|  |
| --- |
| **Group Session Plan**  |
| **Topic: Anxiety and stress**  **(1 hour)** |
| **Section** | **Details** | **Resources** |
| **Introduction**(5 mins) | * If children/young people do not know each other already, encourage them to introduce themselves.
* Explain that today’s session is about feeling anxious and stressed.
* Tell children/young people that both of these feelings are totally normal and everyone experiences them. We just need to learn how to deal with them so that we can feel better.
 | For **in person** or **online** delivery:* PowerPoint slide 2 (to display on smartboard or screenshare). [Click here](https://barnardossendiass.org.uk/media/dyolayj4/11-_resource-11-anxiety-and-stress-powerpoint-for-group-sessions.pptx) for PowerPoint.
 |
| **What do “anxious and stressed” mean?**(5 mins) | * Show the “anxious and stressed” slide on screen.
* Ask children/young people what they think the words mean. What other words might they hear instead to say the same thing? (e.g. worried, nervous). Type their answers onto the sheet.
* Ensure that children/young people know that “**stressed**” can include being worried or nervous, but is also about being “overloaded” or “overwhelmed”, which means having too many things going on.
 | For **in person** or **online** delivery:* PowerPoint slide 3 (to display on smartboard or screenshare).
 |
| **How does it feel?**(10 mins) | * Ask children/young people to think about what it might feel like to be anxious or stressed.
* **If using printed accompanying resources:** Give children/young people a “what happens to your body?” sheet. Ask them to write or draw what might be happening in their body or mind if they are anxious or stressed e.g. racing heart, churning stomach.
* **If not using printed accompanying resources:** Ask children/young people to draw an outline of a body on a piece of paper and write or draw what might be happening in their body or mind if they are anxious or stressed. Or children/young people can just make a list if they prefer.
* After giving children/young people some time to work on the task, ask them share their ideas (if they want to), starting from the head and working down.
* Stress that all of these feelings are totally normal and we can learn to control them and cope with them.
 | For **in person** or **online** delivery:**If using printed accompanying resources:** * “What happens to your body?” printed sheets. [Click here](https://barnardossendiass.org.uk/media/zzln0xsw/12-_resource-12-anxiety-and-stress-what-happens-to-your-body.doc) for resource.
* Pens/pencils.

**If not using printed accompanying resources:** * Blank paper.
* Pens/pencils.
 |
| **Feeling calmer**(10 mins) | * Explain to children/young people that now they can recognise when they are feeling anxious or stressed, they need to know what to so that they can feel better as quickly as possible.
* **Feel calmer -** the first thing that they need to do is feel calmer so that they can think straight. Suggest that they try these things first:
	+ ***Breathe and count (slide 4)*** – this is really important to get our heart rate down. So stop, go somewhere safe and quiet (if possible) and close your eyes if it helps. Breathe in and count to 3 and out and count to 5. Do this for as long as you need to. Try it out together (if this feels appropriate).
	+ ***Use your senses (slide 5) –*** to stop our thoughts spinning out of control, it helps to focus on what is around us right now. One way to do this is to use your senses and make a list in your head of:
		- Things you can see.
		- Things you can hear.
		- Things you can touch/feel.
		- Things you can smell.
		- Things you can taste.

 Try it out together (if this feels appropriate).* + ***Positive phrases (slide 6) -***  Having a positive phrase to repeat to ourselves can really help too. One idea might be “you’ve got this!” or “I’m going to be OK”. Ask children/young people for their ideas.
 | * PowerPoint slides 4-6 (to display on smartboard or screenshare).
 |
| **Making a plan**(10 mins) | * Tell children/young people that once they are calmer and can think more clearly, the next thing to do is to take control of the situation.
* One way to do this is to work out what is making them feel anxious/worried/stressed and make a plan for how to deal with it.
* Sometimes, just writing the worry down can help it to feel smaller and more manageable.
* Show the “anxiety and stress action plan” slide on screen and click to show an example in the “this makes me stressed” column (being in a crowded place). Work through this with children/young people and ask them for their ideas for what you could put in the other boxes. Click to reveal ideas.
* **If using printed accompanying resources:** Give children/young people “anxiety and stress action plan” sheets. Ask them to have a go at filling a row in.
* **If not using printed accompanying resources:** Ask children/young people to have a go at making a plan for themselves using the same format as on the sheet (that you can leave on screen for them to work from).
* After giving children/young people some time to work on the task, ask them if they would like to share their ideas with the group (only if they want to as the content could be sensitive for them).
 | For **in person** or **online** delivery:* PowerPoint slide 7 (to display on smartboard or screenshare).

**If using printed accompanying resources:** * “Anxiety and stress action plan” printed sheets. [Click here](https://barnardossendiass.org.uk/media/hiwleae0/13-_resource-13-anxiety-and-stress-anxiety-and-stress-action-plan.docx) for resource.
* Pens/pencils.

**If not using printed accompanying resources:*** Blank paper.
* Pens/pencils.
 |
| **Relaxing and distracting our minds**(15 mins) | * Tell children/young people that after they have tried to think through, and sort, their feelings of worry/anxiety/stress, they need to try to move on. A good way to do this is to do something positive that they enjoy. This will take their mind off their worries and make them feel good.
* **If using printed accompanying resources:** Give children/young people “things I can do to take my mind off my worries” sheets and ask them to write or draw their ideas on there.
* **If not using printed accompanying resources:** Ask children/young people to write down, or draw, on a piece of paper all of the things that they might do to take their mind off their worries.
* Ask children/young people to share their ideas (if they want to). Tell them that their ideas might help someone else too!
* If you have time, you could also show children/young people the Young Minds video “how to make a self soothe box” to give them more ideas using this link:

[Helping Your Child With Anxiety (youngminds.org.uk)](https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-anxiety/#how-to-help-your-child-manage-their-anxiety) | For **in person** or **online** delivery:**If using printed accompanying resources:** * “Things I can do to take my mind off my worries” printed sheets. [Click here](https://barnardossendiass.org.uk/media/0fneaeix/14-_resource-14-anxiety-and-stress-things-i-can-do-to-take-my-mind-off-my-worries.doc) for resource.
* Pens/pencils.

**If not using printed accompanying resources:*** Blank paper.
* Pens/pencils.
 |
| **How was that? (evaluation)**(5 mins) | * Ask children/young people the evaluation questions. Children/young people to vote with their thumbs up (yes) in the middle (not sure) or down (no) for each question. Note the number for each response on the evaluation sheet.
* **If using printed accompanying resources:** give children/young people a copy of the “Anxiety and stress information” sheet to remind them what they have learnt in the session.
* **If not using printed accompanying resources:** tell children/young people where they can get a copy of the “Anxiety and stress information” sheet from e.g. you could email it to them or their parents/carers.
* Remind children/young people that they can contact WESAIL for information and support. Contact details are on the last page of the “Anxiety and stress information” sheet. Or direct them to our phone number/email address/online information as detailed on page 5 of this pack.
 | For **in person** or **online** delivery:* Evaluation sheet to note group responses on. [Click here](https://barnardossendiass.org.uk/media/y3ydircz/15-_resource-15-anxiety-and-stress-evaluation-1.docx) for resource.

**If using printed accompanying resources:** * “Anxiety and stress information” printed sheets. Click [here](https://barnardossendiass.org.uk/media/44dh3ggn/resource-16-anxiety-and-stress.pdf) for resource.
 |