

Tuesday 2nd April

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH AND
EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

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Common parental concerns



1. I want to get this right for my child.
2. I'm not sure how to support my child.
3. Where do I go for help?
4. Am I saying or doing the 'right' thing?

Aims of the session

1. To provide information about some common concerns you may have.
2. To outline the support on offer at Wyvern.
3. To signpost parents to external support available.
4. To explain the role of your GP / CAMHS.

Supporting your child

Mood swings, stress, anxiety, fear of the unknown, worried, withdrawn, quiet, secretive, unpredictable....

These are all a normal part of growing up!

Unfortunately, they often make our children become a stranger to us.

A child's emotional health is a balance, with ups and downs.





Recognising anxiety

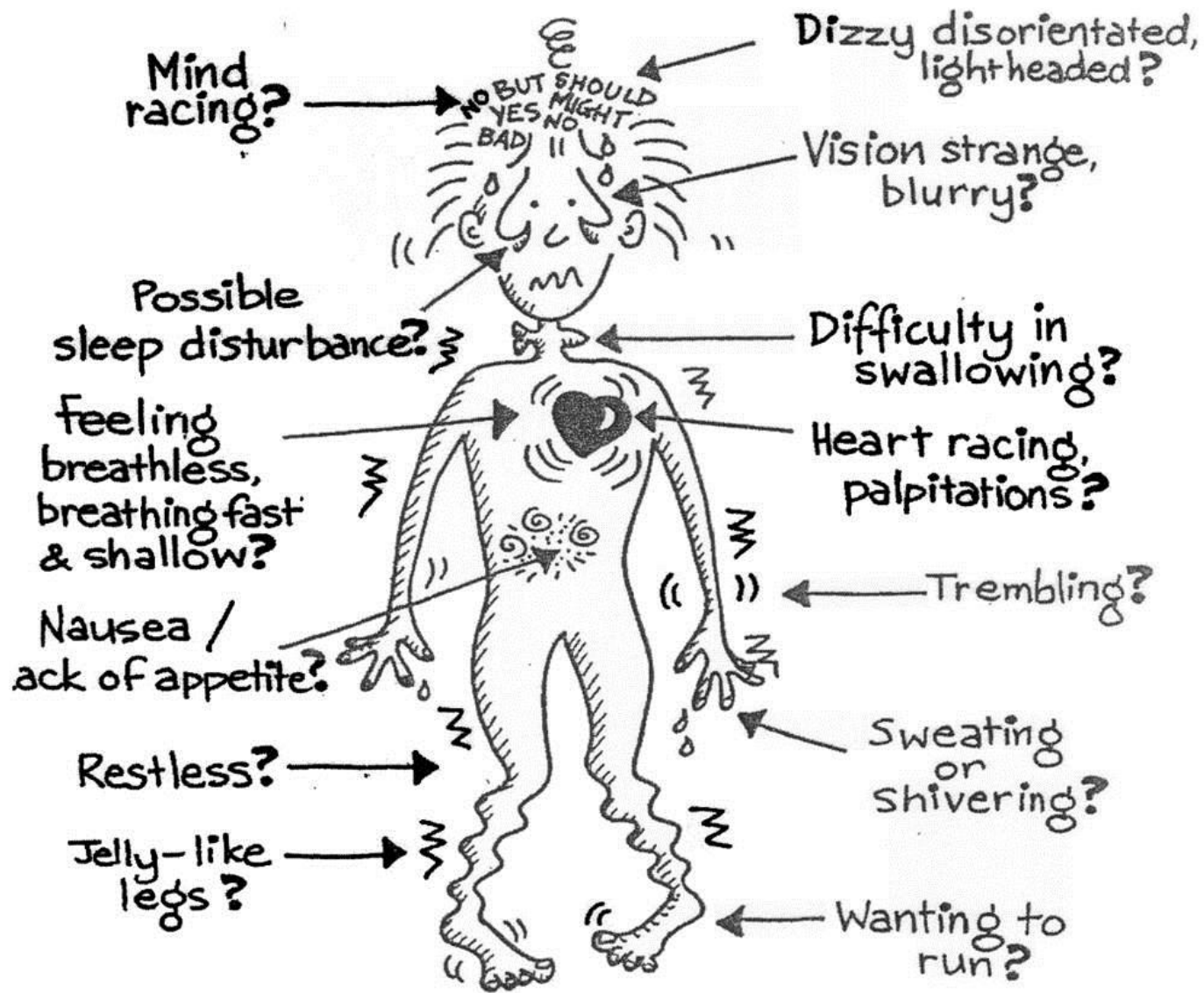
What is anxiety?

Anxiety is an internal feeling of worry, nervousness or unease about something with an uncertain outcome;

Sometimes it is hard to know when anxiety is becoming a problem, but if feelings of anxiety are very strong, or last for a long time, it can be overwhelming.

Common student fears:

- Fire alarms
- PE and changing rooms
- Break times (crowded spaces, eating in front of others)
- Hallways
- School toilets
- Speaking out loud in class (reading, asking for help or answering questions)
- Exams and tests



Recognising the symptoms

Emotional:

- Fear
- Panic
- Nervousness
- Shyness
- Unable to speak
- Lower levels of concentration
- Low self-esteem
- Sensitive
- Perfectionism

Physical:

- Light headedness
- Dry mouth
- Dizziness
- Rapid thumping of the heart
- Feeling sick
- Excessive sweat
- Rapid breathing
- Stomach pain
- Crying



Things that can help:

- ✓ Encourage your child to keep a diary to work out what the triggers to their anxieties are;
- ✓ Regular exercise or even a brisk walk (a great way to start a conversation);
- ✓ Healthy eating - avoid caffeine & high sugar products which can heighten anxiety;
- ✓ Sleep - aim for at least 8 hours per night, devices out of bedrooms;
- ✓ Talking to an adult they trust;
- ✓ Help them to find things that can take their mind off their worries such as arts and crafts, cooking, going for a walk, reading;

www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/anxiety

Parents helpline 0808 802 5544

Mental Health

Mental Health:

A state of emotional well being where someone is able to cope with the stresses of life and live to their potential.

Mental Illness:

A diagnosable illness that results in significant impairment whereby the individual's relationships, cognitions and mood is affected.

Mental disorders result from biological, developmental and/or psychosocial factors.

When should you be worried?

Advice from CAMHS:

Significant increase in levels of anxiety;

Prolonged increase in periods of low mood or depression;

Increasing frequency and severity of self harm;

Expressions of suicidal intent;

Obsession with body image and/or altered eating patterns;

Social withdrawal;

High levels of aggression or violence;

Hearing voices;



What should you do?

Advice from CAMHS:

- Listen to your child;
- Be present, calm and validate their distress;
- Contact your GP for an appointment;
- Keep us informed of your concerns – we can help;

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/>



Eating disorders

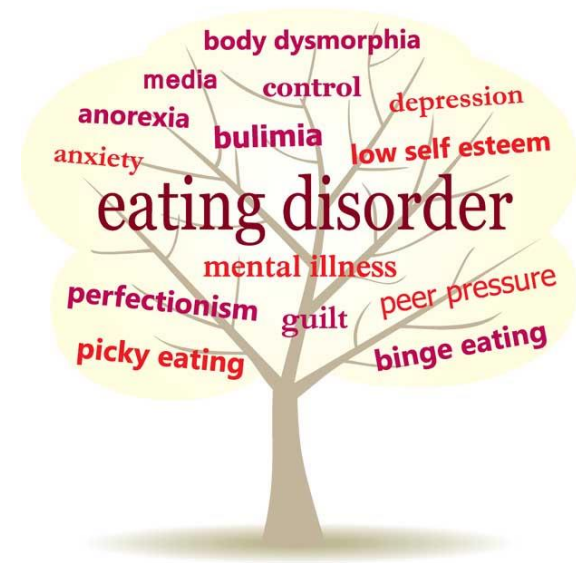
Anorexia

Bulimia

Binge Eating Disorder

When should you be concerned?

1. Eating disorders are very secretive.
2. Eating in bedrooms, not with the family.
3. Restricting food intake.
4. Boys often calorie count.
5. Within 2-3 months, they can disappear or escalate really quickly.



What you may have noticed

Your child has become rigid around what they will eat – do not like going out to eat;

Obsessive behaviour around food and exercise;

Pre-occupied with food, weight and shape;

Loss of interest in hobbies and activities;

Vomiting;

Secretive around food;

Increased social isolation;

Hiding away and isolating themselves;



What should I look out for?

Emotional intensity

Prolonged low mood

Low self-esteem

Anger – towards themselves or others

Withdrawn – feelings of guilt

Easily frustrated

Lack of interest in self e.g. appearance

Physical Symptoms:

Feeling cold

Weight loss

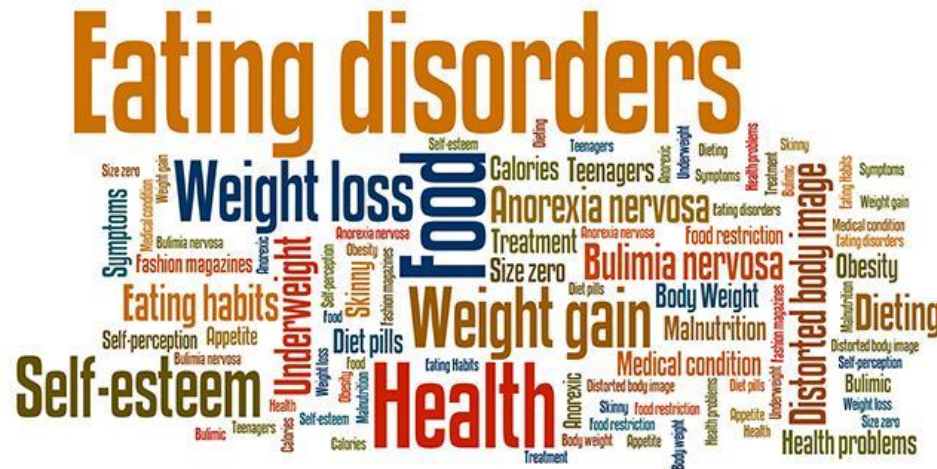
Dizziness

Tired

Periods have stopped

Help and support

1. Vital to be seen by your GP – as soon as possible.
2. Referral for specialist care and intervention.
3. <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>
4. <https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk>



Understanding self-harm

Self-harm can cover a range of things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and harmful way.

Although cutting is the most common form of self-harm, other methods include head banging, hair pulling, burning and scalding, biting, scratching, stabbing, breaking bones, swallowing objects, self-poisoning and overdosing.

By hurting themselves, children and young people are asserting a form of self-control on their life.

Self-harm is a way of coping and of channelling frustration and other strong emotions. In the vast majority of cases, it is not a suicide attempt, but rather a way to let off steam.

How can I help my child?

Self-harm isn't something you can stop because of will power or because you have made a decision.

Nor is it a cry for help or attention-seeking. Your child is having trouble dealing with emotions and, for now, this is the only way they can deal with them.

What can I do?

1. Talk to us – we can help.
2. We can signpost you for additional support.
3. Talk to your GP.
4. Monitor your child's phone/tablet/online world.

But what about...

- Drugs and alcohol
- E-safety
- Transgender
- Sexuality
- Bereavement
- Friendships



We can help:

Tutor / Pastoral Assistants / Pastoral Leaders / Safeguarding team / SEND department / Wellbeing Assistant / Sue Foster

Useful websites



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

<http://eycs.co.uk/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk>

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk>