

# UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY IN CHILDREN

## WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety is when you feel very worried or scared. It can cause things like a fast heartbeat or a funny feeling in your stomach. If it happens a lot and stops you from doing everyday things like schoolwork, playing, or spending time with family, it might be an anxiety disorder.



## COMMON SIGNS OF ANXIETY

- Hard to fall asleep
- Often saying their stomach or head hurts
- Staying away from certain places or people
- Not wanting to be away from parents
- Trouble staying still or paying attention
- Feeling worried of what others think of them
- Always feeling worried or nervous
- Being very moody or emotional

## TYPES OF ANXIETY

- Social Anxiety – Worries about being judged or laughed at.
- Separation Anxiety – Fear of being away from parents or loved ones.
- Generalised Anxiety – Worrying about lots of different things
- Selective Mutism – Unable to speak in some places or with some people



## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- Listen and let them know it's okay to feel anxious sometimes.
- Talk about their worries without judgement.
- Gently support them to face fears, starting with small steps.
- Wait and observe before stepping in - let them build confidence.
- Praise brave behaviour, even in small amounts and avoid labels like “shy” or “anxious.”
- Ensure they get good sleep, eat well, and stay active.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP?

- Anxiety is affecting your child's school, friendships, or family life.
- Their fears are much more stronger than others their age.
- They show extreme worry or reactions to certain situations.

Talk to a GP or mental health professional if:



The Children's Health and Wellbeing Local is jointly funded by the Victorian Government and the Australian Government through the Head to Health Kids Initiative.

Scan the QR code to know more

