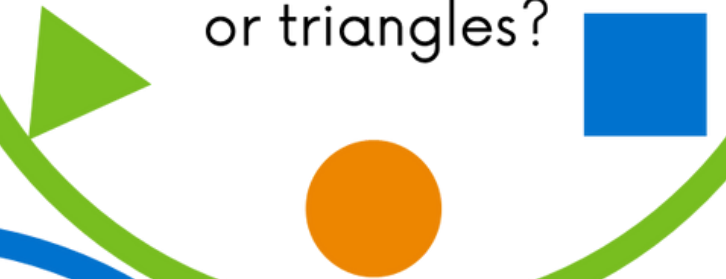
## Nature

Look around you.  
What can you see, what can  
you smell, what colours are  
there in the trees/plants?



## Shapes

What shapes are around  
you?  
How many squares are  
there? How many circles  
or triangles?








What colours are around  
you?  
How many reds are  
there? How many  
blues/greens/yellows?



## Colours

5, 4, 3, 2, 1

-  5 – things you can see
-  4 – things you can feel
-  3 – things you can hear
-  2 – things you can smell
-  1 – deep breath

## A-Z

Can you name one animal  
beginning with each letter  
of the alphabet? How about  
a type of food? A country?  
A film or a fun activity you  
like?







Dorset  
Mental  
Health  
Support  
Team in  
Schools

# More information

