Mental Health - Anxiety

With Professor Barry Carpenter, Professor Cathy Creswell & Helen Manley

Today's learning objectives

o Find out about the latest evidence-base on anxiety in children and young people (including what we know about the impact of the pandemic)

o Build knowledge around what anxiety feels like for children and young people, how it can present itself in school settings, and the impact it has on young people's capacity to learn

o Provide an overview of the principles to support children and young people who have difficulties with anxiety

POLL: Which type of school are you representing this evening?

Anxiety - Cues, Clues & Support for Young People in School

Professor Cathy Creswell & Helen Manley

Oxford University

WHY WORRY ABOUT CHILD ANXIETY?

MORE LIKELY

- ongoing anxiety problems

- other mental health problems
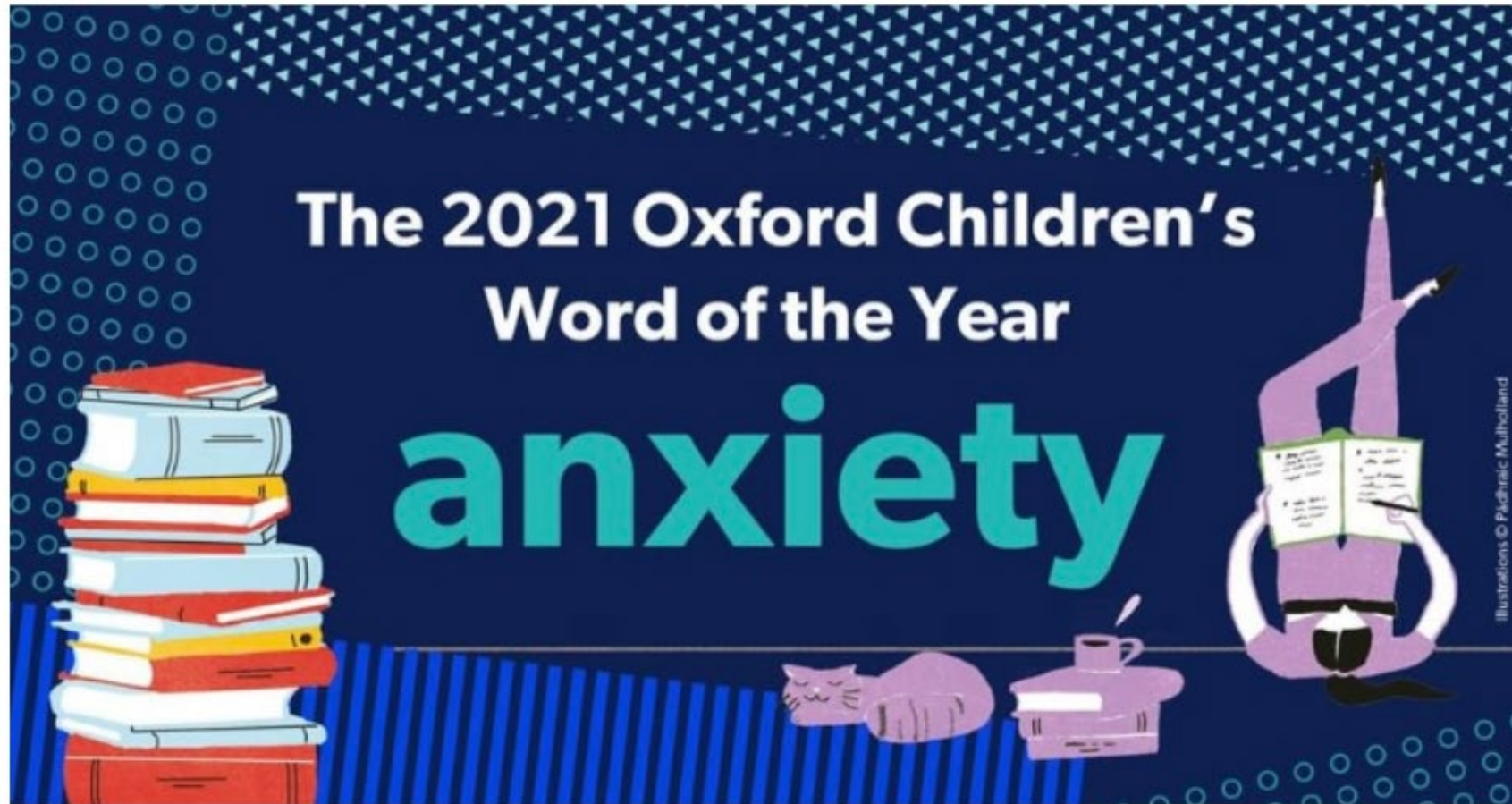
- educational attainment

- employment Prospects

- social relationships

LESS LIKELY

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health

coram Life Education

2017
1 in 9 (10.8%) children and young people had a probable mental health disorder

49% increase in emotional disorders since 2004

July 2020

1 in 6 (16%) children and young people had a probable mental health disorder
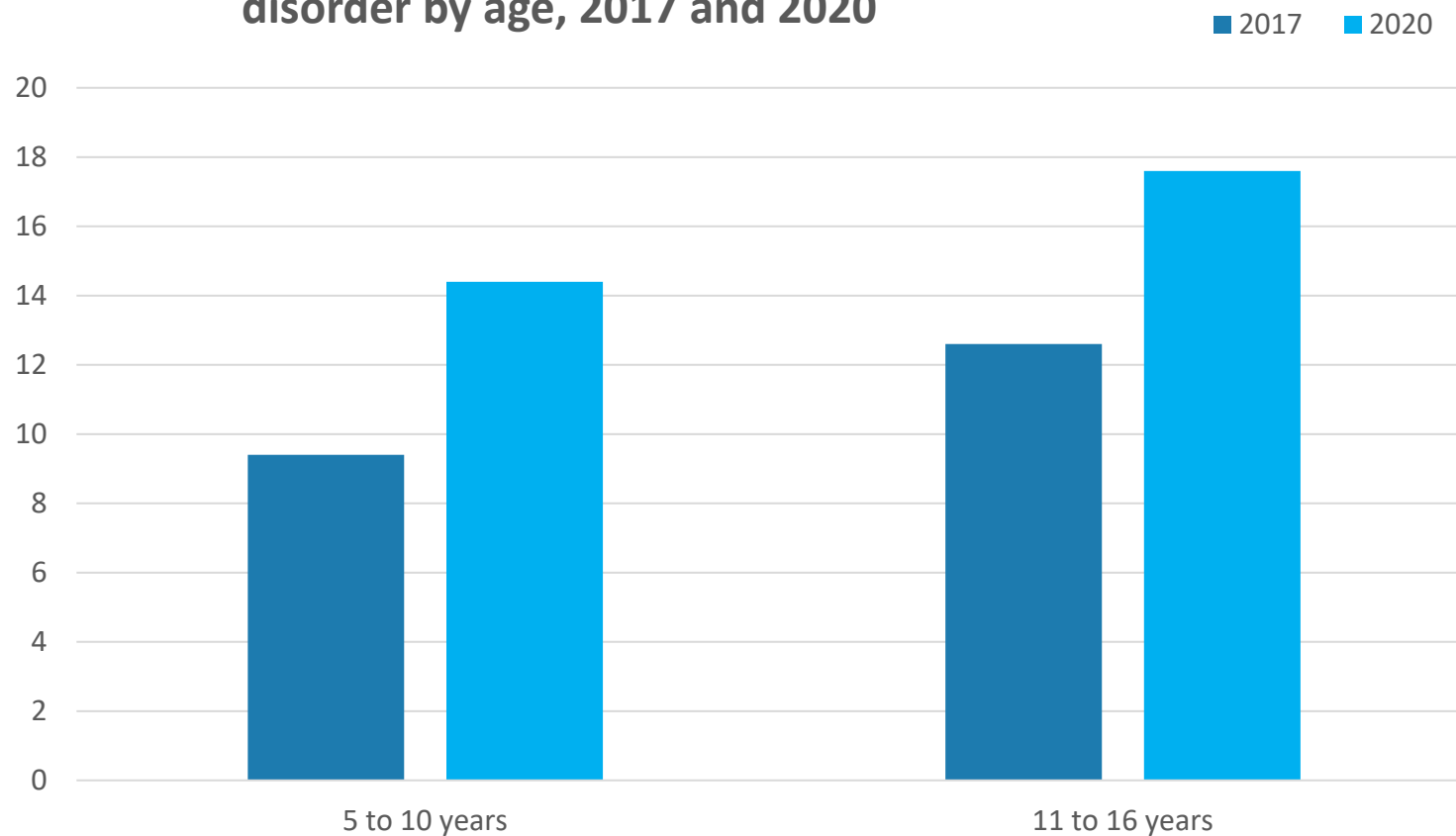
NHS Digital › Mental Health of Children and Young People Surveys
› Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2020: Wave 1 follow up to the 2017 survey

Publication, Part of Mental Health of Children and Young People Surveys
Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2020: Wave 1 follow up to the 2017 survey
Survey

Publication Date: 22 Oct 2020
Geographic Coverage: England
Geographical Granularity: Regions, Country
Date Range: 03 Jul 2020 to 02 Aug 2020

Parents & carers of children aged 4-16 years

Young people aged 11-16 years self-report

www.acamh.org

Changes in mental health symptoms over time: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

Changes in mental health symptoms over time: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
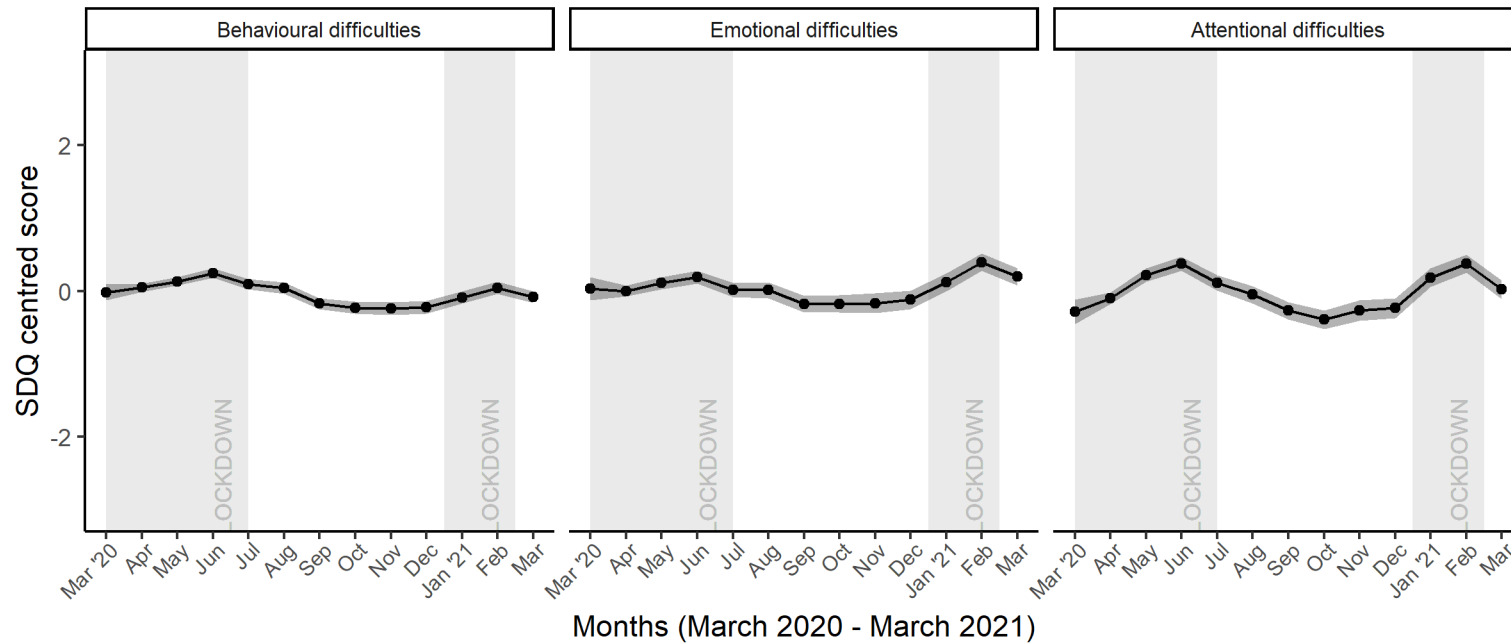
https://doi.org/10.1016/ S2352-4642(21)00177-2

Changes in mental health symptoms over time: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

Figure legend: Lower income · Primary school aged · Secondary school aged · Whole sample

Behavioural difficulties · Emotional difficulties · Attentional difficulties

Y-axis: SDQ centred score

X-axis: Months (March 2020 - March 2021)

https://doi.org/10.1016/ S2352-4642(21)00177-2

www.acamh.org

Changes in mental health symptoms over time: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
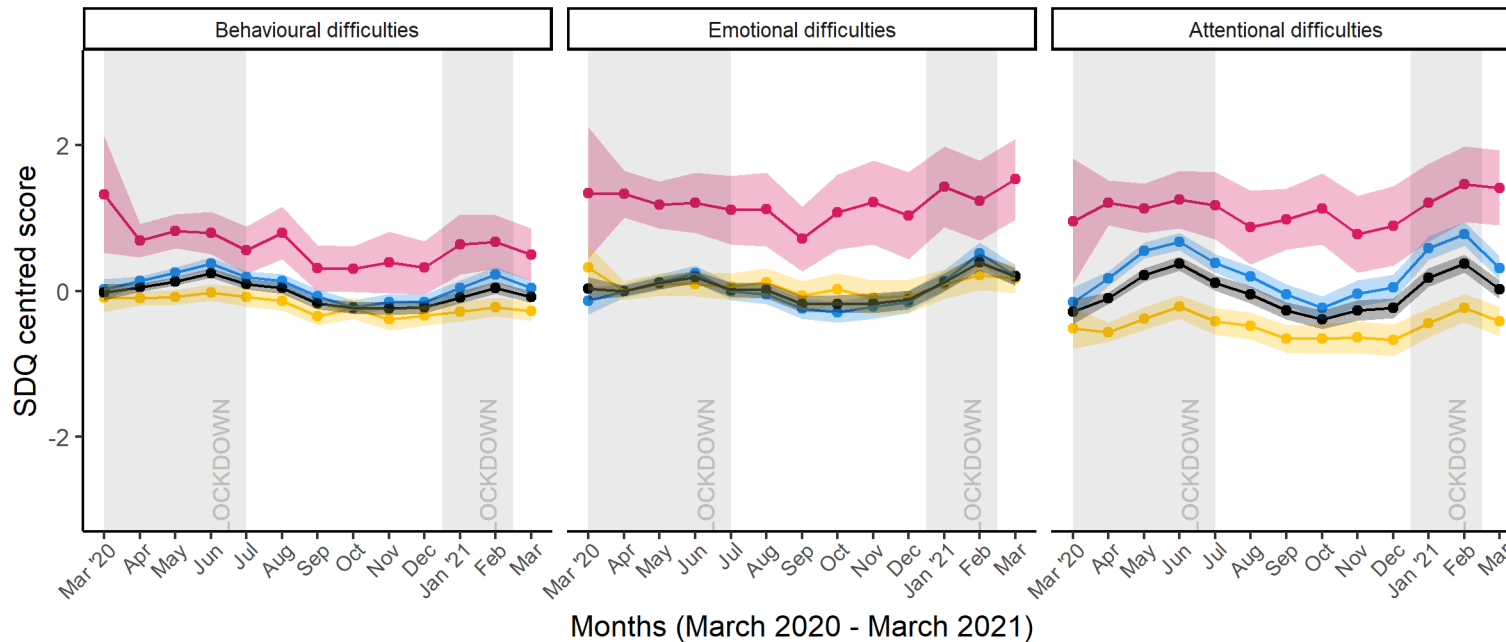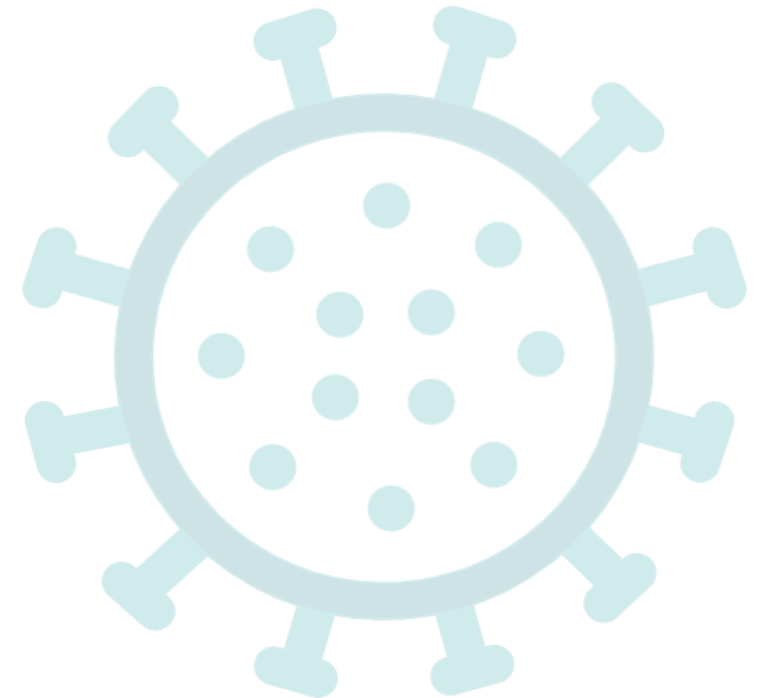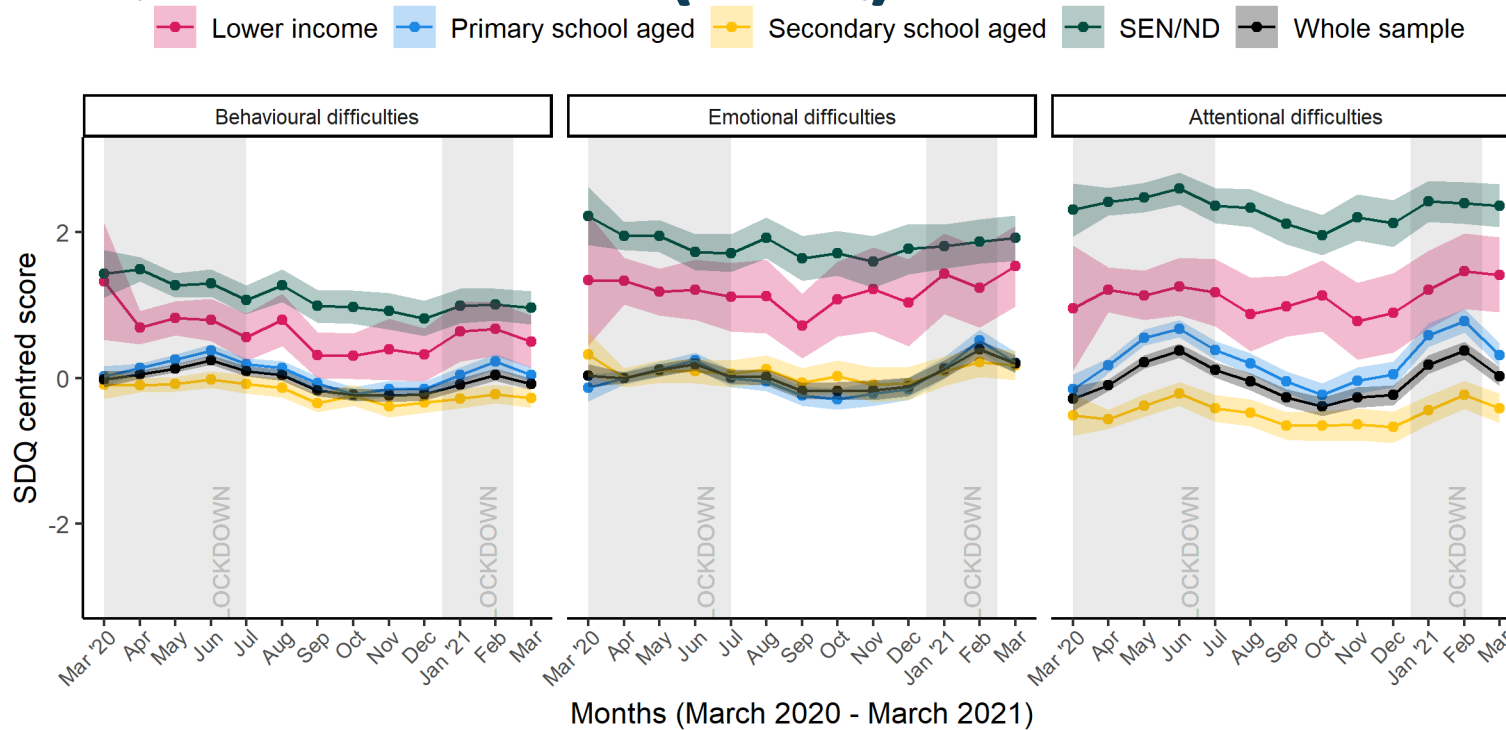
STRENGTHS AND DIFFICULTIES QUESTIONNAIRE: Emotional symptoms

- SEN/ND
- Chronic health condition

- Higher baseline parent psychological distress (DASS)
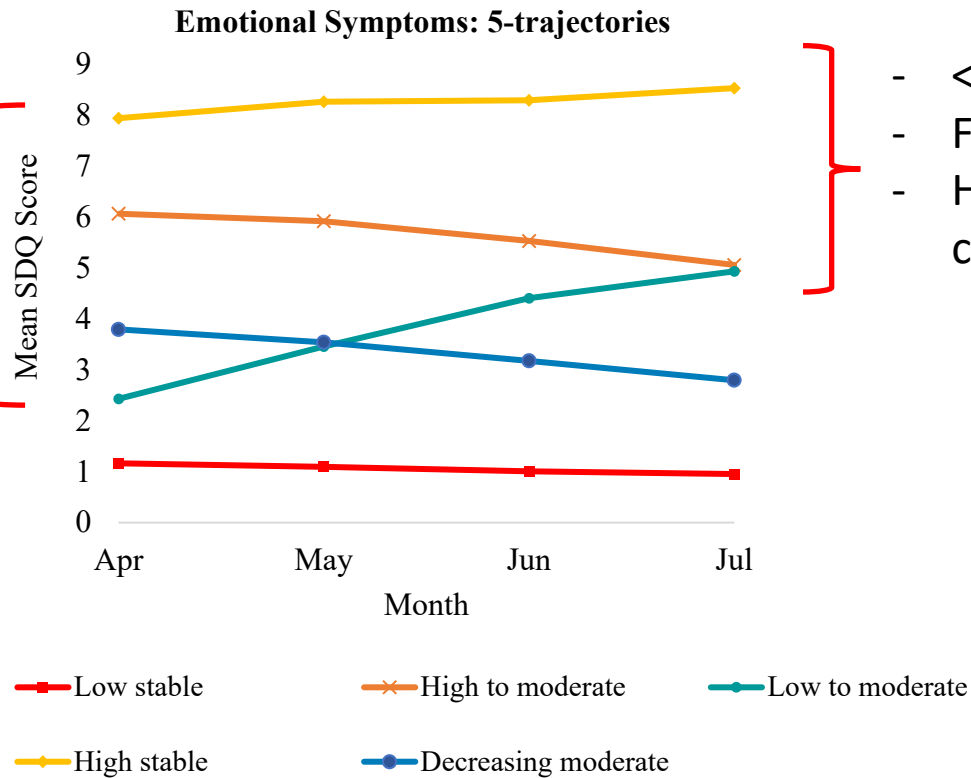
- < £16k per year
- Female
- Higher parent-child conflict

Emotional Symptoms: 5-trajectories

Legend:
- Low stable
- High to moderate
- Low to moderate
- High stable
- Decreasing moderate

X-axis: Month (Apr, May, Jun, Jul)
Y-axis: Mean SDQ Score (0–9)
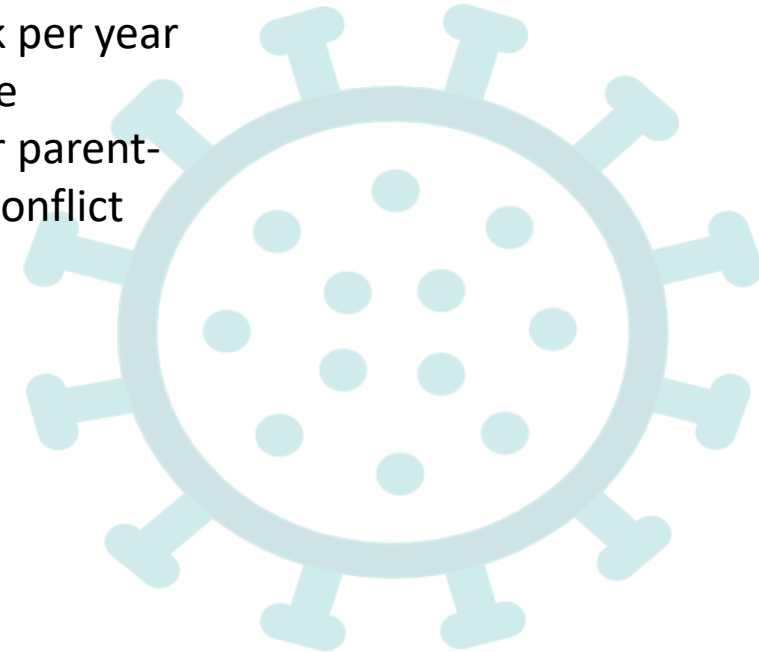
All reports can be accessed through the Co-SPACE website
https://cospaceoxford.org/findings/

WHY MIGHT CHILDREN BE ANXIOUS IN SCHOOL?

issues from home

'some children are already dealing with so much before they even come in'

separating from parent/carer

'saying goodbye can be hard for her'

academic pressures
'exams and tests'

'everything is so competitive'

'not coping with the work'

environment

'classrooms can be busy, crowded and noisy'

'social situations can be overwhelming'

contributing in class
'worrying over what teachers and friends will think'

'getting things wrong'

relationships

'friendship problems can be really upsetting'

'the teacher might shout at me'

WHAT MIGHT ANXIETY LOOK LIKE IN SCHOOL?

frequently being late or absent

tummy aches/feeling sick

headaches

frequent toilet requests

withdrawal or 'shut down'

WHAT MIGHT ANXIETY LOOK LIKE IN SCHOOL?
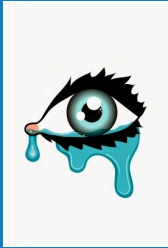
crying

need for constant reassurance
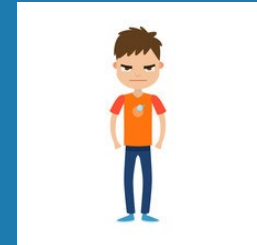
behavioural outbursts

refusal
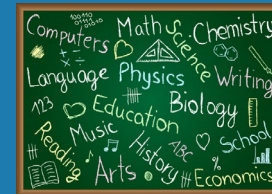
worry over lessons/events in the day

SOMETIMES children hold it together in school and the fallout happens when they go home
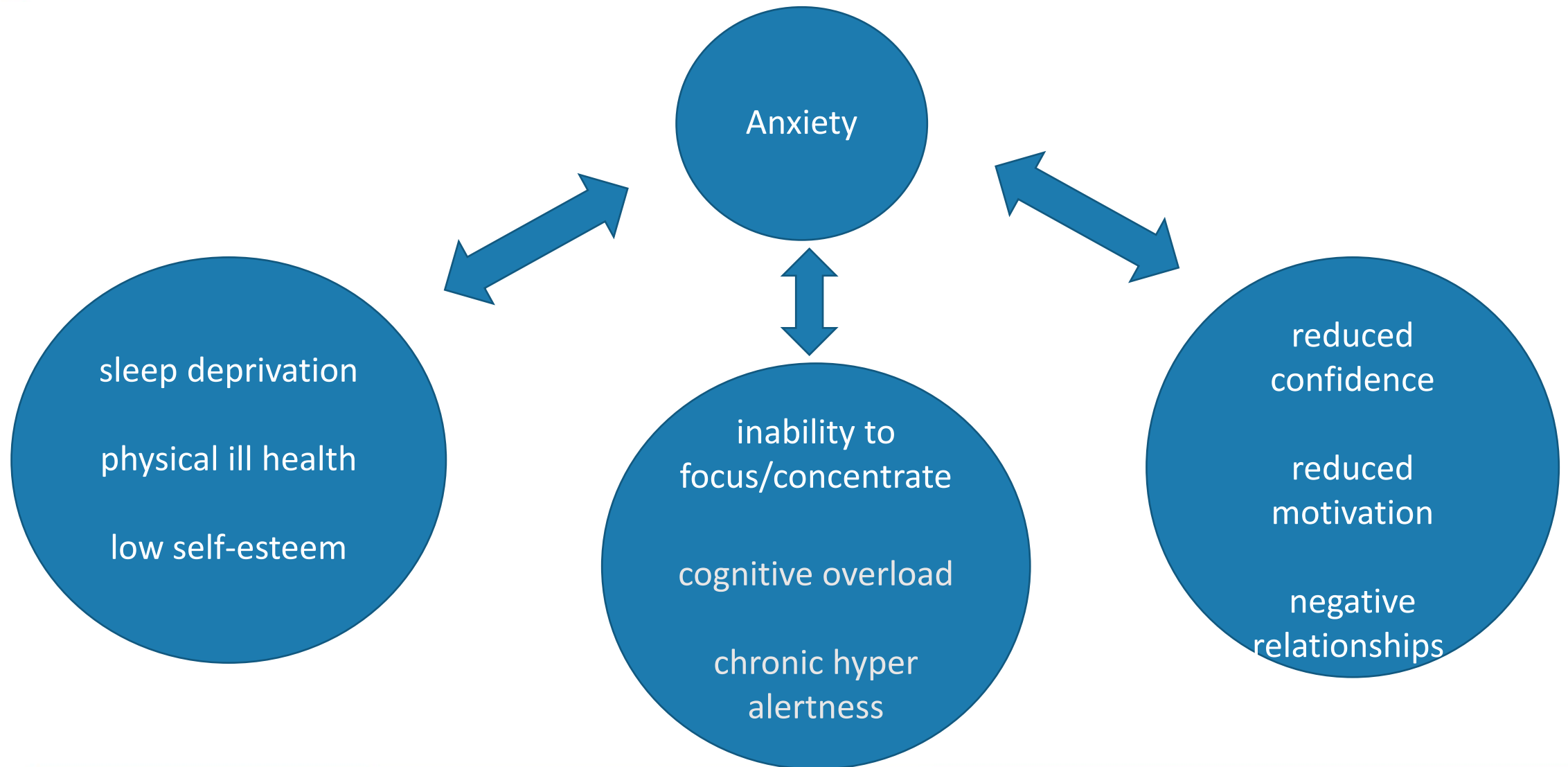
Anxiety

sleep deprivation

physical ill health

low self-esteem

inability to focus/concentrate

cognitive overload

chronic hyper alertness

reduced confidence

reduced motivation

negative relationships
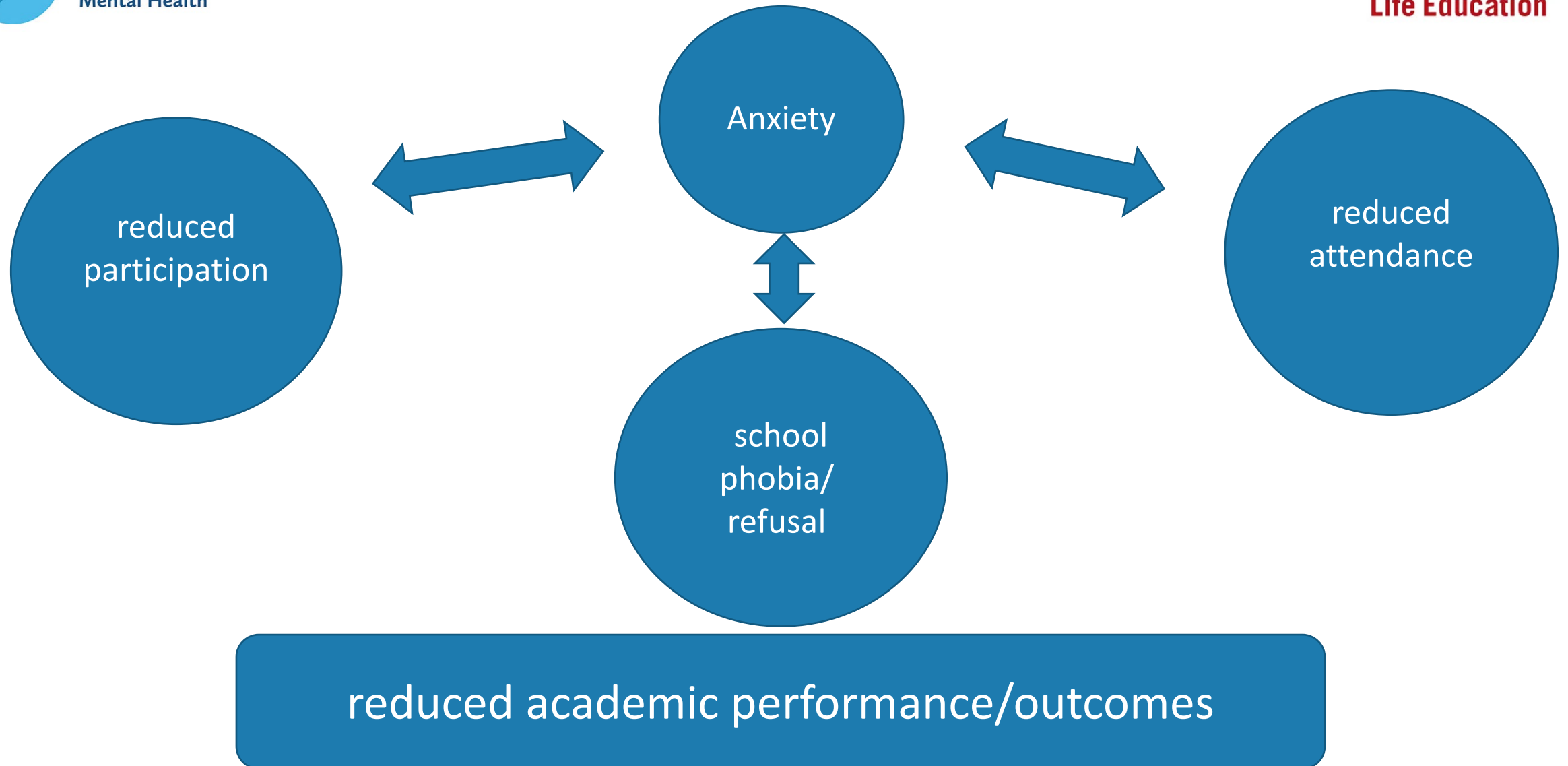
Principles for supporting children and young people who have difficulties with anxiety

Schools are ideally placed to identify and support those at risk

- contact with children and families

- knowledge of children and developmental norms

- familiarity, proximity, non-clinical setting - reduced stigma

Education professionals are among the most consulted about emerging child mental health problems

Schools are already doing lots to help those with anxiety...

- PSHCE/RSE/ Social Wellbeing

- CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) , ELSA sessions, play therapy, counselling

Some studies provide support for school-based CBT interventions to reduce anxiety symptoms (mostly in primary schools)

BUT...

Principles we can apply to the school setting based on successful treatments

1. Think about how you/the child/the parents want things to be
(not how you *don't* want them to be)

Problem: Coming into classroom

	Child	Parent	Teacher
What I want to achieve	• walk to classroom independently • go into classroom quickly • put my stuff away and start my work	• be able to drop off quickly with no crying/resistance • no delay in me leaving the school • stop feeling awful/guilty	• child coming in independently • no need for me to be involved in encouraging to come in • settling without resistance and starting task set

2. Think about what the child needs to learn

- Be curious and be brave!

GOAL	WHAT IS THE CHILD THINKING?	WHAT DOES THE CHILD NEED TO LEARN?
To regularly ask questions in class	I will get told off if I get something wrong. The teacher will shout and get cross.	What will really happen if I ask a question? What will really happen if I get something wrong? What will the teacher do? How will I cope?
To be in school everyday	My mum will get hurt if I'm not at home, and won't be there to pick me up	What happens to Mum when I am at school? What would happen if Mum couldn't pick me up? How will I cope?

3. Put it to the test!

(You probably need to do it gradually)

4. When problems come along, build confidence in solving them

Resources

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH)

coram Life Education

Overcoming Your Child's Fears & Worries
A self-help guide using Cognitive Behavioral Techniques

'I loved the no nonsense, practical approach which will be an empowering relief to parents, themselves paralysed by the anxiety of their own child's anxieties.'
Dr Tanya Byron, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, House of Tiny Tearaways, BBC TV

CATHY CRESWELL & LUCY WILLETTS

Supporting children and young people with worries about COVID-19
University of Reading
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
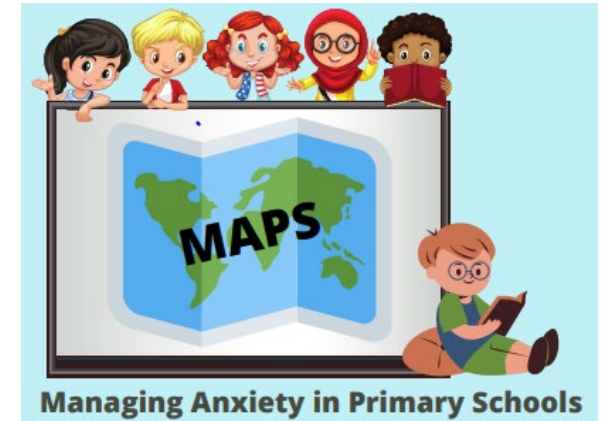
Advice for parents, carers and people that work with children and young people

This is a time of uncertainty and a lot of children and young people will be feeling anxious and worried about what is going on. This is a normal response to the situation and below we offer some advice about what adults can do to help and support children and young people.

There is a lot of information becoming available - this is great but may also be confusing, so we have pulled together some advice and some of our favourite links in to one place. We hope this will be helpful.

Given that the situation is changing rapidly at the moment we will make updates from time to time which you will be able to find here: **https://emergingminds.org.uk/resources/**

NIHR | Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre
NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration Oxford and Thames Valley

Department of Psychiatry · Experimental Psychology · iCATS · Emerging Minds · TOPIC

https://emergingminds.org.uk/advice-for-parents-carers-supporting-children-young-people-with-worries-about-covid-19/

Child Mind Institute

https://childmind.org/topics/concerns/anxiety/

https://childmind.org/article/what-to-do-and-not-do-when-children-are-anxious/

iCATS

https://osiresearch.org.uk/icats/resources-for-families/

Resources

Covid-19 response: Mental Health Resources for and by Young People
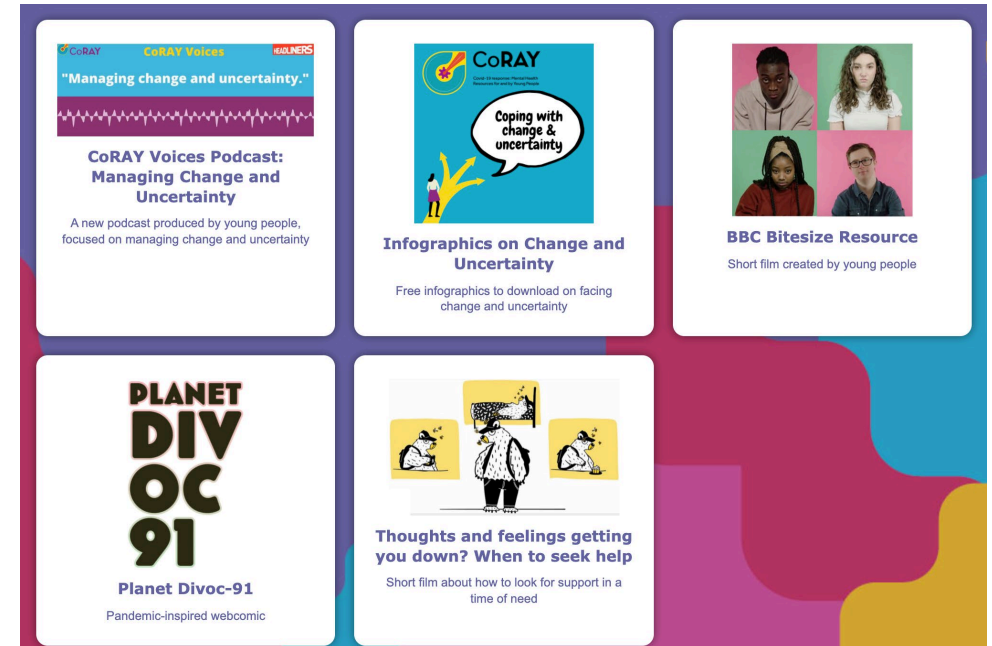
https://emergingminds.org.uk/resources-for-young-people/

CoRAY Voices Podcast: Managing Change and Uncertainty

A new podcast produced by young people, focused on managing change and uncertainty

Infographics on Change and Uncertainty

Free infographics to download on facing change and uncertainty

BBC Bitesize Resource

Short film created by young people

Planet Divoc-91

Pandemic-inspired webcomic

Thoughts and feelings getting you down? When to seek help

Short film about how to look for support in a time of need
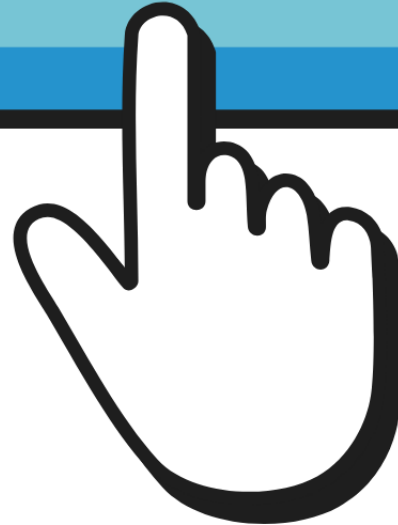
Ask the Expert – Mental Health Conditions in Young People - Prevalence, Shifts & Support

With Professor Mina Fazel

3.45pm on 1st March 2022