



**South West London and
St George's Mental Health
NHS Trust**

Education Wellbeing Service

Helping your Child with their Fears and Worries

This intervention is a low-level guided self-help intervention for parents of children between 4-11 years old, with mild anxiety.

The aim is to empower and support you to help your child overcome common fears and worries using cognitive behavioural strategies.

What to look out for:

- Irritability, tearfulness, clinginess and difficulty sleeping
- Feeling breathless or sweaty; experiencing butterflies or chest pains
- Frequent complaints of headaches, stomach-aches or nausea with no obvious cause.
- Increased restlessness or fidgeting, especially in relation to specific events, like parental separation, going to the toilet, playtime, etc.
- Frequent excuses that suggest avoidance
- Frequent requests for reassurance
- Avoiding situations/activities that make them anxious or only facing those situations when accompanied by you.



What we will usually* cover in our sessions:

Initial Assessment

Session 1: Building a shared understanding of your child's anxiety

- Exploring causes and maintaining factors
- How does your child's anxiety impact on your family?

Session 2: Exploring anxious thoughts

- How to communicate with your child about their fears & worries
- How to help your child to explore their anxious thoughts by testing them out with "behaviour experiments"

Session 3: A step-by-step approach to overcoming fears & worries

- Encouraging 'brave behaviour'
- Building a step plan to face one of your child's fears

Session 4-6: Putting it into practice at home

- Supporting you to work through a step-by-step plan
- Problem-solving any difficulties faced

Session 7: Keeping it going

- What has helped your child?
- How can you take this new learning forward with your child?

Session 8: Review

- Checking in with progress
- Making plans for keeping things moving in the right direction

Sessions are held with you (either in school or remotely) rather than with your child because studies show that a parent-led approach works best when tackling childhood anxiety.

***Although we follow a structured approach, the intervention is tailored to your family's needs, so that the strategies work for YOU.**



Referrals must be made through your child's Teacher/School Mental Health Lead. For further information, speak to your child's Teacher, School Mental Health Lead or contact: Wave6MertonMHST@swlstg.nhs.uk