

# Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal and common feeling that everyone experiences at some point in their lives, especially during times of stress or change. Youth anxiety is a similar experience for children and adolescents, but it can become overwhelming and interfere with their daily lives. It's important for parents to understand what anxiety is and what it means for their children, so they can help them cope and overcome these feelings. By having open and honest conversations, parents can support their children in developing skills and strategies to manage their anxiety and lead a happy and fulfilling life.

## Empower confidence. Start the conversation using these strategies:

- 1. Explain what anxiety is:**  
Start by defining anxiety in simple and age-appropriate terms, that it is a feeling of worry, fear or unease about something that is going to happen or has happened.
- 2. Normalise anxiety:**  
Let your child know that anxiety is a normal part of life and that everyone experiences it at some point.
- 3. Discuss physical symptoms:**  
Explain that anxiety can cause physical symptoms, such as a racing heart, sweating or a stomach ache.
- 4. Identify triggers:**  
Help your child identify what triggers their anxiety and why they feel that way.
- 5. Encourage open communication:**  
Let your child know that they can talk to you about their worries and fears, and that you will listen without judgement.
- 6. Teach coping strategies:**  
Teach your child various coping strategies for managing anxiety, such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation and mindfulness.
- 7. Provide reassurance:**  
Reassure your child that they are not alone in their feelings and that you are there to support them.
- 8. Model healthy behaviour:**  
Show your child how to handle anxiety in a healthy and productive way.
- 9. Seek professional help:**  
If your child's anxiety is impacting their daily life, seek help from a mental health professional.
- 10. Emphasise positive self-talk:**  
Encourage your child to engage in positive self-talk and to focus on their strengths and accomplishments.