

Sometimes I get
anxious

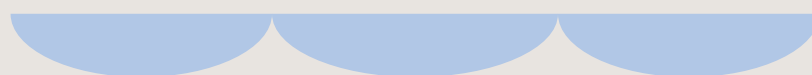


For children
with a disabled
brother or sister.





A sibling support resource designed
for siblings of children with a disability
who may struggle with anxiety.
Aimed at youth aged 7 to 12 years.



Having a brother or sister with a disability can sometimes be quite hard.

It can have some really good parts like teaching you how to be more caring of others.

It can also have some not so good parts.

Maybe your parents need to spend lots of their time helping care for your brother/sister, or maybe you miss out on doing some of the things you enjoy because your brother/sister can't join in too.

Sometimes all of this can lead to feelings of worry and anxiety.



Most people have a little bit of anxiety, and that's normal, but some of us can feel lots of anxiety a lot of the time.

It is helpful if we know what anxiety might look or feel like, and also what we should do when we feel ourselves getting anxious.



What is anxiety?

Our experience of anxiety can be similar or different to others. It can affect our emotions and how we feel in our body, as well as the way we think about ourselves, others, and the world around us. It can also affect what we do.



Anxiety looks and feels like ...

EMOTIONAL

Crying a lot

Feeling angry and frustrated all the time

Feeling afraid

Worrying about things that are far in the future or that may not happen

Worry about family or friends getting sick

Worry bad things are going to happen

PHYSICAL

Headaches or stomachaches

Not feeling hungry

Tense muscles

Finding it hard to breathe

Racing heart

Feeling dizzy



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BEHAVIOUR

- Not liking school anymore
- Prefer to spend a lot of time on your own rather than with family and friends
- Not wanting to join in on fun activities
- Trouble sleeping – hard to fall asleep, waking during the night or waking early
- Thinking you have to be perfect all the time
- Nightmares

Feeling anxious can stop us doing well in school.

It can stop us from wanting to have fun with our friends and family and it can make us feel very lonely.

That's why it's important we have some ways to make those anxious feelings go away.



What can we do when we feel anxious?

TELL AN ADULT

When you are feeling anxious it is helpful to tell a family member or another adult you can trust.



CALM BREATHING

There is a special type of breathing we can do which helps make those anxious feelings go away.

1. Place your hands on your tummy so your fingertips are gently touching.
2. Take a slow breath in through your nose so the air fills up your tummy (watch your breath gently move your hands apart).
3. Hold on for a second or two and breathe out slowly through your mouth.
4. Do this at least 5 times, or until you feel calm.
5. You can also practice Paced Breathing - breathe in for four counts, hold, and breathe out for six counts.

Your out breath is always longer than your in breath.

CALM ACTIVITY

Think of an activity that makes you feel happy or relaxed, this could be playing with Lego, watching a movie or riding your bike.



MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is about slowing down and really paying attention to what you are doing.

A good way to start practicing mindfulness is to focus on your breathing or by repeating a word over and over in your head.

There are lots of ways to practice mindfulness and you can find some at this website: kidshealth.org

.. PEACE ..

.. PEACE ..

.. PEACE ..



SPECIAL TIME FOR YOU

Talk to your parents about doing a special activity with them on your own.

This might be having them take you to an afterschool sport or playing a board game together.

SPECIAL TIME WITH YOUR SIBLING

Making time for an activity you can do with your brother/sister can help make you feel happy. What is an activity you could do together?

- Reading them a book?
- Watching a movie?
- Playing a computer game?
- Bouncing on the trampoline?
- Maybe you could take some silly photos together?





SHARING WITH FRIENDS

Having friends and special people in your life who you trust and that make you happy is important.

Even having one good friend can make a big difference.

Parent to Parent offers lots of different activities for young people eight years and over who all have a brother or sister with a disability. It's a great way to meet new friends and talk to other siblings who might have similar feelings or experiences to you.

Find out more about these at:

parent2parent.org.nz/sibsupport





BE HEALTHY

Keeping ourselves healthy by eating good foods, moving our bodies often and getting a good night's sleep can help with our anxious thoughts.

ASK QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or worries about your brother or sister's disability and you want to know more about it, ask your parents.

Having those questions answered can help some of the anxious thoughts go away.

Lots of people can feel anxious and worried, but when we share our feelings and do things which make us happy and healthy, we can help some of the anxious feelings go away.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

- FACEBOOK GROUP

Stay in the loop with upcoming Parent to Parent sibling events and catch up with friends:

facebook.com/groups/sibsupportnz

Parental guidance for children under 13 years old required.

- STOP, BREATHE AND THINK FOR KIDS

Meditation and mindfulness for children under 10:

stopbreathethink.com

[Click here](#) for a YouTube playlist with meditation videos for kids.





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