



Helping  
Your

# Anxious Child

— SECOND EDITION —

Children's  
Workbook

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## Copyright Information

Permission to use this children's workbook is granted to purchasers of *Helping Your Anxious Child: A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* by Ronald Rapee, Ann Wignall, Susan Spence, Vanessa Cobham & Heidi Lyneham (ISBN 978-157-224-575-4). Owners of the text are granted permission to print a copy of the workbook and additional copies of the practice worksheets needed to implement a program with their child.

Printed and bound copies of the workbook are available from the Centre for Emotional Health, Macquarie University:

Website: [www.ceh.mq.edu.au](http://www.ceh.mq.edu.au)

The reference for this workbook is:

Lyneham, H.J., Wignall, A. & Rapee, R.M., (2008). *Helping Your Anxious Child Children's Workbook* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed). Centre for Emotional Health, Macquarie University: Sydney, Australia.

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# Welcome

Did you know that some kids worry so much or get so scared that it makes them miss out on things they would really enjoy doing? Kids who worry a lot often get help from psychologists whose job it is to help people learn how to stop worrying and be less scared. Psychologists also write books that help kids and their parents learn more about fears and worries and ways to feel better. That's what this workbook is about.



Together with your parents you will be learning new skills that will help you manage your fears and worries. Each year lots of kids learn these skills and they find that once they practice them enough, they start to worry less and they are able to do things that used to be quite difficult. This Children's Workbook has activities and practice tasks that you will work through over the next few months. Your parents have a book too. This is a family activity and you will have to work together and help each other.

Some kids get a bit scared at the idea of learning about their worries and the things that scare them. So don't be alarmed if all this sounds a bit too much to handle. Using the workbook will help you to feel less worried about doing the things that scare you and we will work on facing the actual scary things very slowly.

## Parent's Instructions

This is the companion to *Helping Your Anxious Child* by Ronald Rapee, Ann Wignall, Susan Spence, Vanessa Cobham and Heidi Lyneham (ISBN 978-157-224-575-4). For each activity described in *Helping Your Anxious Child* you will find a child friendly explanation to read with your child and worksheets that guide your child through learning and practicing anxiety management skills. To be able to do each activity with your child, you will need to read the relevant chapter so that you understand the theory behind the anxiety management skill and how to apply it to your child's particular fears and worries. You will find short instructions at the top of each activity in the workbook, however, we would encourage you to also have easy access to your copy of *Helping Your Anxious Child* as some activities rely on the more detailed information provided in its text.

It is important to note that although the children's workbook is designed to be child friendly and enables your child to take an active role in learning to manage anxiety you will need to be quite involved in helping your child to complete the activities particularly if your child is young (under 10 years). This program is not aimed at improving their reading, writing and spelling. It is more important for your child to come up with their own ideas and answers than to write them down. Consequently, if your child is not a fast writer or great reader you should take responsibility for these tasks.

We hope that this workbook assists in teaching your child anxiety management skills and that you and your child are successful in learning to manage fears and worries.

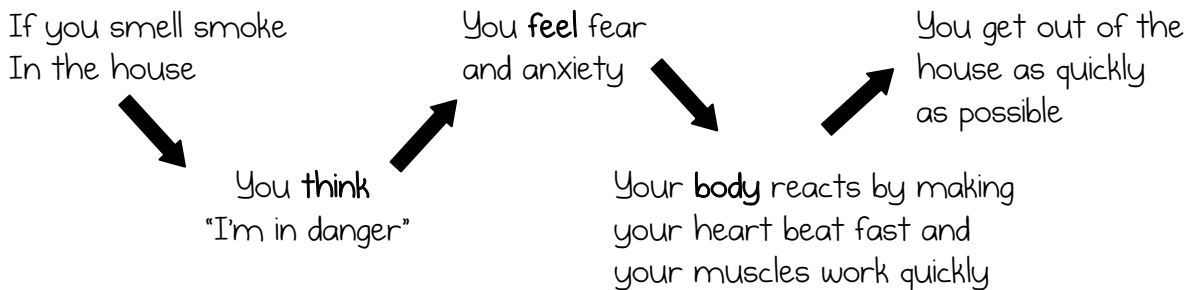
## Activity 1

Start off by talking with your child about worries and fears. Once you've answered any initial questions, read to them or with them the section on "What is Anxiety". Explain that you will spend some time each week doing activities that will help you both to learn how to manage anxiety.

# What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is another word for worries, fears, being shy and being scared or frightened. It's a natural emotion that helps us to survive. We can't live without it! Anxiety is the emotion that helps to protect us in dangerous situations. If we didn't have any anxiety at all we might get hurt.

For example:



This is great in the situation where your house is on fire but sometimes you can get scared when there's really no need to be afraid. You might hear a noise outside and think it is a burglar and run to get your parents to check. When they do check they find it was the next door neighbor's cat getting into the garbage. This is an example of getting anxious when there isn't any real danger.

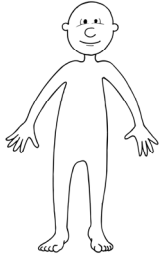
Sometimes anxiety can be useful. Athletes and actors usually feel anxious before they perform. They use the anxiety to "rev up" so they can do their best. Anxiety can also give you motivation. Like if you are a little bit nervous about the end of year exams, you are more likely to study for them. Everyone gets anxious sometimes and that is a good thing because a little bit of worry can help us.

But some people get more anxious than others and for these people it can help to learn to worry a little bit less. If you get more anxious than other kids it's not because you are silly or crazy. It's just because in some people anxiety happens more often. Everyone can be helped by learning to control anxiety. But it is especially important for kids who have high anxiety because often the anxiety causes problems. For example, it might be affecting things at home, with family, at school or on the sports ground. Anxiety might stop you doing things you want to do (like becoming team captain) or it might make you do things that you don't want (like lying awake at night).

Luckily, there are programs (like this one) that teach you ways to feel more confident and have fewer worries.

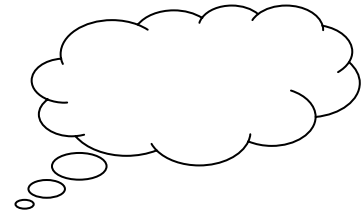
# The Three Parts of Anxiety

If you look at the example of smoke in the house, you'll be able to see that there are three parts to anxiety - your body, your thoughts and your actions.



**YOUR BODY:** Your heart beats faster; your muscles become tense; your breathing gets faster; you'll even be thinking more. These changes prepare your body for action.

**YOUR THOUGHTS:** You start looking for danger and have scary thoughts like 'something bad' might happen. Sometimes anxiety may begin as a worrisome thought which cannot be ignored.



**YOUR ACTIONS:** Anxiety causes you to want to run away or sometimes it will make you want to lash out. You may want to stay away from the thing that makes you anxious which sometimes means you miss out on doing things that could be fun.

## So Why Me?

About one in every ten kids worry about things or feel scared of something so much that it stops them doing things that they want. Some people are more anxious than others, partly because they are made like that (just like some people have blue eyes and some brown depending on what color eyes their parents have). People also learn to think and act in an anxious way by watching others or by going through scary experiences.

Luckily where the anxiety comes from doesn't really matter because you have within you the power to change your anxiety by learning and applying some new skills. On the next pages are the stories of five children who have fears and worries. Some of them might have worries and fears just like yours.

## Activity 2

The following section introduces the same children that appear in *Helping Your Anxious Child* in slightly easier language for your child. You can either read it to your child, or let them read it out to you. Hopefully, this can get you started on a chat about their own fears and worries and how they are not alone and are not "crazy".

### Meet Some Other Children with Anxiety.



This is Talia. She is nine years old. She has a big group of friends, loves music and plays basketball. Just recently Talia was invited to a beach party for one of her friend's birthdays. Talia was very excited about the party but also very scared. Although Talia learnt how to swim when she was five, she is really scared of the water, especially if it is deep water. Talia didn't want to miss the beach party but she was embarrassed about being scared of the

water and didn't want her friends to find out. She couldn't even imagine being able to swim at the beach, she didn't even like swimming in the little pool at the sports centre.

Talia doesn't know what it is that she is scared about, she just knows that whenever she goes near the water she gets really shaky and just wants to run away. Talia doesn't understand why she can't do something that everyone else finds so easy and sometimes it makes her sad.



Kurt is 10 and he spends a lot of time worrying. He worries about his mum and dad getting sick, about things he sees on the news like storms and bushfires, about making mistakes at school, getting in trouble and whether he remembered to feed the dog before school. Kurt gets extra worried when he has to do something that doesn't happen very often, like going to the dentist or visiting his Aunts and Uncles. Kurt often gets in trouble for asking too many

questions, he always feels like he needs to know what will happen next, who will be there and when they will be going home.

Kurt also has an extra large worry about germs. He worries that if he touches certain things like the front door knob or the telephone he will get germs on his hands and then he will get sick and maybe even die. Kurt thinks about germs a lot, almost all of the time. When he thinks about them he gets really fidgety. The only way that Kurt can make himself less worried is to wash really well. Kurt uses lots of soap when he washes his hands, first he washes his left hand then his right hand, then he washes the taps and so that the germs that were on the tap don't make him sick he then washes his hands again. Sometimes washing his hands isn't enough, especially if he has been somewhere like a shopping centre bathroom. If he gets really worried like that he has to have a shower. He has to wash himself from the tip of his head to the ends of his toes, and if he misses a bit he has to start again – sometimes he will be in the shower for 45 minutes. Kurt thinks it is silly to worry about germs so much but that doesn't make him feel any better and it certainly doesn't make the worries go away.



This is 7 year old Lashi. She lives on her own with her Mum. Lashi doesn't like being away from her Mum. When she's not at home Lashi finds herself thinking about all the bad things that might happen. She worries that her Mum may have been killed in a car accident or that burglars might have broken into the house and taken her away. Lashi hates going to school even though she likes to be with her friends because it means that she can't be with her Mum. Lashi even finds it difficult to visit her Dad because all she can think about is what will happen if her mum never comes back. When Lashi's Mum wants to go out Lashi gets so scared that that she cries and cries until her Mum agrees to stay home. Her Mum gets mad but Lashi is always glad that she didn't go out.

Lashi had another problem recently. She was meant to have a vaccination when she went to the doctor but she was just too scared that it would hurt and she ran back to the car before the nurse got the needle ready. Lashi always gets scared when she goes to the doctor. It seems easier not to go at all, so she tries not to let anyone know if she is sick.



Twelve year old George doesn't think he is very good at anything. He started high school this year and really hasn't enjoyed it at all. George has only one friend at school and it took a long time for them to meet each other. It wasn't until they had to work on a project together that they started talking and became friends. George spends a lot of time worrying about what other people think of him. He thinks he will say something stupid or that other people will laugh at what he is wearing. George really doesn't like to talk to anyone other than his family. Whenever he can he avoids talking to people. He gets his parents to talk to shop assistants, he doesn't answer the phone and he tries to stay home on days when he is meant to do speech tasks at school. George spends a lot of time at home, he doesn't do any sports and he doesn't belong to any clubs. He likes to build models at home but he doesn't show them to other people even though some of them are very good. George worries that someone will make fun of the model so he prefers to keep them to himself. Sometimes George feels really lonely but he doesn't want to make a fool of himself so he hasn't tried to make any new friends.



This is Jess, she's 11. She spends all her time worrying about her parents, her friends, her school work, things that have happened in the past and that might happen in the future, and about accidents waiting to happen. Jess even worries about how much she worries! Jess spends a lot of time on her schoolwork because she doesn't like to make mistakes, sometimes she has to do her work three times before she is happy with it. Jess has two good friends but she gets scared that one day they will decide that they don't like her and she won't have any friends. Jessica's worries are worst at bed time, it feels like they will never stop and Jess gets upset. A few months ago Jess had tonsillitis. Although she was better after she took antibiotics, she became scared that she would choke. Since then she has stopped eating a lot of different foods, particularly foods that are lumpy when she swallows. This makes her parents really mad as Jess won't always eat her dinner.

## Activity 3

This activity aims to help your child talk about their fears. They need to circle the different things that they worry about. Be very careful not to turn this into an "interview" and not to start telling your child to stop worrying about these things. Just accept their view and ask questions so that you and your child can understand more about the fear. If your child is embarrassed then they may be more willing if you talk a bit about what worried you as a child.

# Me and My Anxiety

Here are pictures of the types of things that some children are afraid of or worry about - circle the ones that you find difficult. Which ones did your parents find scary as kids?



Strange Things



Crowds



Making Friends



Getting Hurt



Being Embarrassed



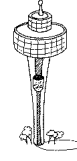
Performing



Seeing the Principal



Night Time



Heights



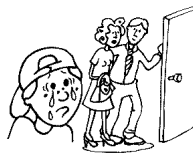
Ghosts



War



Making a Speech



Parents Going Out



Asking Questions



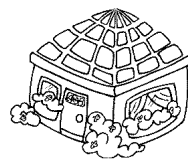
Getting in Trouble



Going to a Party



Bullies



Being Away From Home



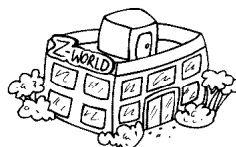
Water



Animals



Loud Noises



Shopping Centres



Being Late



Germs



Dogs



Feeling Sick



School



Dentists



Monsters



## Activity 4

Begin by talking with your child about what they might get out of doing the program. A good way to phrase it might be to ask questions like "are there things that are hard for you to do now because they make you nervous?" or "are there things that you would like to do without being scared?" Or you may focus on more concrete positives (especially if you have a younger child) for example, "would you like to be able to make friends more easily?". While there may be lots of things that you personally want out of the program (like being able to leave your child with a sitter while you go out for the night), you need to focus here on what positives your child might get out of the program (like becoming a "big" boy or girl, feeling brave and having more friends). Write down the main goals that your child comes up with on the worksheet. It is a good idea to put this somewhere that you and your child will see regularly to remind yourselves of why you are doing the program, especially when things get a little tougher. Encourage your child to decorate their goals and be proud of where he or she is heading.

## My Goals

Things I will be able to do or how I will feel when I have finished the program.

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## Activity 5

In this activity you and your child will make a commitment to the program. There is a contract for you both to sign. Remember you should not sign if you do not want to commit and neither should your child. If your child is hesitant or does not want to commit to the program follow the suggestions in *Helping Your Anxious Child*. In the contract you need to identify a weekly reward for yourself and your child (such as an hour extra of computer time or a late bedtime on Friday night). You are also agreeing to do an activity together as a reward for completing the program (such as a lunch at a restaurant of your child's choice or a movie with popcorn). This activity is a reward for all the hard work you will both be doing and should be just for the parent and the child doing the program. We suggest allowing three months to complete the program.

## The Family Commitment

You've learnt about what anxiety is and which fears and worries you find difficult. To learn how to manage anxiety you and your parents are going to make a promise to spend time learning and practicing some new skills. Of course some children only live with one parent, or even a grandparent or foster parent, and that is fine too. Below is a contract for you and your parent(s) to sign. This will show that you are all going to try your hardest to learn how to manage anxiety.

We \_\_\_\_\_ (all of your names) recognize that anxiety, fears and worries have taken too much control of our lives. This isn't very much fun and therefore we are all going to make a commitment to learn how to manage fears and worries. We are committed to learning new skills that will help us manage anxiety. We will help each other even when the going gets tough.

We will work together on activities at least once a week and do a little bit of practice every day. If we do this \_\_\_\_\_ will get \_\_\_\_\_ each \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will get \_\_\_\_\_ each \_\_\_\_\_

If we complete all of the activities, then in \_\_\_\_\_ we will do a special activity together. This activity will just be for the people making this agreement. The activity we would like to do is...

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Signatures:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 6

Use the pictures to start a conversation on the different types of feelings that people can have. Try to encourage your child to use a variety of feeling words. After naming many feelings, play a game of feelings charades; concentrate on using body language and facial expressions to express feelings, and have your child guess the feelings as well as act ones out for you.

### Learning about Feelings

There are lots of different types of feelings. One of the best ways to tell how someone is feeling is to look at the expression on their face. Underneath each picture write what you think each child is feeling.



Play a game of feelings charades with your family. Write on pieces of paper all the different feelings that you can think of, then take turns to pull the names out of a bowl and act out the feelings without making any sounds. The other players should see if they can guess what the feeling is.

## Activity 7

Read together the explanation of "The Worry Scale". Have your child use the worry scale to describe his or her degree of worry in the different listed situations and then have your child add a few situations of his or her own to rate.

# The Worry Scale

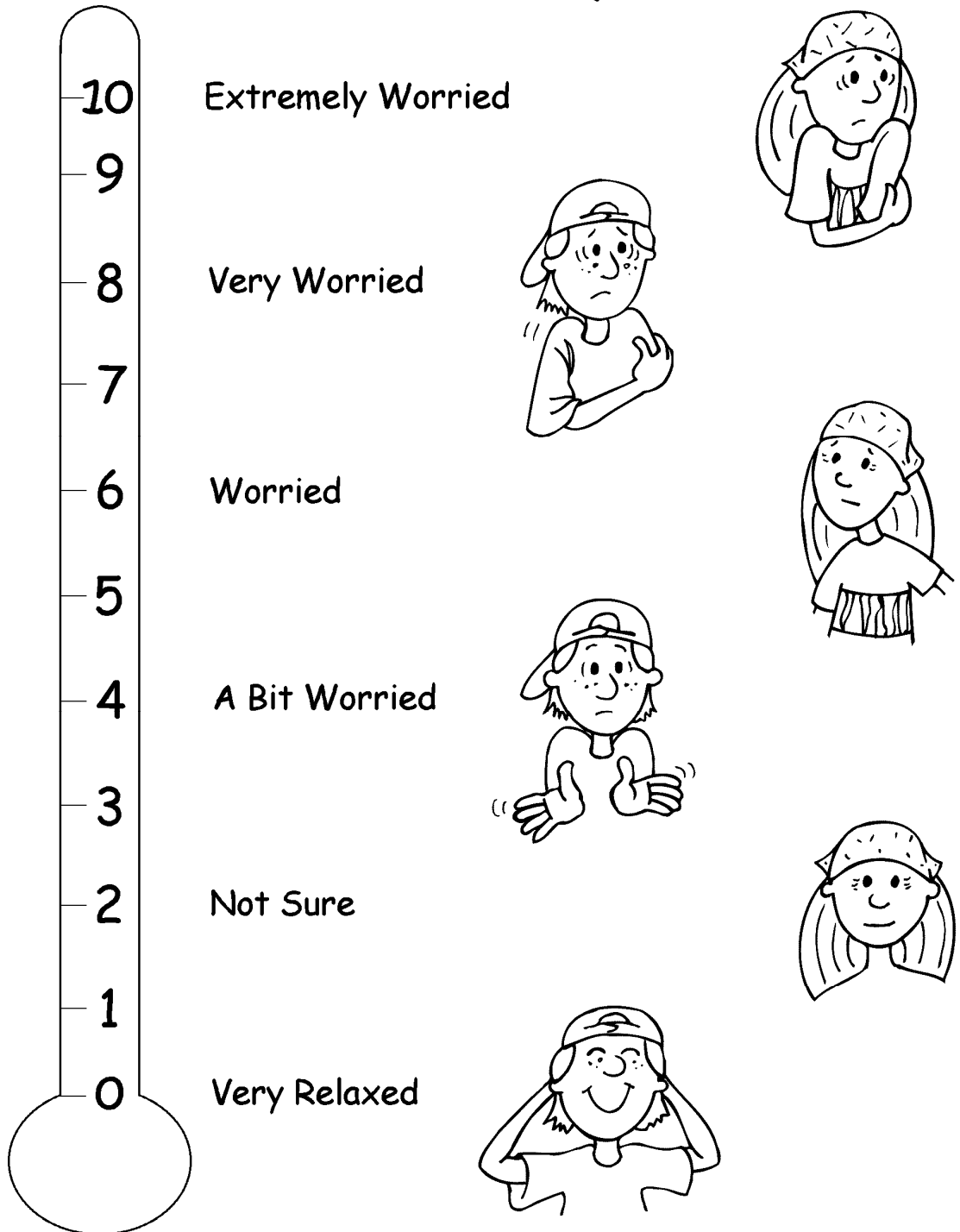
Sometimes when we are worried, we are only a little bit worried but other times we feel very, very worried. A good way of describing how big a feeling is, is to use a scale. A scale is like a thermometer. When the feeling is low, the number on the thermometer is low, when the feeling is strong the number on the thermometer is high.

On the next page is a scale for the feeling of worry. We're going to be using it a lot to help tell us how strong a worry is about a particular event or thing. To use the scale, you think about the situation and then give it the number which shows how worried you are by that situation. For example if you are about to get up on stage to do a solo song in front of the whole school your worry rating might be a 9 on the scale.

Use the worry scale to rate how worried you would be in the following situations.

Situation	Worry Rating
You're going to your first school camp .....	_____
You're going to your Grandma's for dinner .....	_____
You see a story on the news about a cyclone.....	_____
Your parents are going out for the evening.....	_____
You have to start a new school tomorrow.....	_____
You hear a strange noise when it's dark outside.....	_____
You get called to the principal's office at school.....	_____
You're in the park and there's a very big dog nearby.....	_____
You're running late for school.....	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# The Worry Scale

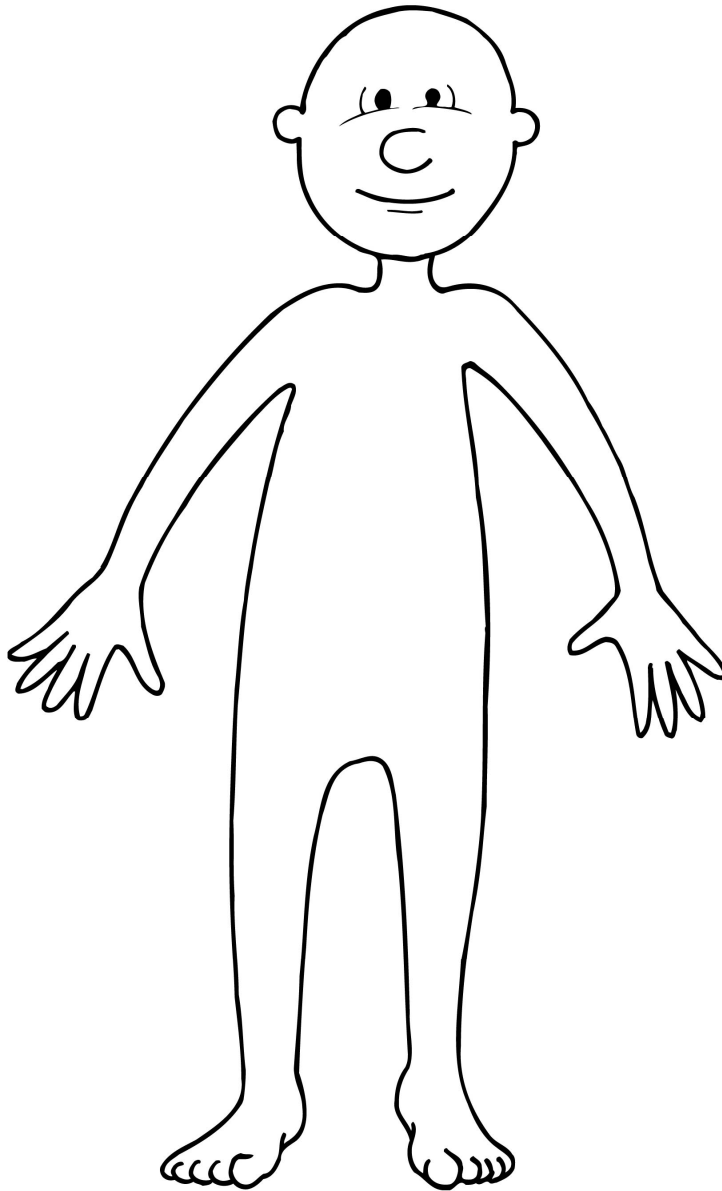


## Activity 8

On the outline of the body your child needs to draw where anxiety affects him or her. You may choose to enlarge this picture on a photocopier so your child can decorate it and hang it up. A fun alternative is to get a huge sheet of paper and have your child lie on it. Then draw an outline of your child with a pen on the paper. Your child can then use this personal "portrait" to color and show where and how anxiety affects him or her.

# Anxiety and My Body

Anxiety causes all sorts of things to happen to our bodies. Using the body picture, draw in all the things that you can think of that happen to your body when you're very worried. Then choose a different color and draw the things that happen to other people when they worry. You may need to ask other people what happens to them to find out.



## Activity 9

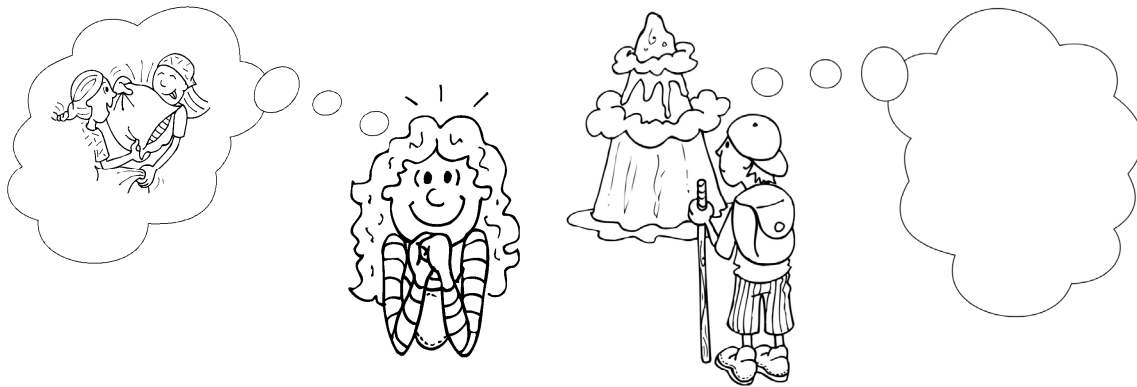
Read the explanation of "How I Feel Depends on What I Think!" Show each picture to your child and ask him or her to say what thought might come up in the situation. At the end of the activity, point out how different people can have different thoughts and that even the same person can have different thoughts about one situation.

# How Anxiety Affects My Thoughts

## How I Feel Depends on What I Think!

Did you know that you can change how you're feeling by thinking something different?

Every minute of every day we are thinking about different things. Have a look at these pictures. In the first one the girl is excited about her friend coming over. What do you think the boy in the second picture is thinking? Write a thought in his thought bubble.



Now have a look at this picture. This girl could have two different thoughts that lead to two different feelings. In one thought bubble write a thought that would make the girl happy and then in the other write a thought that may make the girl worried.



## Activity 10

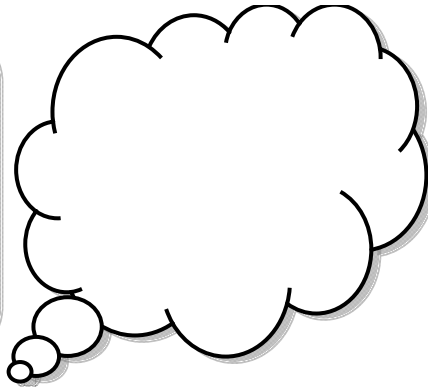
Read the description and ask your child to think of a time when they felt really happy. Briefly describe the situation in the first box on the form. Ask your child to remember what he or she was thinking or saying. This might be hard to remember if the situation happened a long time ago. If your child can't remember, try to guess what the thought might have been in that situation. Write this in the "What was I thinking" box. Then in the "What I was feeling" box ask your child to indicate how he or she was feeling and to rate how worried he or she was using the worry scale (probably 0). Next, repeat the exercise thinking of a time when he or she felt really worried or afraid and for two situations that have happened in the past week.

## Linking Thoughts and Feelings

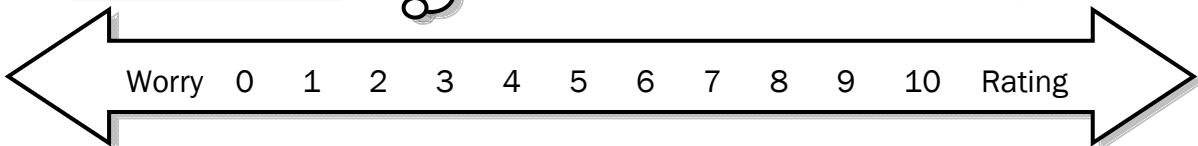
What you are thinking and how you are feeling have a lot to do with each other. Let's think of some examples of how this happens with you and try to link up some thoughts and feelings. Think of a time when you were really, really happy. In the shapes below write down what was happening, what you were thinking and what you were feeling. Circle what your worry rating would have been in that situation.

What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?



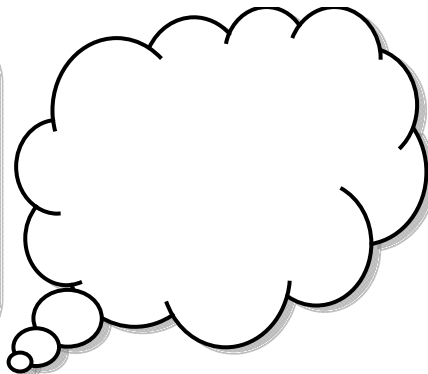
What Was I Feeling?



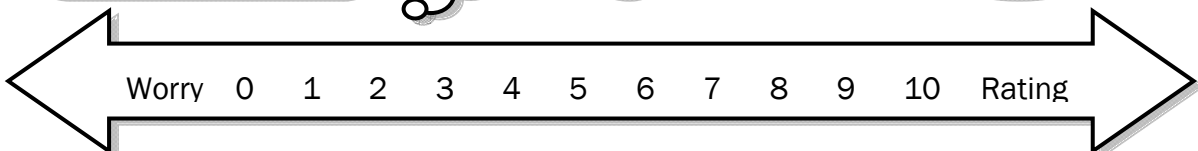
Now think of a time when you were really, really worried and fill in the shapes.

What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?



What Was I Feeling?





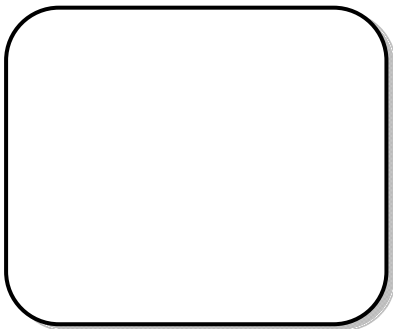
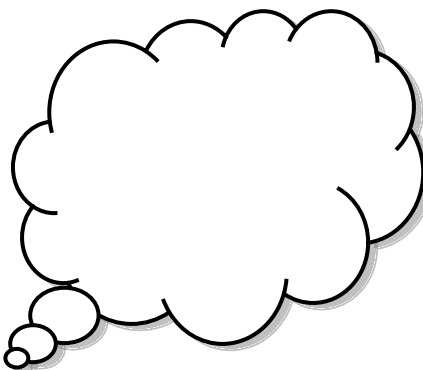
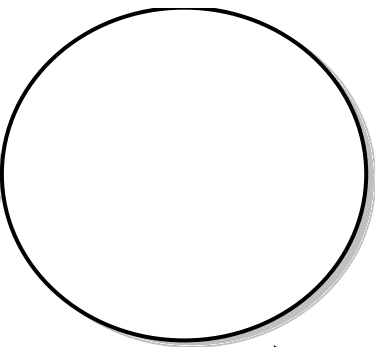

What is the difference between the two thoughts that you had in the happy and worried situations?

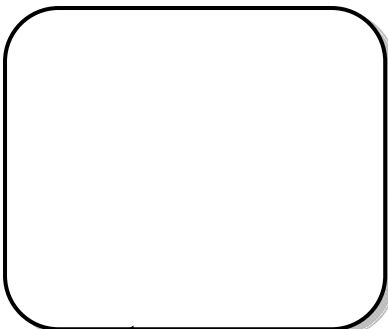
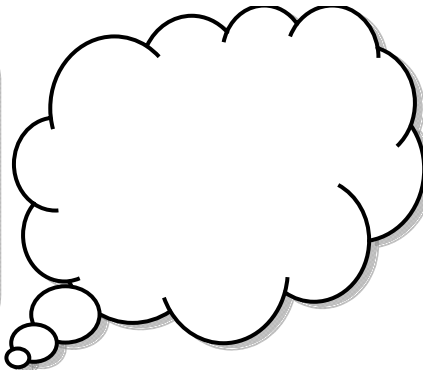
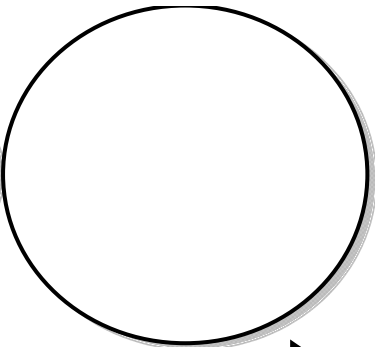
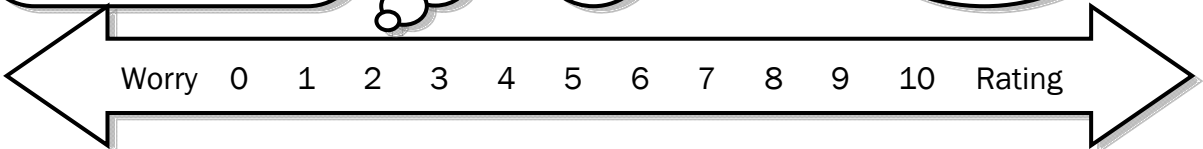
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Now think of a situation or two that has happened in the past few days when you have been worried, even if it was just a little bit. If you have trouble remembering, close your eyes and try to imagine that you are back in the situation. Don't forget to rate how worried you were in each situation.

What Happened?	What Was I Thinking?	What Was I Feeling?
		
		

What Happened?	What Was I Thinking?	What Was I Feeling?
		
		

## Practice Task 1

Have your child keep a record using the "what I think & feel" forms of his or her anxiety for a week or two, recording a number of examples of situations, thoughts and feelings that bothered him or her. Your child should make an entry whenever he or she feels anxious, worried, shy, or scared, even if only a little. This may be many times a day, or only once a day. But you should try to encourage your child to make at least one entry each day. Remember to praise and reward your child for their efforts. As all practice tasks are meant to be done daily you will need to make copies of the practice task page to use through the week. Master copies of practice forms can be found at the back of this workbook.

## Learning About My Thoughts and Feelings

Practice tasks are activities that you should do every day to help you learn new skills. Every day for the next week each time you get even a little bit worried or scared write down what was happening, what you were thinking, what you were feeling and finally, using the Worry Scale, how worried you were. This will help you learn more about your worries.

### ??? What I Think & Feel ???

What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?

What Was I Feeling?

Worry 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Rating

What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?

What Was I Feeling?

Worry 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Rating

What Happened?      What Was I Thinking?      What Was I Feeling?

Worry 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Rating

What Happened?      What Was I Thinking?      What Was I Feeling?

Worry 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Rating

What Happened?      What Was I Thinking?      What Was I Feeling?

Worry 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Rating

## Activity 11

Read through the information with your child. Emphasize that the same situation led to two different thoughts and that the thoughts cause the feelings and behavior. Read the story of Sam and Tim and ask your child to identify whose thoughts were helpful and why.

# Why Are Thoughts Important?

Every situation you are in goes like this:

First there is the **EVENT**, which is what is going on around you.



Then there are your **THOUGHTS**, which are what go on in your head, like what you would write in your imaginary thought bubble if you were a cartoon.

There's also your **FEELINGS** brought on by your thoughts which you can rate on your worry scale.



Finally there is your **ACTIONS**, which is what you do.

Event	Thought	Feeling	Action
Mum is home late	She's been in an accident	Scared/ Worried	Pace up and down the hallway
	She's stopped to get take away fir dinner	Happy/ Excited	Watch TV while You're waiting

**So even when the event is the same what you think can change how you feel and what you do!!!**

Sometimes we have calm thoughts that make you feel good and do helpful things. At other times we have worried thoughts that make you feel bad and make you do unhelpful things

Below are two stories. See if you can tell whose thoughts are helpful and whose thoughts are unhelpful in these stories. Answer the questions after you read the stories.

### SAM'S STORY

Sam is at the movie theatre with his family. Just before the movie starts, he sees a friend from his class on the other side of the room. Sam waves and calls out to the friend. The friend does not respond. Sam thinks to himself: "He must not have heard me. I'll go over to where he's sitting after the movie has finished and say hello".

Sam feels fine. He sits quietly in his seat and enjoys the movie. When it has finished, he goes over to the other side of the theatre, where his friend is sitting and says hello. His friend is pleased to see Sam and they make plans to meet up the next day to play.

### TIM'S STORY

Tim is at the movie theatre with his family. Just before the movie starts, he sees a friend from his class on the other side of the room. Tim waves and calls out to the friend. The friend does not respond. Tim thinks to himself: "Oh he ignored me. He must hate me. Everyone saw that he ignored me. I can't believe what a loser I am".

Tim feels embarrassed and miserable. He doesn't enjoy the movie at all because he's too busy worrying about what happened with his friend. When he sees his friend at school on Monday, Tim avoids him.

Do you think Sam's thoughts were helpful or unhelpful in this situation? Why?

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Do you think Tim's thoughts were helpful or unhelpful in this situation? Why?

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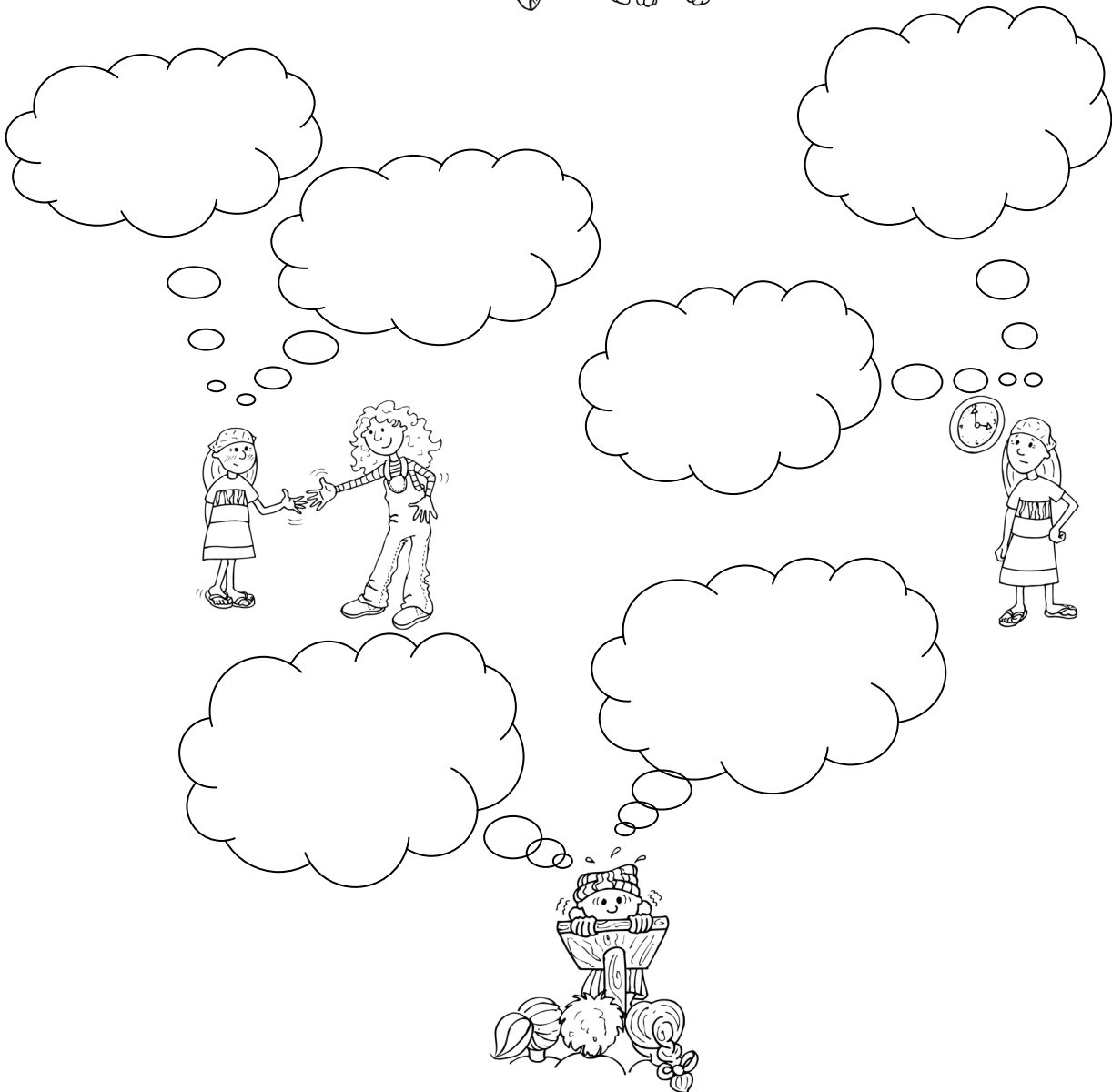
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## Activity 12

Using the cartoons of ambiguous situations have your child write two different thoughts that the child in the picture could be behaving. Encourage your child to identify a calm thought and a worried one. In the second part of the activity, again identify calm and worried thoughts and add what feelings and actions would follow each thought. You only need do as many examples as is needed for your child to understand that the same person can have two different thoughts in a situation and that the thoughts lead to different feelings and actions.

## Self-Talk

For the cartoons below write two thoughts that the child might have.



# Alternatives

In each of these examples fill in a calm thought the person could have and then what they would feel and what the person might do. Do each one a second time and see what happens when the person has a worried thought.

Situation: You haven't done your homework for school			
	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions
Calm			
Worried			
Situation: You want to invite a new friend to your party			
	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions
Calm			
Worried			
Situation: Your team is playing a big game tomorrow			
	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions
Calm			
Worried			
Situation: You have a school camp to go to			
	Thoughts	Feelings	Actions
Calm			
Worried			

## Activity 13

Read through the introductory information on Detective Thinking, the steps of detective thinking and the example. Teaching your child to use detective thinking is best demonstrated by completing examples. Help your child to find evidence and realistic thoughts for the big dog and strange noise situations.

# Detective Thinking

## People who worry a lot tend to think in two ways:

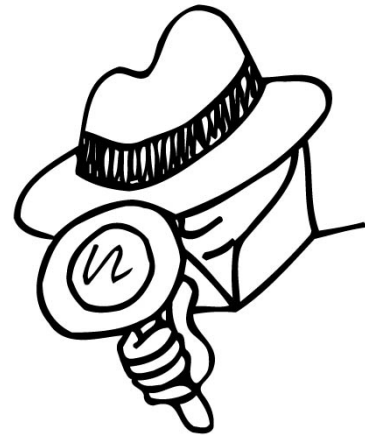
They over-estimate how likely it is that something bad will happen

OR

They over-estimate how terrible it will be if that bad thing does happen

In the example where mum was home late the worried thought “she’s been in an accident” over-estimates how likely it is that Mum had been in an accident because there are lots of other things she may have been doing, like getting dinner

One way to decide if there’s been a thinking mistake is to find evidence for the thought. Evidence gives us clues that we can use to help us make that decision. The best people at finding clues are detectives. A detective is a special person who tries to solve a mystery. Sometimes our thoughts are a bit of a mystery. They can make us feel bad for no good reason. If we want to solve the mystery behind our thoughts we need to act like detectives and find evidence for our thought. That way we can decide whether the thought is realistic or not. If it’s not realistic we can use the evidence to find a calm thought.



## How to Do Detective Thinking

To help your detective we have four steps for you to follow and a form for you to write down all the evidence that is discovered about a particular worry.


### Steps for detectives to follow

1. Write down the event and then the thought behind the feeling. Use the worry scale to rate how worried you are when you think this thought
2. Look for the evidence. Ask what are the facts? What is likely to happen? What has happened to me and to others before?
3. List all the other things that might happen instead.
4. Using the evidence you found, write down a realistic thought to replace the worried thought. Give a new worry rating.




# The Detective's Evidence Sheet


Here is an example of how a finished detective's evidence sheet looks. This one is very detailed. Usually you won't have quite so much evidence, other times you will have a whole lot more.

	<b>Realistic Thinking Detective's Evidence Sheet</b>
<b>Event</b> What is happening?	I have to give a talk at school
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	I will do a bad job and kids will talk about me behind my back. <div style="text-align: right;">Worry Rating: 8</div>
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What are the facts? What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	I've given talks before and only did a bad job once. I have seen some other kids get embarrassed a couple of times, so I'm not the only one who feels like this. I've heard other people say that they gave really bad talks but I didn't notice that they did anything wrong. Most people look a bit nervous or embarrassed when they are speaking in front of a crowd - so I won't look different to most other people. I have been practicing and learning my talk, so I should be ok. I've given talks before and been embarrassed - but no-one said anything much about it. Even if I make some mistakes, most kids will forget about it very quickly.
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	I will probably do a good job and even if I make some mistakes, the kids probably won't even notice <div style="text-align: right;">Worry Rating: 3</div>


# Detective Thinking Practice

Let's give this a try. Imagine you are in each situation having the thought that's been written down. Fill in the evidence section and then work out a realistic thought and how worried the person would be.

 <b>Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet</b>	
<b>Event</b> What is happening?	There's a big dog coming towards me.
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	The dog's going to bite me and I won't be able to stop him. Worry Rating: 9
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:

 <b>Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet</b>	
<b>Event</b> What is happening?	There's a strange sound outside.
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	A burglar is trying to break in. Worry Rating: 10
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:

Now give it a try with one of your own worries. You could use one of the worries from your linking thoughts and feelings practice task.

	<b>Realistic Thinking Detective's Evidence Sheet</b>	
<b>Event</b> What is happening?		
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	<b>Worry Rating:</b>	
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What are the facts? What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?		
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	<b>Worry Rating:</b>	


At first it won't be easy to do detective thinking especially when you are really very worried. The best thing to do is to try doing a detective sheet on small worries first and then try it on some bigger worries. Remember this is a new skill and it will take lots of practice before it becomes easy.

## Activity 14

This activity should be done **after** your child has had at least one week of consistent practice of doing detective thinking on his or her smaller worries. Once your child starts to understand the process, have him or her complete detective thinking worksheets for bigger worries, try to cover at least two situations. Remember to use the questions listed in *Helping Your Anxious Child* to help your child gather the best evidence for each situation. If your child is having trouble, let him or her “coach” you on one of your own worries. Get your child to ask you the questions and help you come up with evidence about the worry, and then help you come up with a calm realistic thought. It is often easier to practice when the situation is not personal. Encourage your child to come up with a lot of evidence for these big worries. The more evidence your child finds, the more likely it is that he or she will find a realistic thought to believe.

## Applying Detective Thinking to Big Worries

Now that you know how to do detective thinking and you have had some practice on small worries it is time to try detective thinking with big worries. There is lots of room on these forms, so try to find lots of evidence. You might also like to try helping someone else find evidence for one of their worries.

	Realistic Thinking – Detective’s Evidence Sheet	
<b>Event</b> What is happening?		
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:	
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?		
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:	



## Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet

<p>Event</p> <p>What is happening?</p>	
<p>Thoughts</p> <p>What am I thinking?</p>	<p>Worry Rating:</p>
<p>What is the evidence?</p> <p>What else could happen?</p> <p>What happened when I worried before?</p> <p>What is likely to happen?</p> <p>What has happened to other people?</p>	
<p>What is my realistic thought?</p>	<p>Worry Rating:</p>


On big worries you may find that at first your worry ratings do not move too much but if you re-read the evidence several times over the next few weeks and keep adding new evidence, you will find that slowly the worry ratings will come down.

## Practice Task 2

Detective thinking is not an easy skill to learn. The key is practice. Detective thinking will continue for the rest of the program. Children should fill in a Detective Thinking Worksheet every time they feel at all nervous, shy, worried, or frightened. The more that children practice, the better they will get at it, and the more likely they will be to use detective thinking when they're actually feeling anxious. To begin, you'll need to be quite involved and help your child considerably. As he or she gets better, you should help less and less until you can just prompt with a reminder such as, "What would a detective think in this situation?" Older children might pick up the skills in a few days while younger children may need help for many weeks. But remember, this isn't a race—each child needs to take whatever time is needed to master the skill.

## Detective Thinking

Over the next couple of weeks you need to practice your detective thinking skills. Each time you get worried instead of just writing down what the worry is, pretend to be your detective and find evidence for your worry and see if you can find a realistic thought and get your worry ratings down. If you need help, ask mum or dad or another adult. They might be able to help you find some extra evidence.

	Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet	
<b>Event</b> What is happening?		
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:	
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?		
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:	



### Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet

<b>Event</b> What is happening?	
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:



### Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet

<b>Event</b> What is happening?	
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:



## Realistic Thinking – Detective’s Evidence Sheet

<b>Event</b> What is happening?	
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:



## Realistic Thinking – Detective’s Evidence Sheet

<b>Event</b> What is happening?	
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
<b>What is the evidence?</b> What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:





### Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet

Event What is happening?	
Thoughts What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
What is the evidence? What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
What is my realistic thought?	Worry Rating:



### Realistic Thinking - Detective's Evidence Sheet

Event What is happening?	
Thoughts What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
What is the evidence? What else could happen? What happened when I worried before? What is likely to happen? What has happened to other people?	
What is my realistic thought?	Worry Rating:

## Activity 15

Begin by getting your child to tell you what a reward is. Make sure that you remind your child that rewards are not only for success but also for effort. Next brainstorm as many rewards as you can together and list them in the activity (a list of suggestions is in *Helping Your Anxious Child*). Once you have a large list, have your child complete the section on rewards for trying hard. You are aiming to get ideas that would motivate your child once he or she starts facing fears. Let your child identify unrealistic and realistic rewards at this stage; you can negotiate which rewards are given when you work on creating stepladders

# Rewards

Rewards are an important step in coping with anxiety.

What do you think a reward is? \_\_\_\_\_

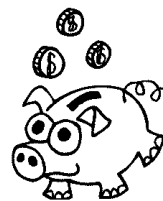
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See how many different rewards you can think of. List as many as you can.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you think of these ones?



Remember, rewards are not only money and other material things. They can also be special time with people, activities or outings, not having to do things you don't enjoy and getting extra time to do the things that you like to do.

# Rewards for Trying Hard

The great thing about being a kid is that there are people around us who often give us rewards when we do things well or try really hard. People like mums and dads, grandparents and teachers all give us rewards from time to time.

Pretty soon you will be starting to face your fears and that is going to take some really big efforts! So we need to work out what type of rewards you would like to work for. On this page write down some ideas for rewards which you might like to earn for learning to manage your fears and worries.

Fun Things I can do with my family...

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My Parents telling me ...

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Special Activities I can do at home ...

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Things I would like to work towards...

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## Activity 16

Complete the activity on rewarding yourself with your child and make sure that he or she understands that it is their effort as well as achievements that can be rewarded. We do not succeed all of the time but if we try our best, then we have a sense of accomplishment to take away with us

# Rewarding Yourself

Did you know that you can reward yourself? This sounds a bit silly at first but it is possible. When you do something for yourself or for other people you can rate yourself on how good a job you did. Then you can say something to yourself like “Hey, I did a good job!” This is called a self-talk reward. You can also let yourself do some special things that you enjoy doing. You might spend some extra time reading your favourite book or you could ring a friend.

Try this example. Jessica just helped her friend to do a difficult math problem. What could Jessica say to herself for being a help to her friend?



What about this one. George has spent all week studying for his science test. When the teacher gave it back to him, his mark was 6 out of 10. 6 out of 10 is an OK mark, not a perfect mark, but not terrible either. What could George say to himself?

Sometimes even when we try really hard, we don't do as well as we had hoped. BUT it's important to reward ourselves for the effort that we put in. Sometimes trying hard is even more important than the success we achieve. So remember to reward yourself for trying hard as well as for the good things.

**What could you do for yourself as a reward for trying hard...**

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## Activity 17

Read through the explanation of what problem-solving is with your child, going through the example of how Jessica solved a problem. Have your child think of another solution that Jessica might have considered and work out what the likely consequences would be to that solution. Using the blank worksheet choose a problem that has recently been faced by your child or create a hypothetical problem (for example getting invitations from two friends that clash and having to solve how to deal with not wanting to hurt either person) and have your child work through the problem solving steps. To start with, choose a simple problem that is not too closely related to your child's current anxieties. Be sure not to become critical of your child's suggested solutions or past behaviours – never use the words "Well, wouldn't that have been a better way to behave than bursting into tears yesterday!" Your only response to their ideas should be praise and encouragement for your child's efforts. Once your child has gotten the idea, you can try to use problem solving as a skill to help manage anxiety before difficult situations.

## Learning to Solve a Problem

Sometimes when we are facing our fears we get stuck in a situation which we can't see a way out of. We don't know how to solve the problem. One way of fixing situations like this is to try problem-solving. This is where you identify possible solutions to the problem and work out which is the best solution.

**There are six steps to solving a problem:**

1. Work out what **the problem** is.
2. Decide whether you **can you change** the situation, your reaction or both?
3. **Brainstorm** all the possible ways you could solve the problem no matter how silly they seem.
4. Go through each idea and work out **what would happen** if you did that to solve the problem. Would it lead to good outcome or a bad one?
5. **Choose** the idea or a couple of ideas that will lead to the best outcome.
6. **Carry out that idea** and then check whether it worked. If it didn't go back and try one of the other ideas that you had or think of some new solutions.



Each time you use problem solving you get better at coming up with ideas and each worksheet can be used to help create ideas for the next time you face that problem.

# Example Problem Solving Worksheet

There is an example of how Jessica used problem solving when her mum and dad were going out for their wedding anniversary. One of her solutions was to do detective thinking. Can you think of another solution that Jessica might have used. If you can write it onto her sheet and work out what the consequences of that might have been.

<b>Step 1: What is the problem?</b>	
Mum and Dad are going out and I don't want them to go	
<b>Step 2: What can you change?</b>	
I can change my reaction, they are going out even if I don't want them to	
<b>Step 3: Brainstorm ideas for solving this problem.</b>	<b>Step 4: What would happen if you did this idea?</b>
Take the car keys and hide them	I'll get in trouble and they will get a taxi
Watch a video to take my mind off it	I'd have fun and wouldn't be thinking so much
Write down some evidence for my worries	I wouldn't be thinking about accidents and I might feel better
Have a big tantrum	I'll get sent to time-out and end up more upset
<b>Step 5: Which idea is best? Which is second best?</b>	
I'll use 2 and 3. First do some detective thinking and then watch a video	
<b>Step 6: Evaluate how your idea worked – what would you do next time?</b>	
My worries stopped once I started to enjoy the video and as a reward I got to go bike riding with Dad. My solutions worked well.	

# Problem Solving Worksheet

Try to use problem-solving worksheets when you come across problems that you don't know what to do with. Often the anxiety management skills that you learn in this program can be used to help you come up with possible solutions.

Step 1: What is the problem?	
Step 2: What can you change?	
Step 3: Brainstorm ideas for solving this problem.	Step 4: What would happen if you did this idea?
Step 5: Which idea is best? Which is second best?	
Step 6: Evaluate how your idea worked - what would you do next time?	

### Practice Task 3

The focus of this practice task is on getting your child to monitor the good things that he or she does during the week and to record the self-rewards for doing these things. This task also gets your child to rate how big or little the thing was, which is helpful for them in understanding that big achievements and efforts get big rewards, small achievements and efforts get small rewards. Your child can record activities like helping mum with an extra chore, trying extra hard during a difficult school subject or anything where they put in effort. As situations arise your child should practice detective thinking and problem solving, and both you and your child should reward such efforts.

## Rewarding Yourself

Over the next week rewarding yourself for doing good things and trying hard. Write down every time you do something good or try really hard. Practicing your detective thinking or using the problem solving are two things you could reward yourself for!! There is a blank problem solving worksheet to use when you need it.

What Good Thing Did I Do?	Was It a Little, Big, or Medium Thing?	How Did I Reward Myself? (What did you say to yourself? What special thing did you do?)



# Problem Solving Worksheet

Try to use problem-solving worksheets when you come across problems that you don't know what to do with. Often the anxiety management skills that you learn in this program can be used to help you come up with possible solutions.

Step 1: What is the problem?	
Step 2: What can you change?	
Step 3: Brainstorm ideas for solving this problem.	Step 4: What would happen if you did this idea?
Step 5: Which idea is best? Which is second best?	
Step 6: Evaluate how your idea worked - what would you do next time?	

## Activity 18

Read the information on fighting fear and get your child to solve Molly's problem. Repeat the activity of solving problems until your child has a good grasp of the idea of breaking fears down and facing small amounts of fear at a time. Some children will be concerned about what they will be expected to try and how difficult it may be. Emphasize the keys to stepladders including: That he or she will create his or her own stepladders; all steps are negotiated starting off with things he or she can almost do already so it won't be too difficult; the harder steps only happen once confidence starts to improve; and then the scary steps won't seem so hard. Remind your child there are rewards as they move up their ladder.

## Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Fears often cause us to avoid doing things we would like to do. They make us miss out on fun and they make us feel bad. Fears are stubborn and they won't go away unless we actually stand up to them and face the situations that the fear tells us to avoid.

Try to work Molly's problem out. Molly's best friend is having a party. Of course Molly really wants to go but there is a problem. Molly is very afraid of heights and the party is at the top of a very tall building called the "Super Tower". Super Tower is 100 stories high. Molly doesn't think she would ever be able to go up that high, it's a 10 on her worry scale, but she doesn't want to miss out on the party. Molly has 4 weeks before the party to try to find a way to face her fear.



What could Molly do to solve this problem? \_\_\_\_\_

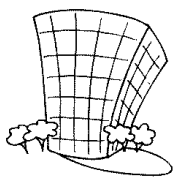
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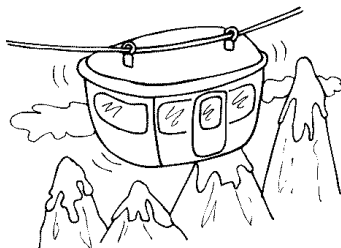
One thing that Molly could do is **fight the fear**. When she thinks about it, very high heights are really scary but smaller heights aren't so bad. She needs a way to get her fear to be smaller at higher heights. Together with her mum, Molly worked out a series of steps which broke her fear of heights down into manageable pieces. Molly and her mum thought of all the different places that they could go to get used to high places and Molly rated how worried she would be if she had to go up each one. They came up with the following ideas and ratings.



3



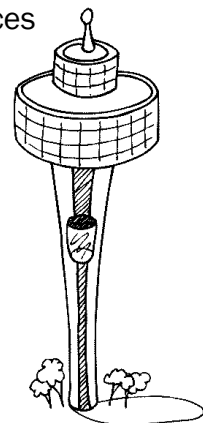
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7



8



10

Using these ideas, Molly and her mum then came up with the following steps:

- Step 1: Travel up the elevator and look out the window of the shopping centre with Mum (3)
- Step 2: Travel up the elevator and look out the window of the shopping centre on her own (4)
- Step 3: Go to the roof and look over the edge of Dad's Office Building with Dad (5)
- Step 4: Go on the cabin car ride at the zoo with mum (6)
- Step 5: Go on the cabin car ride at the zoo with friends (7)
- Step 6: Go to the mountains lookout and stand by the railing (8)
- Step 7: Go to the top of Super Tower before the day of the party with family (9)
- Step 8: While at Super Tower go to the opposite side of the building away from Mum and Dad and look out the window by myself (10)

Each time there was an opportunity Molly practiced her steps. After she did step 1 twice she found she was no longer worried about that step, her rating was down to a zero. The next step didn't even seem so scary so she gave that one a try and did it over and over until it wasn't scary anymore. In fact she did it until she got bored with it. Molly worked through each step this way. When the party day came her worry rating for Millennium Tower was a 2 and she was able to go. Molly had a wonderful time and she was no longer afraid of heights. A few weeks later Molly even managed to go on the roller coaster at the fun park.

## The Keys to Stepladders

There are some important things to remember about stepladders...

Stepladders are gradual. You do less scary steps before the really scary ones

You use your coping skills like detective thinking to make yourself feel less anxious while doing a step

It's important that you stay in each situation until you realize that it's not so bad - even though the first time you try, you might worry that you'll be too anxious to stand it.

Repetition - Do it again and again - once is never enough! Make sure you try each step a lot of times - until you get bored rather than worried.

**Most importantly - reward yourself!**

## Activity 19

Complete the task of creating your child's own fears and worries list. First read through Lashi's example and then have your child work on their own list with your help.

# Making a Fears and Worries List

The first thing you need to do to be able to face fears is list all of the situations that cause you to worry, and how worried they make you. Try to make the things you write as specific as you can. This is what Lashi's fears and worries list looked like.

### Lashi's Fears and Worries List

<b>These things are really hard to do</b>	Staying with a sitter while Mum goes out for the night	9
	Having an injection	10
	Mum being late home or being late picking me up	9
	Hearing noises outside when in my room at night	10
	Sleeping in my own room	8
<b>These things are hard to do</b>	Going to school	6
	Going to the doctor with Mum	5
	Hearing strange noises at night	7
	Being in the dark	6
	Staying over at Dad's place	5
<b>These things make me a little worried</b>	Being in another room at home	2
	Going to a friend's house after school	4
	Visiting Granddad and Grandma with Mum	1
	Visiting Dad's place for the afternoon	2

As you can see Lashi had two major worries, being away from Mum and going to the doctors. You'll be able to see how Lashi used this list in a stepladder later. But first here's a blank list for you to fill in. If you need some help in coming up with ideas look at your detective thinking sheets from the last few weeks and at the worries and thoughts form from practice task 1. You can also get Mum and Dad to help you. Try to think of as many situations as you can.

# My Fears and Worries List

These things are really hard to do	
These things are hard to do	
These things make me a little worried	

What seem to be your major worries? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 20

Read through Lashi's story. Emphasize that Lashi helped plan the steps, that there were rewards for doing each step and that each step was repeated until Lashi wasn't really worried anymore. Use the steps described in the activity to create at least one ladder for your child to start working on. Praise your child for taking a big step towards facing his or her fears.

## Making your Stepladders

Remember, stepladders are gradual. For each fear or worry you have a goal, you break that goal into steps (just like Molly did to conquer her fear of heights) and when each step is achieved you will earn a reward. The first step should have a worry rating of 2 or 3 and the highest step should have a rating of 9 or 10. You need to create lots of steps in between so that you break your fear down into small bits you can handle.

On the next page is Lashi's stepladder for facing her worry about being away from her Mum. She worked through each step until that step wasn't worrying her anymore until she got to step 10. After she did step 10 Lashi's Mum took Lashi and two friends to the movies.

## Creating a Stepladder Plan

It's time for you to make your first step-by-step plan. Choose one of the areas from your fears and worries list. If you have more than one, then try the smallest worry first. Once you have chosen the area use the instructions to make your first stepladder.

1. First set a goal that is practical – in other words, something that can really be done.
2. Brainstorm all the possible steps you can think of to break the worry down. Do this on scrap paper.
3. Give each step a worry rating.
4. Choose enough steps from your list so that almost all of the possible worry ratings have a step next to them.
5. Write your steps in order of easiest to hardest on your stepladder.
6. Next, talk with your parents about what reward will go with each step. Remember small rewards go with little steps and bigger rewards go with the harder steps.

Hint: If you write your step ideas on scrap paper and cut them up, you can move them around until you have the order right.



**Lashi's Goal:** To be able to stay home with a sitter without worrying about mum being out.

Step 10: Stay home with a sitter while Mum goes away overnight

Reward: Go the movies with two friends

Step 9: Stay home with a sitter for a few hours at night

Reward: Have a few friends over to sleep the night

Step 8: Stay home with Grandma while Mum goes out till 11.30pm

Reward: Go to dinner at a restaurant

Step 7: Stay with Dad while Mum goes out for the evening

Reward: Have a friend over for dinner

Step 6: Stay home with sitter for the day

Reward: Mum will bring home a surprise

Step 5: Stay home with a sitter for an afternoon

Reward: Stay up a half-hour later than normal

Step 4: Stay home with Grandma all day

Reward: Choose activity for Mum and I to do

Step 3: Staying home with Dad while Mum goes out for 4 hours

Reward: Go bike riding with Mum

Step 2: Staying home with Grandma for 30 minutes

Reward: Choose what we have for dinner

Step 1: Staying home with Dad while Mum goes out for 15 minutes

Reward: Extra story when I go to bed

## Step by Step Plan



Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_



## Practice Task 4

Using the first stepladder (and for any future ladders) your child needs to plan when to do his or her steps. Talk about when, where, and how the first step on the stepladder will be attempted. Tentative plans for facing further steps can also be made but these depend on success of the first step. Your child's fear will need to come down at least a bit on the current step before moving on. Make these initial plans with your child and then follow through during the week. Remember that your child should continue to practice detective thinking either in preparation for steps or when worried thoughts arise.

## Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

This practice task is one that you will be doing many times over the coming months. It is time to start your steps. You use the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form to make plans and record how things go. There are two parts to the form, a planning side and a review side.

On the planning side of the form you write down:

1. What step you will do, when you will do it,
2. What coping strategies you will use while doing the step, and
3. What your worry rating is when you think about doing the step

On the review side of the form you record:

1. What your worry ratings were before and after doing the step,
2. What you learned from the experience (this might help you with your detective thinking next time), and
3. Whether you received your reward.

You fill out the planning side of the form at the beginning of each week, and you fill out the review sections each time you try the step.

### Example Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
Step 4: Go to shop and ask where an item is kept After school on Tuesday 5 shops	People will not think I am stupid for asking where stuff is I will practice what to say beforehand	Today: 5 During: 6 After: 2	That shop assistants are helpful and don't think that you are stupid for asking questions	1 hour computer time

# Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		

## Activity 21

Assuming that your child has had several weeks of practicing detective thinking, work with your child to identify the most useful thoughts and questions that help him or her to think more realistically when anxious. Have your child write these on to a small cue card that can be carried in difficult situations. Your child may need to write out more than one card, for example one to carry in their pencil case at school and one to have beside the bed at night. Each card may also be specific to the situation that causes anxiety.

### 'In your mind' Detective Thinking

You've had time to practice detective thinking. Although you will still need to do detective thinking when you face a new worry, you can also now use some of the questions and thoughts that you find useful as a short cut to reducing your worry.

#### Most Useful Questions and Thoughts

Look through the detective thinking forms that you have completed and find the events and worried thoughts that happen most often.

My most common worried thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

What evidence finding questions are most useful for these worried thoughts?

---

---

---

Choose a question or two and write these onto one side of a small card.

Which calm thoughts do you find most helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Write these on the other side of your card

#### Helpful Questions

Do other people do this?  
How likely is it that I will get sick?  
If I get sick, how bad will it be?

#### Helpful Thoughts

Everyone messes up, it's not a big deal.  
Answer what I can, then do the hard stuff.  
Worrying won't stop bad things happening

When you are in a tough situation and you feel anxious, use your cue card to help reduce your worry. If the worry doesn't decrease enough then do a detective thinking sheet.

## Activity 22

After working on stepladders, children and parents will both have a better understanding of how the facing fear process works. This is a good time to revise your child's stepladders. Examine stepladders to see if the steps are practical, challenging but not impossible and that the steps on each ladder relate to the same type of fear.

# Revising Your Stepladders

You already have your first stepladder to help you reach a particular goal. Sometimes when you start working on a stepladder, you find there are problems with it that make it seem like the stepladder isn't working. Here are some common problems that kids sometimes get with their stepladders.

**Steps that are not practical.** Sometimes some of the steps on your ladder are things that are hard to organize – like being asked to a birthday party. Other steps might not be very clear, like saying that you will pat a dog, but you don't know what type or size of dog. You need to make sure that all of your steps are ones that describe exactly what to do and that you can give them a try regularly.

**Steps that are too big.** Sometimes the next step seems way too difficult and makes you very anxious. This means you're too scared to give it a go. If you find that your next step seems too hard after all, then try to think of one or two smaller steps you can do first.

**Steps that are too small.** After doing one or two steps you find that the next step on the ladder doesn't bother you at all and you think it will be too easy. It doesn't hurt too much to do these steps anyway. Sometimes you might be surprised at how hard they are and after all, at least you'll get a reward! But if you try the step and it really is easy, then you can move onto the next one.

**There are too many goals** on one stepladder and that makes it difficult. You are trying to face your fear of talking to adults but the ladder includes steps about being around dogs. Try and break the ladder into two or more so that each stepladder only works on one type of fear or worry.

### Have a look at your stepladder...

1. Are there any steps that are not practical?
2. Are there any steps that seem to be too big?
3. Are there any steps that seem to be too small?
4. Are there too many goals on your stepladder?

If you answered yes to any of these questions get your Mum or Dad to help you change the steps to ones that are more useful in helping you to face your fears.

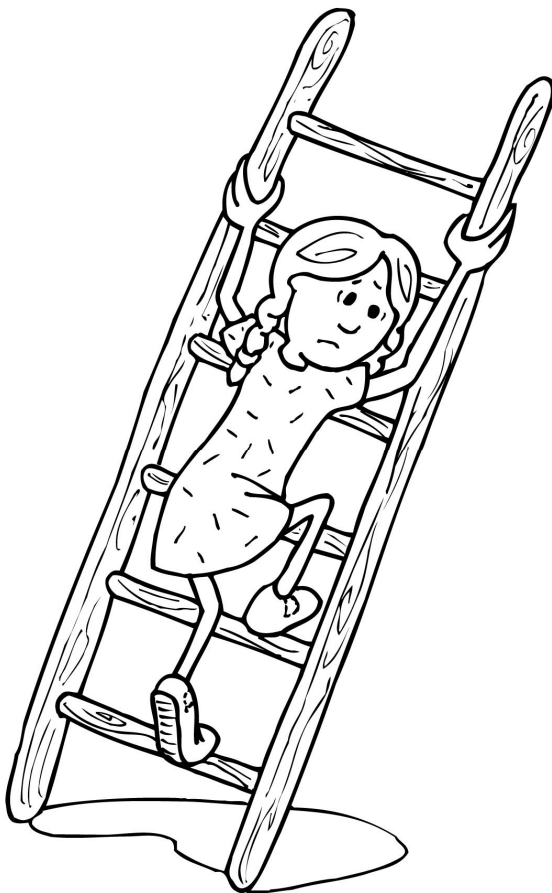
## Activity 23

It is very likely that you will need two, three, or even many step ladders to work through your child's different fears. Create step ladders for the next few most important fears that your child needs to face. Make sure that your child has the greatest say in which fears are most important. Granted they may not be your highest priorities but it is highly likely that what your child chooses will be the fears that are giving him or her the most trouble. There will be time to get to other fears that cause you concern as their confidence grows. Use the same process as the one that you used to create your child's first stepladder.

## New Stepladders

Your 'Fears and Worries List' probably had more than one type of fear or worry that needs to be faced. You have one stepladder already, now it is time to create at least one more.

### Remember To Follow These Steps:



Write down a practical goal of what you would like to be able to do by the end of the stepladder

List all the possible steps you can break the worry down into

Give each step a worry rating

Make sure you have enough steps at different worry levels so that there is never more than 2 worry points between each step

Put them in order from lowest to highest and write the steps onto a stepladder

Negotiate what rewards will go with each step

## Step by Step Plan



Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

## Practice Task 5

Complete the planning section of the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear Form with the steps that will be attempted during the coming week. Remember that decisions on the steps that will be faced should be led by your child. If progress seems too slow, then the step choices can be discussed but children should still feel that they are in control of the process. If your child really seems to not want to do the step, then this reluctance may suggest that the step is too large and an intermediate step should be designed. While practicing steps, your child should use the new cue cards and, when needed, should continue to use detective thinking and problem solving to reduce feelings of anxiety.

## Doing Steps

Keep working on your stepladders and to keep practicing your other anxiety management skills. You should be practicing **EVERY SINGLE DAY**, and if you can, more than once per day. Use the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form to plan what steps you will do this week.

### Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		

## Activity 24

Read through the common difficulties that can occur when facing fears. Use the information to help your child identify where things might be going wrong within their own stepladders. Emphasize the use of coping skills in preparation for each step and that it does take persistence and lots of practice to overcome fears.

### When the Going Gets Tough

Facing fears is not easy. You've probably had a couple of times when things haven't gone well. Here are some hints and tips about what may go wrong when you are working on stepladders.

Sometimes our anxious thoughts make us believe that something bad will happen. So remember to use detective thinking before attempting each step.

Sometimes we get out of a situation so quickly that we don't ever learn that the situation is safe. Remember to stay in each situation long enough for your worry rating to come down.

Sometimes our worry ratings don't seem to change, remember that each step has to be done often enough and practiced many times before it will get easier.

Sometimes we forget where we are up to, remember to keep a record of your practice on the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear.

Sometimes we do a step but think it's no big deal, remember that fighting fear is a big deal and you should reward yourself every single time.

Sometimes we move too quickly and get very scared on the next step. Remember go up a step only when you are either bored or only a little bit scared.

Sometimes when we do something so that we do not have to think about being scared, like listening to music or going with a friend, but this means we never learn how safe the situation really is. So remember, always face a fear full on and with no help.

Think back to the steps that you have tried. Have you had any of the problems described above? What could you do to make sure you can keep facing fears?



## Practice Task 6

Once again, work with your child to create written plans on what steps will be attempted in the coming week(s). Also remind your child to use his or her cue cards during steps and, when needed, to use detective thinking and problem solving as ways of managing anxiety

# Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Use the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form to plan what steps you will do in the next few days or weeks. You should also plan what coping strategies you will use when doing the steps, like detective thinking or problem solving. After you try each step write down what you learned and whether you received your reward.

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		

## Activity 25

Read through the information on why it is useful to be a confident person and the different ways of communicating. Help your child to complete the table by writing in some of the ways they typically act when they need to act assertively and then go back and help them to write down some better ways of acting. If your child has trouble coming up with examples of these behaviors, try to get him or her to think of recent times that they needed to act assertively or have seen other children or adults act assertively. You can also act out the different ways of reacting to get the answers.

# Why Be a Confident Person?

Children who have lots of worries and fears often find it difficult to make friends, stand up for themselves and they often get teased. Sometimes anxious children get really angry when they are worried and they may not be very nice to other people. Other anxious children find it hard to make friends because they don't have confidence in the way they speak and act in front of others.

Most people like it when their friends are confident, calm and honest. The best way to develop self-confidence is to practice being assertive. It can be very tricky to be assertive if you don't know what to do but you can learn how to be confident, calm and honest even in really scary situations.

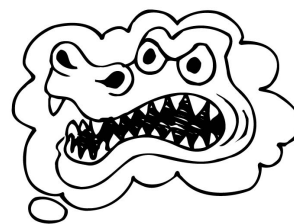
## Different ways of communicating

There are three different ways of behaving when you are with others



You may be **PASSIVE** like a mouse who tries not to be noticed. But other people like to boss mice around and try to scare them because a mouse is pretty quiet and doesn't stand up for itself when someone does something that they don't like.

You may be **AGGRESSIVE** like a cranky crocodile who snaps and yells at other people. Most people try to avoid being with people who are cranky because they don't want to get hurt. When you try to tell people things in a cranky way, they may get angry back or laugh at you for being so upset.



You can be **ASSERTIVE** and act in a cool, calm and confident way by standing up for yourself at the same time as being nice to other people. Assertive people make good friends and do not let others take advantage of them or their friends.

Use the following table to work out what a person will say and do if they are acting like a passive mouse, an aggressive crocodile or an assertive cool, calm and confident assertive person.

	<b>Passive Mouse</b>	<b>Aggressive Crocodile</b>	<b>Assertive Person</b>
What would their eyes be doing?			
How would they be standing?			
How would the person speak?			
What would they be saying?			
How would they be feeling?			
How would they look?			
What types of things are they likely to do?			

## Activity 26

You will already have an idea of what social skills your child needs to improve. Use a variety of situations to coach your child on using these particular skills and ultimately on being assertive. Role-play the situations listed in the activity. You can also use the list of situations in the section on role-plays in *Helping Your Anxious Child* for further practice. As a first step, discuss the situation so that you and your child can come up with an ideal picture of that situation (that is, the way it would happen if someone was being assertive). Once this is worked out, role play the solution. Make this fun - if your child has trouble seeing the right way to be assertive, have him or her role play the worst possible solution (eg being passive) and then role-play the assertive solution. Swap roles occasionally so that you can model good use of the skills. If the early social skills (like eye contact or voice volume) need work, try to role play a couple of situations each day.

# Using Assertive Behavior

People who are assertive do the following things:

- They look people in the **EYES**, but they don't stare
- They use good **POSTURE**, which means they stand up straight
- They use a clear **VOICE**
- What they say, the **CONTENT**, is polite and pleasant even when they are standing up for themselves
- They keep their **FEELINGS** calm
- They **APPEAR** to be confident and in control
- They **BEHAVE** appropriately, like seeking help when they need it, taking risks and saying what they think, feel and want when it is safe to do so

Try this activity; get your mum or dad or perhaps some of your brothers or sisters and try to act out these situations. First act them out as if you were being too weak or a passive person, then try to be too strong or an aggressive person and finally practice being just right that is assertive.

Situation 1: you're in the cafeteria line at school and someone pushes in front of you

Situation 2: your neighbor borrows your bike without asking you

Situation 3: you can't find the eggs in the supermarket that your mum asked you to get and you need to ask for help

Situation 4: you see some older kids picking on a student in the playground at lunch

Try to think of some other situations where sometimes people act passively or aggressively. See if you can work out how an assertive person would act and practice using the assertive response in a role play.

## Activity 27

Read through the different ways to outsmart a bully. With the examples have your child read the tease and then you give the come-back. Ask your child to think of other teases that he or she has heard and then work together to come up with appropriate come-backs. If your child is being bullied or teased, help him or her to apply the outsmarting bullies tactics to each unique situation, give your child the opportunity to practice reacting differently at home, and then have him or her try at school. For example, have your child practice using come-backs in different situations before trying it with a bully. Practice a tease a day; you pop up every so often with the tease and your child responds with the come-back. At first say it in a light hearted manner slowly increasing the severity of your tone as they gain confidence with responding to each tease. Once he or she sounds confident and can say it instantly have them practice at school. Also discuss what to do if the bully doesn't back off encouraging a "if at first you don't succeed try again – with small changes to the plan" attitude. Remember that if the teasing doesn't stop, or if it escalates into physical bullying, the school and professional help need to be involved.

## Outsmarting Bullies

No matter how assertive we are sometimes it takes a bigger push to get people who are teasing or bullying us to stop. Once you have grown your confidence you need to outsmart the bully.

There are four things that you can do to outsmart a bully

**Talk to someone you trust about what the bullies are doing.** You need to talk about it until what they are saying about you doesn't upset you. You should always tell your parents and teachers if a bully ever hurts you by hitting, kicking, punching or touching you in any way – you will need their extra help if this is happening.

**Get an Audience.** Don't let the bullies get you on your own. Stay in areas where other kids hang out and where the teachers often are. If you are walking home stick close to others walking the same way. On the bus sit with someone or only a seat away from some friendlier kids. By staying close to other people your bully has to risk getting caught. You may even dare them to say what they said louder by saying "sorry I didn't hear you" over and over. The louder they get the more chance there is that they will get caught.



**Do Something Different.** Bullies keep teasing because they know how you will react. To get them to stop, you have to surprise them by acting differently. When you change what you do, you take away the bullies' power. If you usually get upset you might walk past and ignore what they said, keeping your face very calm so they think you didn't hear them. If the bully often bumps into you deliberately, try to step out of their way at the last minute so they miss.

**Develop Clever Come-Backs.** Bullies say nasty things so why not confuse them by saying something clever back at them. If they try to be even nastier you can keep being clever until they lose interest – it won't take long if you don't let them upset you.

Here are some examples of teases and clever come-backs:



If the bully gets embarrassed make sure you don't laugh at them as they might get angry and dangerous. Never ever say anything nasty to the bully either. You don't need to hurt their feelings, even if you might feel like it. You just need to make them think that what they say doesn't bother you. Only use one or maybe two come-backs before walking away and ignoring the bully completely – don't get into an argument.

Before you use clever come-backs you need to practice what you will say and how you will say it in a calm and confident way. It is best to practice using the come-back with friends or family before you try them with the bullies – it will be less scary.

What things do bullies say to tease you? Try to think of two clever come-backs for each one, then practice with your family saying it until you can do it naturally, calmly and confidently.

## Your Action Plan

If you are being teased or bullied use the following worksheet to come up with an action plan for using your new outsmarting bullies tactics. Once you have a plan you will need to practice it at home until you are confident in what to do and then you can use the plan at school or where ever the problem is happening.

### Outsmarting Bullies Action Plan

---

Talk about it - Who is the bully and what usually happens?

---

How can I get an audience?

---

What can I do differently?

---

What clever come-backs can I say?

---

### Outsmarting Bullies Action Plan

---

Talk about it - Who is the bully and what usually happens?

---

How can I get an audience?

---

What can I do differently?

---

What clever come-backs can I say?

---

## Practice Task 7

In addition to continuing to work on stepladders (for which you should discuss and plan steps for the week ahead) and practicing other anxiety management skills as opportunities arise, your child should make an effort to practice assertive behavior, either in role play or real life. Have them use the checklist to remember the different parts of assertiveness, however you should encourage your child to concentrate on the behaviors that he or she most need to improve in terms of social skills.

# Assertiveness

Practice this time is to work on your assertive behavior and your stepladders. Choose one situation each day where you can practice being assertive. Keep a record of these situations and mark off the checklist what assertive behaviours you remembered to use. You can practice in role play or in real life. Also plan the steps you will do from your stepladders.

## Assertive Behavior Checklist

Describe the Situation	Things you remembered to do
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Good posture</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Good posture</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately</li></ul>



# Assertive Behavior Checklist

Describe the Situation	Things you remembered to do
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately

# Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Use the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form to plan what steps you will do in the next few days or weeks. You should also plan what coping strategies you will use when doing the steps, like detective thinking or problem solving. After you try each step write down what you learned and whether you received your reward.

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		

## Activity 28

As a way of consolidating your child's anxiety management skills, it can help to have your child "help" other children who have similar problems. By helping others, children are consolidating their own skills and also preempting fears and worries that they may one day face. This is a useful preventative task and also boosts self-confidence as children realize that they have useful knowledge. Discuss each "case" with your child and have him or her suggest what each child might do to overcome their anxiety.

### How Could I Help Others?

Now that you have learned about managing fears and worries you will be able help other kids who don't know what to do with these thoughts and feelings. Your job today is to come up with some advice for different kids who have big fears and worries. For each scenario below discuss how you might help this person to face their fears and make their worries smaller.

**Jack** has a fear of bugs. When he sees bugs it makes him feel sick. Last week in science class they were watching a documentary about spiders and Jack got so scared that he had to leave the classroom. He was really upset and his heart was racing.

**Annie** has her first school camp coming up. She has never stayed away from home overnight and is really worried about what might go wrong while she is at the camp. She would rather stay home but her parents have said that she has to go.

**Melissa** started a new school and she hasn't made very many friends. She has become quite scared of approaching the other kids to talk to them or to ask them whether she can sit with them at lunch. Melissa is spending most of her time at lunch on her own and this is making her sad.

**Tim** worries that his mum will get sick or something terrible like a car accident will happen. Tim tries as hard as he can to be with his mum all of the time, he doesn't even like to go to school. But since he has to go, he checks on her during the day by phoning home. Tim doesn't visit his friends unless his mum can stay with him.

**Sam** is starting high school next year and is really nervous. There are a lot of things to worry about according to Sam, whether the classrooms will be easy to find, whether the work will be very difficult, whether there will be nice people to hang out with and what the teachers will be like. Sam finds that being busy stops the worries but that at night when trying to sleep the worries don't stop and they are beginning to be a real nuisance.



## Practice Task 8

The final practice task asks children to put in extra effort in reaching the goals on their stepladders. They should plan when they will face steps and what coping skills they can use to help them manage their anxiety. You will need to keep repeating this practice task for several weeks or possibly several months depending on the complexity, number and length of your child's stepladders. Each week help your child to make appropriate plans and help them implement chosen steps.

## Reaching My Goals

It is time to really push towards your stepladder goals. Use the Fighting Fear by Facing Fear form to plan what steps you will do that will lead you to trying the last step on each stepladder. Make sure you plan when you will attempt the steps and what coping skills you will use to manage your anxiety.

### Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		

## Activity 29

Complete this activity with your child and get their perspective on how far they have come over the past few months and don't allow a discounting of their achievements. Your child has learnt new skills that have enabled him or her to face the things he or she used to worry about and that is a very big accomplishment. Tell your child what you are proud of following recent achievements – and give special praise for the effort that they put in as well as for the fears that have been conquered. When doing this encourage your child to acknowledge any goals that he or she is still working toward and then talk about when and how to tackle these.

# What Have You Achieved?

Take a look all the way back at the activity called “Me and My Anxiety”.

Which of things are you afraid of today? \_\_\_\_\_

What was your biggest worry when you started the program? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think of this now? \_\_\_\_\_

What things have you achieved that you never thought you could do? \_\_\_\_\_

What rewards have you received for facing your fears? \_\_\_\_\_

You may not have conquered every single step yet. It's very important that you keep working up the stepladders until you reach your goals.

What steps do you still have left?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When do you plan to work on these steps? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What rewards are you still working towards? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 30

Read the information with your child and make sure he or she understands the importance of continuing to occasionally remind a previous fear that they are still strong enough to fight it. Make an agreement with your child that if he or she gets worried in the future, they will come to you and talk about what is happening. Tell your child that you will give him or her your attention and try your best to understand and give the help they need to face the new challenge.

# Stopping Fears and Worries from Coming Back

Fears and Worries are stubborn things. They can sneak up on you when you're least expecting it. That's why it's important not to let your guard down. The best way to do this is to practice your anxiety management skills like detective thinking regularly and to keep doing the tough things on your stepladders (even though they will get easier over time). Practicing gives fear a reminder that it's not welcome in your life except in really little bits.

It is OK to get worried once in a while and it's OK to be anxious when you have a test tomorrow **BUT** your worry should never get so bad that it stops you doing things that you want to do.

If worries or fears seem to be making you too nervous to do something you would like or need to do, then do the following;

- Talk to someone like your mum or dad about it.
- Try detective thinking or problem solving.
- See if you can break the situation down into some manageable steps.



If you do these things your fears should never get too big and they shouldn't cause you too much trouble.

## What to Do When Everything Goes Wrong

If your worries get really bad it is important to talk to your mum or dad and get them to help you work through the skills that have helped you already. If you feel like you can't talk to your parents talk to another adult in your family or at school.

Don't get discouraged. Sometimes you will get stressed. If it's exam time or you're changing school or your best friend moves away you'll probably have a rough time but if you go back to the basics you should be able to get on top of your worries.

## Activity 31

In this final activity children are asked to take the challenge of doing something enjoyable that he or she would previously have avoided or by identifying a big challenge to be faced in the near future (such as school camp). The task includes creating an action plan that will help your child to be successful. It is hoped by aiming to do something enjoyable your child will also increase his or her social contact allowing him or her to experience and overcome more anxiety – and ultimately helping your child to perfect his or her anxiety management skills.

### Facing a Really Big Challenge.

We have a challenge for you! Now that you are an expert in managing fears and worries we would like you to try something that you never imagined you would be able to do.

Think of something you could do that would be fun but is something that would also make you feel scared or worried. You should choose something to do that is either outside of home, like joining the scouts or a basketball team, or something you can do at school, like joining the choir or taking part in the school play. You might even think about something that you will have to do in the future and start to work on it now.

What big challenge could you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What makes this a big challenge for you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What will you need to do to prepare for this challenge? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have the idea, work out with your mum and dad when you will be able to put this challenge into practice and then start working towards this new goal.

## Congratulations!!

Remember that in activity 5, when you made the family commitment to learning to manage anxiety, you agreed to do a special family activity at the end of the program if you all tried your best. You should plan to do this in the next week or two. Make sure you all keep to your agreement and enjoy your time together.

# Congratulations!!

You are now certified in

Brave Behavior

Detective Thinking

Facing Fears

Assertiveness



You should be very proud of all the things you have achieved.

Take a look back at the beginning of the book where you made the family commitment. Remember you agreed that if you all worked very hard at beating fears and worries you would go on a special outing. So go and enjoy yourself you deserve it.



## Optional Activities 1, 2 and 3

Learning relaxation is split into three activities completed over a number of weeks. For each activity read the introductory material with your child and use the scripts provided in *Helping Your Anxious Child* to guide your child through the relaxation exercise. It is useful to record each script onto tape or mp3 for your child to use for daily practice. Optional activity 1 focuses on tensing and relaxing muscles throughout the body. Optional activity 2 focuses on relaxing the whole body while using imagery of a peaceful scene. Optional activity 3 focuses on using rapid, focused relaxation in real-life situations. It is necessary to practice each activity for 1-2 weeks to ensure that the skill can be used when faced with a challenging situation. A record form that can be used for to monitor practice is provided.

## Optional Activity 1 –Relaxation

Some people find that when they are anxious that they become very tense in different parts of their body and sometimes it can feel like our whole body is tight and uncomfortable.

Relaxation is a skill that you can learn to reduce the tension in your body when you are feeling anxious. Relaxation is a good skill to learn because sometimes we get so stressed and tense that we find it very difficult to put in place the other skills that we have learnt to help manage our anxiety. It's hard to think realistically if our heart is beating very quickly and we are breathing too fast. When you relax, thoughts become calm and peaceful and it's more difficult to think about worries. Our bodies also change when we are relaxed, our heart slows down, our muscles relax and we don't feel tense.

### Learning to Tense and Relax Muscles

Your parents have the instructions that will teach you how to tense and relax your muscles. First you will learn to relax and tense your arms. Then you can tense and relax your head and face, your legs, and finally your back, tummy and chest.

When you start to practice relaxation you will need someone to read the instructions to you. If you like you might want to make a tape recording of what you did so that next time you practice you can do it on your own.

### Relaxation Practice Part A

For at least one week practice tensing and relaxing your muscles. Do your practice at a time when you won't be interrupted and somewhere that is comfortable. Record your practice on the relaxation practice form. Write down what day you practiced on, where you practiced, color in the parts of the body that stayed tense (so you can try harder to relax those body parts next time) and then circle how relaxed you managed to get.

## Optional Activity 2 – Whole-Body Relaxation

Now that you can tense and relax different parts of your body you can start to try relaxing your whole body at once.

To relax your whole body you will need to relax the muscles of your body, control your breathing and use your mind to imagine that you are in a very pleasant place. When you relax it is important to breathe in an even, gentle and relaxed manner. While you're doing this you use your imagination to create a peaceful place in your mind. For example you might imagine that you are lying on a beach or you might imagine that you are curled up in bed with a puppy.

Your parents have the instructions that describe what you need to do to relax your whole body. Set aside some time to practice with them so they can read the instructions to you. Making a tape of the instructions will mean that you can practice whenever you want to.

### Relaxation Practice Part B

For at least one week practice relaxing your whole body while imagining a peaceful place in your mind. Do your practice at a time when you won't be interrupted and somewhere that is comfortable. Record your practice on the relaxation practice form.

## Optional Activity 3 – Relaxation in the Real World

Now that you can relax your whole body it is time to learn how to relax really quickly when you are in situations that are making you worried or anxious. The idea is for you to be able to relax quickly and effectively in everyday situations without your parents there to help you.

The trick to relaxing quickly is to first tense your whole body really tight while you count to five and then as you breathe out slowly, you say relax to yourself and you let all the tension in your muscles slip away. After breathing out, you think about what is happening in your body and find any muscles that are still tense. On your next breath out you relax these muscles.

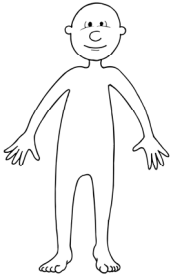
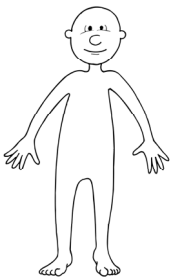
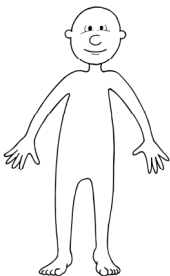
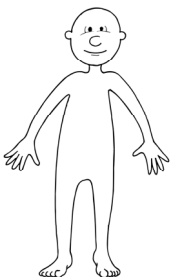
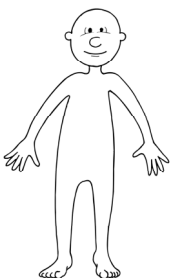
You should say to yourself something like “ I am in control, I am able to relax. Really relax. I can control my breathing...in... and... out. In and out... I can control my muscles. Tense and relax. Really relax.”

The best thing about this type of relaxation is that no one knows that you're doing it. No one can see what you are thinking and because you are relaxing you will look comfortable and confident.

### Relaxation Practice Part C

You will need to practice rapid relaxation first when you are in situations that you know well, like traveling in the car or while you are having a drink at the shops. If you practice in these situations first you will find it easier to do when you are in scary situations. Get Mum or Dad to help by reading the instructions the first couple of times and then try using it without their help. Keep a record of your real life practice below.

# Relaxation Practice Record

Day of the week	Where did I practice?	What parts of my body were still tense?	How relaxed did I become?
			<p>Not at all      A bit      Very</p>
			<p>Not at all      A bit      Very</p>
			<p>Not at all      A bit      Very</p>
			<p>Not at all      A bit      Very</p>
			<p>Not at all      A bit      Very</p>

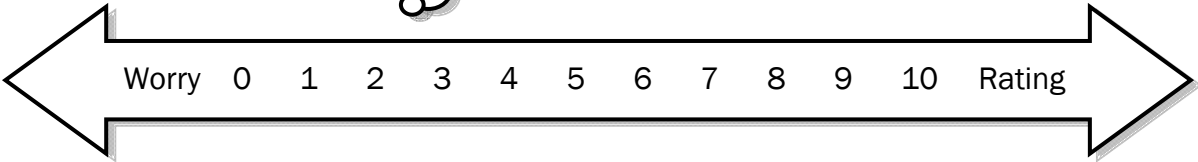
# Practice Task Master Forms

??? What I Think & Feel ???

What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?

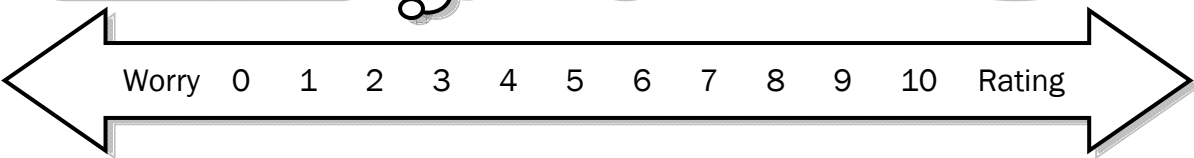
What Was I Feeling?



What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?

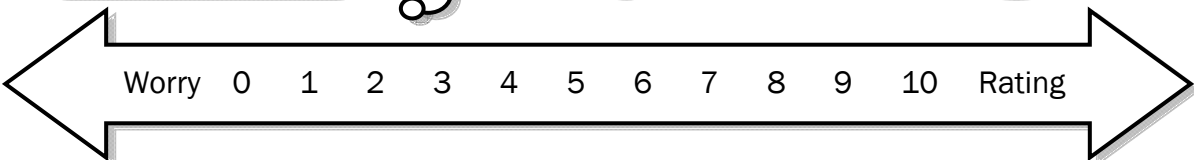
What Was I Feeling?




What Happened?

What Was I Thinking?

What Was I Feeling?



# Realistic Thinking

 <b>Detective's Evidence Sheet</b>	
<b>Event</b> What is happening?	
<b>Thoughts</b> What am I thinking?	Worry Rating:
<b>What is the evidence?</b>  What else could happen?  What happened when I worried before?  What is likely to happen?  What has happened to other people?	
<b>What is my realistic thought?</b>	Worry Rating:

# Problem Solving Worksheet

Step 1: What is the problem?

Step 2: What can you change?

Step 3: Brainstorm ideas for solving this problem.

Step 4: What would happen if you did this idea?

Step 5: Which idea is best? Which is second best?

Step 6: Evaluate how your idea worked - what would you do next time?



# Rewarding Yourself

What Good Thing Did I Do?	Was It a Little, Big, or Medium Thing?	How Did I Reward Myself? (What did you say to yourself? What special thing did you do?)

## Step by Step Plan



Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_



## Step by Step Plan

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Reward: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fighting Fear by Facing Fear

Planning		Review		
What step will I do? When will I do it?	What strategies will I use?	Worry Ratings	What did I learn?	What reward did I receive?
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		
		Today: During: After:		

# Outsmarting Bullies Action Plans

---

Talk about it - Who is the bully and what usually happens?

---

How can I get an audience?

---

What can I do differently?

---

What clever come-backs can I say?

---

---

Talk about it - Who is the bully and what usually happens?

---

How can I get an audience?

---

What can I do differently?

---

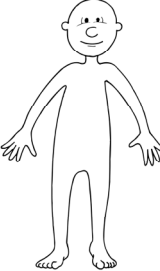
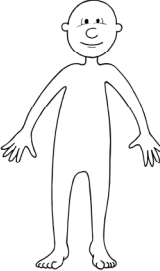
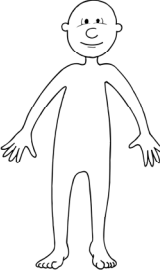
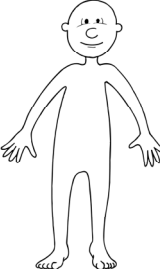
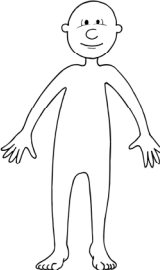
What clever come-backs can I say?

---

# Assertive Behavior Checklist

Describe the Situation	Things you remembered to do
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture <input type="checkbox"/> Clear voice <input type="checkbox"/> Saying what you want politely <input type="checkbox"/> Staying calm <input type="checkbox"/> Appearing confident <input type="checkbox"/> Behaving Appropriately

# Relaxation Practice Record

Day of the week	Where did I practice?	What parts of my body were still tense?	How relaxed did I become?
			Not at all      A bit      Very
			Not at all      A bit      Very
			Not at all      A bit      Very
			Not at all      A bit      Very
			Not at all      A bit      Very