



St John's C of E Academy



Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Staff

Summer Theme – Anxiety

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is an unpleasant feeling that everyone experiences sometimes. You might describe it as feeling very nervous or “wound up”. General anxiety symptoms can last for extended periods of time – it could go on for a couple of weeks or longer. It’s more than just being nervous. You might have anxious thoughts about yourself, other people, and how you think other people feel about you. You might also have anxious thoughts about the world around you and what’s coming in the future

Anxiety isn’t necessarily a bad thing. It can spur us on, help us stay alert, make us aware of risks and motivate us to solve problems.

However, anxiety can be a problem if it’s affecting your ability to live your life. If your anxiety is ongoing, intense, hard to control or out of proportion to your situation, it can be the sign of a mental health problem.

Help is available no matter how long you’ve felt anxious for or how severe your symptoms are. There are many different types of treatment, so talk to your GP about all your options.

People who are anxious usually think negatively about:

Themselves:

- “I can’t cope”
- “I’m going to die”
- “I’m not safe”

Others:

- “Other people can cope better than me”
- “Someone I love is going to have an accident or die”
- “The people I love aren’t safe”

The future:

- “Bad things will happen”
- “I’ll not manage”
- “I won’t be able to cope”

The world:

- “The world isn’t safe”
- “The world is a dangerous and frightening place”

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Anxiety can affect both your body and mind.

The effect on your mind can include:

- a feeling of dread or fearing the worst
- feeling on edge or panicky
- difficulty concentrating
- irritability
- feeling detached from yourself or the world around you.

Physical feelings can include:

- restlessness
- feeling dizzy or light-headed
- wobbly legs or pins and needles in your hands and feet
- shortness of breath or hyperventilating
- heart palpitations (a noticeably strong, fast heartbeat)
- nausea (feeling sick)
- needing the toilet more or less often
- sweating
- [sleep](#) problems
- [panic attacks](#).

Anxiety can also affect your behaviour. You may withdraw from friends and family, feel unable to go to work, or avoid certain places. While avoiding situations can give you short-term relief, the anxiety often returns the next time you're in the situation. Avoiding it only reinforces the feeling of danger and never gives you a chance to find out whether your fears are true or not.

Some people with anxiety may appear to be fine on the outside while still having some of the symptoms listed above. You may have developed ways of hiding your anxiety so that other people don't notice it.