

ANXIETY

INFORMATION SHEET

WHAT IS ANXIETY?



- Anxiety is a normal feeling that many people, including kids, sometimes have. **It's a natural reaction to stress or worry.**
- Anxiety can be helpful because it can make us **alert and cautious** in certain situations, like being aware of crossing the street when there is lots of traffic.
- Anxiety becomes a problem when it makes it hard to do things like go to school, spend time away from your family, or do well in school or sports.
- When anxiety becomes a problem, it can be referred to as an 'anxiety disorder.'
- Anxiety disorders are one of the most common mental health conditions in children and adults.



SOME COMMON SIGNS OF ANXIETY PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN...

Refusing to go to school or refusing to spend time with friends

Feeling sick for no known reason

Having a hard time falling asleep or staying asleep

Worrying too much about fears (for example, about things not in their control)

Using the bathroom a lot (especially before leaving the house)

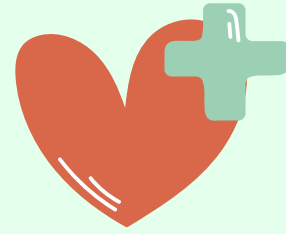
Unexplained stomach aches or headaches

Having a difficult time separating from their parents

Having a hard time breathing for no known reason

WHAT CAN I DO AND WHO CAN I TALK TO FOR SUPPORT?

If you think your child may be dealing with an anxiety problem, a good place to start is **speaking with your family doctor or a doctor at your local Community Health Centre.**



Your child's doctor will ask questions about how your child has been feeling and may have you fill out questionnaires about their feelings and behaviour.

The answers to these questions will help the doctor decide **if your child could use support for dealing with anxiety.**



The doctor may suggest having your child talk to a therapist or in some cases, they may recommend that your child try medication to help with their anxiety.

It is important to know that your doctor cannot share information about your child or what they recommend to help your child, with anyone else without your and your child's permission.

There are only a few circumstances where your doctor can share information without your or your child's permission. If you have questions about this, ask your doctor.

If your child has a supportive teacher, it would be helpful to talk to them and see if they have noticed if your child is experiencing anxiety at school. They may also have ideas about how to support your child at school.



Talk with your child – It is helpful to talk openly and supportively with your child about anxiety and worry. Knowing they have your support can help them feel better.

With your support, love and understanding and the help of a knowledgeable healthcare provider, your child can learn to deal with their worries and fears.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

- **George Hull Centre for Children and Families**
 - www.georgehullcentre.ca
 - A centre in the Etobicoke community that supports children, youth and their families around mental wellbeing. Translation services are available at the centre as well.
- **Lumenus Mental Health, Developmental & Community Services**
 - www.lumenus.ca
 - A centre in the Toronto area that provides supportive care to children and families focused on mental wellbeing, child development, autism and early years intervention services. Translation services are available at the centre as well.
- **About Kids Health website** | www.aboutkidshealth.ca
 - This website is put together by the Hospital for Sick Children and offers helpful information for parents, teens, and children. The information is also available in multiple languages.
- **Anxiety Canada** | www.anxietycanada.com
 - A website that has free strategies and helpful tips for parents supporting children who may have anxiety
- **Kids Help Phone website and phone support** |
 - kidshelpphone.ca or call (1-800-668-6868)
 - An excellent website that has information around children and youth's mental wellness. There are also sections of the website that have specific information for newcomers to Canada (kidshelpphone.ca/tag-cloud/?tags=newcomers). Another section of this website offers information in multiple languages (kidshelpphone.ca/wellness-support-in-multiple-languages). There are also counselors that speak multiple languages available to speak with children and youth over the phone.
- **New Youth** | <https://newyouth.ca/en>
 - An online community for immigrant and refugee youth new to Ontario. Offers information on dealing with depression and anxiety as well as many other topics.
- **Canadian Mental Health Association Newcomer's Health and Well-Being (for 12 years and older)**
 - <https://cmha-yr.on.ca/get-support/newcomers-health-and-well-being-12/>
 - A website that offers information to connect newcomers to support and programs for mental well-being
- **LAMP Community Health Centre** | <http://www.lampchc.org>
 - A multi-service centre that provides a wide range of health and community services and can refer to other local health services
 - <https://lampchc.org/programs-services/community-health-programs/ask-community-information/newcomer-services/>
 - ASK! Community Information offers a range of supports to newcomers through a Settlement Counselor
- **Stonegate Community Health Centre** | www.stonegatechc.org
- **Rexdale Community Health Centre** | www.rexdalechc.com