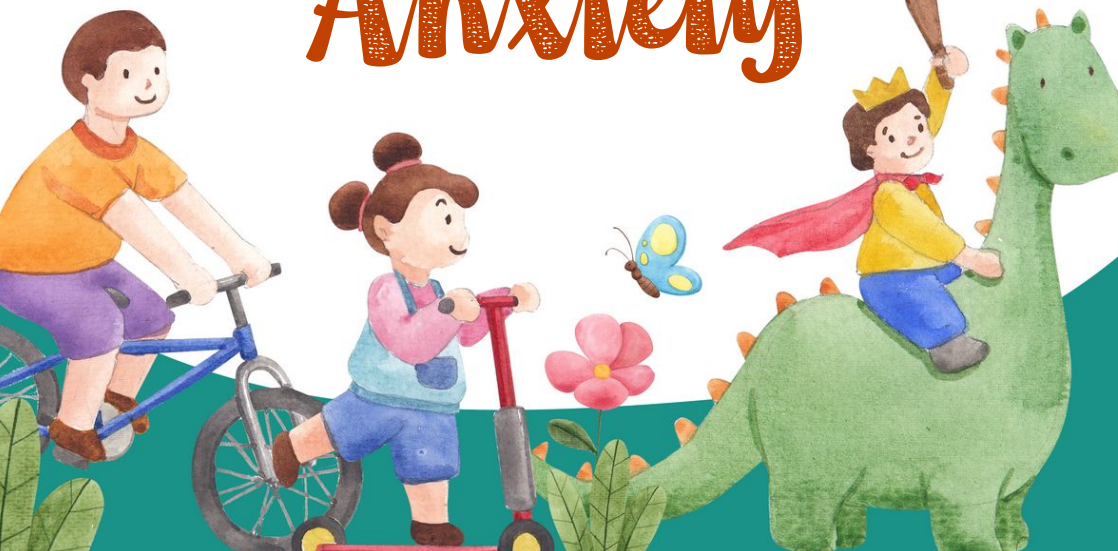




Let's Talk to
our Children
about
Anxiety



We acknowledge that it is important for parents to be equipped with information and resources to recognise and manage anxiety in children aged 4 to 7 years old.

This booklet aims to create awareness about anxiety and help parents feel comfortable to talk about the topic with their children.



What is Anxiety?



A child may experience anxiety, which is a feeling of excessive fear or worry that may interfere with his or her typical daily activities, such as going to school, playing or interacting with others.

There are several types of anxiety. In this booklet, we are focusing on **separation anxiety** and **selective mutism** as these are the more common types of anxiety that occur in children aged 4 to 7 years old.

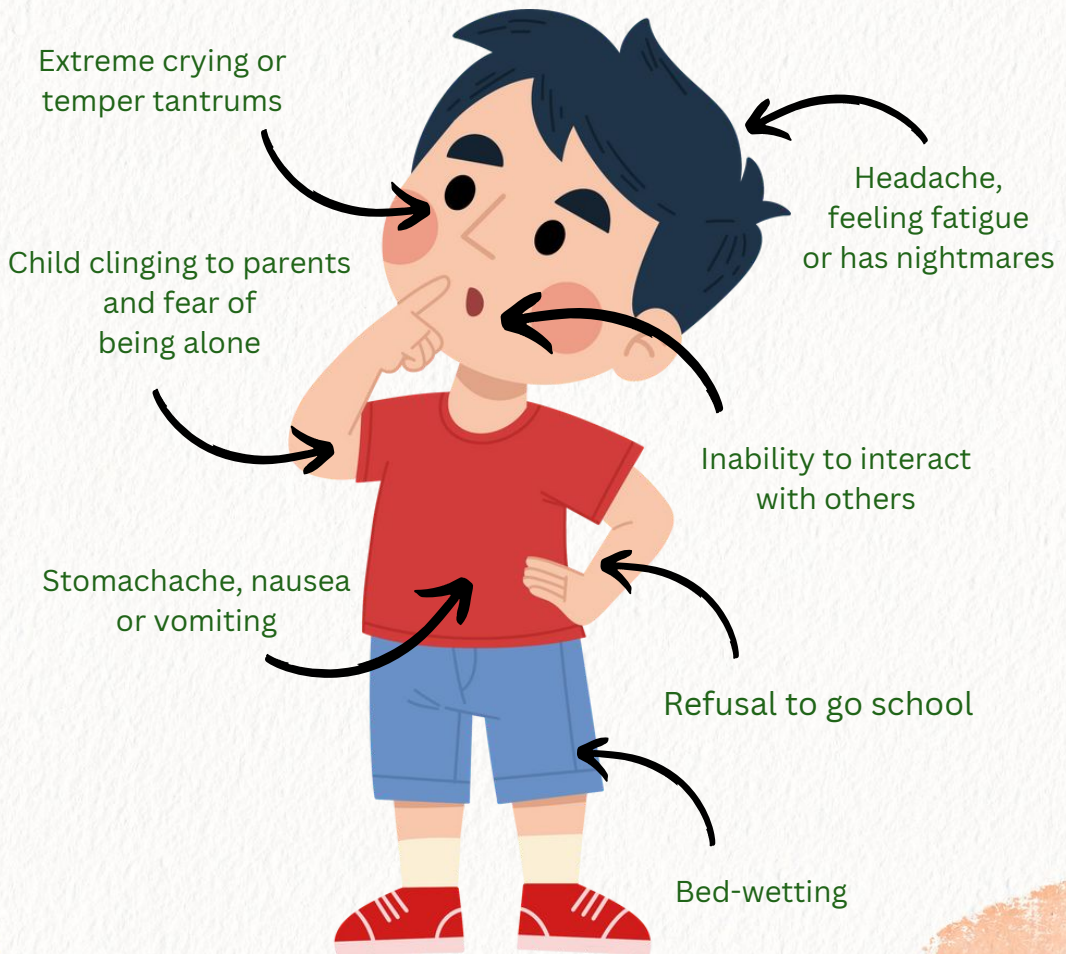
Type of Anxiety: Separation Anxiety

A child may experience separation anxiety when he or she:

- worries excessively or is resistant to separate from someone that he or she is closely attached to.
- fears losing the person that he or she is close to.
- has thoughts that something bad might befall the person that he or she is close to or when the person is not around.
- shows symptoms that persist (at least for a month) and causes significant impairment to the child's daily functioning.



Signs & Symptoms



Type of Anxiety: Selective Mutism

A child may experience selective mutism when he or she:

- has a fear of communicating effectively in specific settings such as school or public areas despite being able to do so in familiar places such as home.
- shows symptoms that persist (at least for a month), but not limited to the first month of starting school or being in a new environment.



Signs & Symptoms

Avoids eye contact and might be wary of others



Headache, sensitive to noise and crowd

Chest pain or shortness of breath



Muscle ache, stomachache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

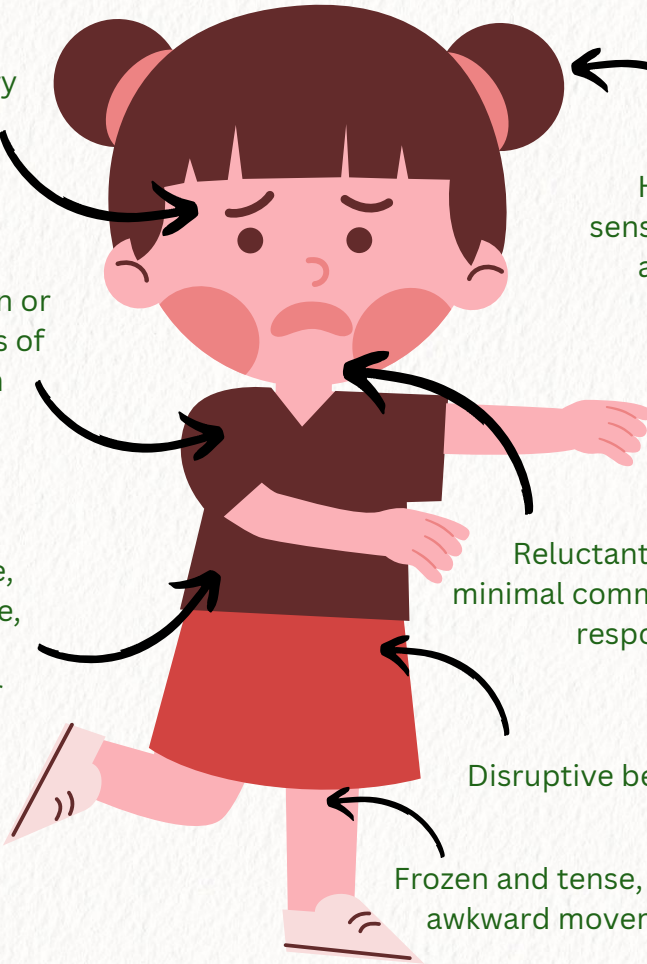


Reluctant to smile, minimal communication or response



Disruptive behaviour

Frozen and tense, fidgety, awkward movements



Supporting Your Child



Talk to the child to understand his or her fears and worries



Introduce activities that will help the child to calm down



















Avoid scolding or forcing the child to face his or her fears and worries when he or she is not ready



Acknowledge the child's feelings and ensure him or her that you are there for them

Identifying Your Child's Emotions

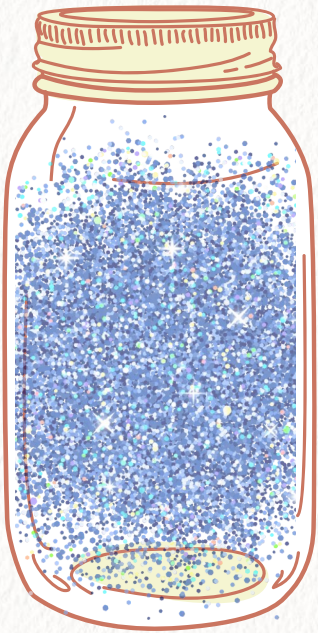
 <p>angry</p>	 <p>bored</p>	 <p>confident</p>	 <p>confused</p>
 <p>curious</p>	 <p>disappointed</p>	 <p>embarrassed</p>	 <p>excited</p>
 <p>happy</p>	 <p>hurt</p>	 <p>jealous</p>	 <p>kind</p>
 <p>sad</p>	 <p>scared</p>	 <p>surprised</p>	 <p>worried</p>

Activity 1 – Calm Down Bottle

This activity aims to reduce anxiety when the child looks at the glitter floating in the bottle or jar.

You will need:

1. Bottle/Jar
2. Warm Water
3. Glitter Glue
4. Optional:
Sequins/Food Colouring



Step 1: Fill the bottle with warm water.

Step 2: Add glitter glue. You may want to add food colouring or sequins into the bottle to make the glitter more appealing.

Step 3: Get the child to shake the bottle and watch the glitter slowly float to the bottom. While watching, try to get the child to practice deep breathing exercise.

Activity 2 – Blow Bubbles

This activity allows the child to practice deep breathing exercises.

You will need:

1. Bubble Water Toy

Step 1: Share with the child that you will demonstrate blowing bubbles using the blower that comes with the toy.

Step 2: Parent to take deep, slow breaths and blow the bubbles. Share with the child the breathing techniques and how these will help him or her to calm down.

Step 3: Get the child to try it out. Provide prompts and encouragement along the way. Remind the child that he or she can use this activity whenever there is a need to calm down.



Activity 3 - Word Search

H	A	P	P	Y	U	Z	C	Y	R
U	A	F	M	Q	P	Y	A	G	M
C	J	X	M	V	S	V	L	A	A
E	X	C	I	T	E	D	M	P	D
S	G	X	B	E	T	N	V	E	I
E	Y	J	B	R	R	S	C	C	Y
W	V	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	D	L
I	X	S	P	B	U	L	S	A	D
M	G	P	T	E	Y	Q	D	Q	F
O	X	K	N	T	P	C	M	L	I
Z	P	W	A	N	I	Q	O	H	W
X	C	H	F	A	N	S	R	O	F
E	U	Y	R	N	C	I	I	O	C
M	R	L	A	G	R	U	M	P	Y
K	I	I	I	R	A	C	E	N	X
C	O	K	D	Y	N	N	B	F	M
G	U	E	M	P	K	K	O	V	H
W	S	D	Q	R	Y	V	R	Q	C
K	K	M	P	O	K	C	E	U	C
B	A	I	B	U	M	T	D	M	R
E	G	L	A	D	J	Z	A	O	H
C	N	B	R	A	V	E	R	B	Y

Bored

Liked

Proud

Happy

Calm

Sad

Angry

Afraid

Upset

Excited

Brave

Puzzled

Curious

Grumpy

Cranky

Glad

Mad



Activity 4 – Colouring

Match the colours to the numbers



- 1 White



- 3 Light Grey



- 5 Navy



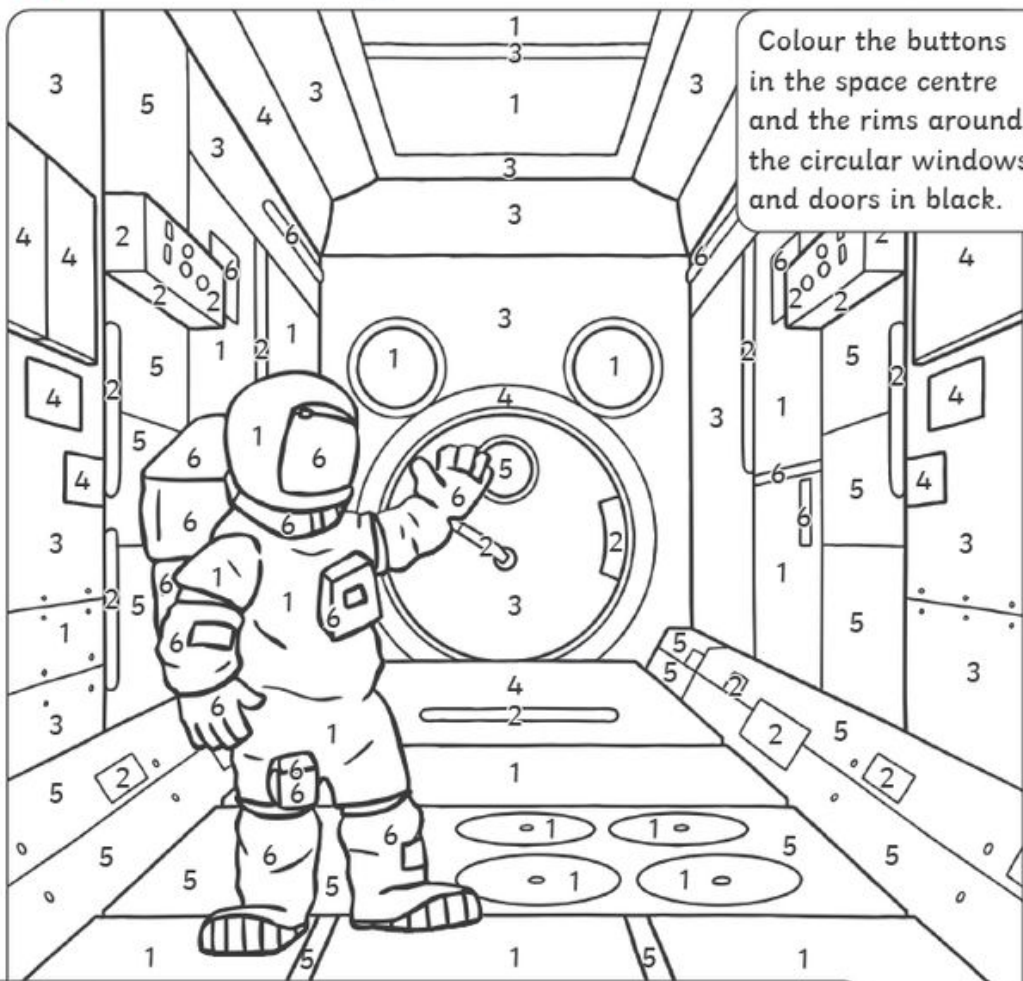
- 2 Red



- 4 Dark Grey



- 6 Black



Helplines



Samaritans of Singapore

WhatsApp: 9151 1767
Hotline: 1-767



Tinkle Friend

1800-2744-788



Family Service Centre E-Locator

A list of family service centres near your neighbourhood.



Triple P

Evidence-based programme that equips parents with techniques to promote their children's (aged up to 16 years) psychological, social and emotional competence.



Child Guidance Clinic

Supports children and youths under 18 who are facing emotional or behavioural challenges.



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